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RURAL CHARMS.

BY W. O. FARMER.

Who has not oft sighed to inhale,
The pure, fresh air from hill and vale—
The perfumed gales from flower and field,
Invigorating health that yield!
What bliss—exhilarating joy,
Far from the City's pros to fly—
Its sweltering sun, dust, toil and care,
And to fond rural scenes repair—

Free to enjoy those charms unknown,
Except 'neath rural skies alone:
To muse or gambol, walk or ride,
To wonder by the cool brook's side;
To watch, as each day's course is run,
The glories of the setting sun—
Or hear the song birds pipe their lay,
In greeting to the new-born day.

And when the twilight shadows fall,
List to the lowing cattle call,
Or see them picturesquely browse,
Or, listlessly recumbent, drowse!
To feel, at hallow'd vesper time,
The distant church bell's mellowed chime,
Becharm the soul in dulcet strains,
Soft as the Harp *Folia* claims!

Who would not wish it were his lot—
The world and all its cares forgot,—
To live amid those glowing scenes—
Fond vision of the Poet's dreams!
To see the tumbling torrent leap,
In mist and spray from rock and steep—
Then glide away in tranquil wood
Through sunny glen and shady wood,—

Now, nestling, hid in copsewood green,
Emerging now, in sunshine soon,
Till, in its far-off, hazy bed,
It gleams, a tiny silver thread!
Deep in the limpid pool to trace,
Reflected Nature's every grace—
Its emerald banks—the grass that waves,
The shrub that in its crystal laves,

The fleecy cloud—the flow'et's bloom,
The Sun-King's splendor at his noon—
Or the flushed West, whose Protean dyes,
In gorgeous colors tint the skies!
And, then, what quiet joy to sit,
As evening's shadows change and flit,
And all is still—hushed every sound,
And nothing living breathes around,—

And catch the insect chorus swell
In low, soft cadence o'er the spell—
Blest contrast to the dim and strife
Besetting poor vexed human life!
Or turn to where the fertile soil
In plenty decks the peasant's toil;
Where rippling fields of golden wheat,
Broad meadows rich in clover, meet.

Where mounds of new-mown hay exhale
Sweet odors to the passing gale—
Taste of the sweets that must have blest,
Fair Eden ere its Eve transgressed!
Or wand thro' pastures stocked with kine,
That use and ornament combine:
The sward so green—to charm the eye,
The herbage—sodder to supply.

Or, peeping from its foliage screen,
Behold the farmer's cottage gleam—
Its many-colored tiles ablaze,
Bathed in the sun's last golden rays!
Ah! cold must be the heart, and dead—
To gross alloying habits wed—
That fails to prize the wealth of bliss,
Showered by Heaven on homes like this!

MONTREAL.

In the Jardin des Plantes, at Paris, an elephant has been turned out of his house to allow of a chase of the rats that devoured his food. The rats ran about in all directions, and while the elephant was stooping to pick up a morsel of bread which one of the crowd had thrown to him, a rat, fancying he saw a means of escape, took refuge in the interior of his trunk. The elephant made frantic efforts to relieve himself of his unwelcome visitor, but in vain. Suddenly he paused and seemed to reflect, then he went to his basin, filled his trunk with water, and amidst the great excitement of the lookers-on, ejected the water and the unfortunate rat with one sublime effort.



"THE TELL-TALE SCAR."

FEUDAL TIMES; OR, TWO SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE. — A Romance of Daring and Adventure.

(Translated especially for the FAVORITE from
the French of Paul Duplessis.)

CHAPTER XX.

AN HONEST ALLIANCE.

After taking the seat pointed out to her by MONSEIGNEUR DE CANILHAC, Diane raised her beautiful eyes to those of the marquis, and then, in tones which, though moved by emotion, indicated at once determination and anxiety, commenced the conversation.

"Monsieur," she said, "it is impossible that news of the monstrous wrong done to my mother by the Marquis de la Tremblais should not have reached you. Our servants infamously assassinated, our fortified house of Tauve traitorously taken by assault and given over to pillage, and the terrible murder of the Dame d'Erlange, my mother, constitute a fact such as has no parallel in history!"

"You deceive yourself, mademoiselle," interrupted the marquis; "on the contrary, the history of our civil wars abounds in similar facts.

I must not conceal from you, if, as I have no doubt is the case, your intention is to invoke my protection, that while recognizing to the full the justice and extent of your griefs, it will be simply impossible for me to afford you any remedy. The religion to which you belong places you in an entirely exceptional position. If I were to take part against the Marquis de la Tremblais, a zealous Catholic, in favor of the Demoiselle d'Erlange, an avowed Protestant, I should arouse the whole noblesse of the province of Auvergne, and, what is worse, should be blamed at Court."

"Be under no apprehension, monsieur," replied Diane. "I have placed my interests in the hands of heaven; it is not of myself I wish to address you in this interview. If I call your attention to the odious crime committed by the Marquis de la Tremblais, it is because the subjects on which I desire to speak to you relate to that crime. A brave and loyal gentleman, Monsieur le Chevalier Sforzi, languishes at this moment in the dungeons of the Chateau de la Tremblais, awaiting an ignominious and cruel death. Monsieur de Sforzi is a Catholic, and happened to be at Tauve when the house was surprised in the dead of night and sacked. He did all that a man of honor would have done in his place—fought valiantly! Overcome by numbers, he fell; but his defeat was, as his resistance had been, heroic and glorious! Surrounded by enemies—assassins—he gave vent to his indignation, and inflicted on the marquis an irreparable affront. Too cowardly to face Monsieur de Sforzi, the marquis remits to the hands of his executioner the care of his vengeance. Will you, monsieur, allow this new crime to be committed? I cannot believe it. Blood so shed would tarnish your blazon; you would be put under the ban of the noblesse. That, mon-

seigneur, is what I had to say to you. The gratitude I owe Monsieur de Sforzi, now in danger of his life for having sustained my mother's rights, imperiously commanded me to intercede with you as I have done."

Diane impatiently awaited the reply of MONSEIGNEUR DE CANILHAC. The Governor of the province of Auvergne appeared undecided, embarrassed.

"Mademoiselle," he said at length, "I plainly recognize the fact that throughout this affair MONSEIGNEUR DE LA TREMBLAIS has acted in haughty and culpable contempt of the royal authority. I admit that his conduct is neither that of a loyal subject nor of a brave gentleman. The fate of the Chevalier Sforzi deeply affects me; but, unfortunately, it is hardly possible for me to counteract the designs of the marquis and save Monsieur de Sforzi! Do not judge me without hearing me, mademoiselle, I am going—such is the sincere and great esteem with which you have inspired me—to speak to you with perfect frankness. The high position which I occupy does not in reality give me—very far from it—the power which ought to attach to it. I am obliged, therefore, to avoid carefully all occasion for laying bare, and so destroying, the last and feeble prestige which surrounds my authority. Now, to enter upon an open struggle with the Marquis de la Tremblais would be to expose myself to certain failure. Ought I, mademoiselle, for the purpose of defending an obscure and unknown man, compromise so gravely the king's interests? I leave the question to your judgment?"

"Yes, monsieur, you ought!" cried Diane. "Better a thousand times to risk your authority than lose your honor! What right have you to enjoy the privileges and prerogatives belonging to nobility if you do not fulfil the obligations and duties imposed on you by your birth and station? 'Do what should be done, come what may,' says our motto. Now, to allow the chevalier to be assassinated without attempting to defend him is to partake the shame of the crime—to become the accomplice of the marquis!"

At these words, pronounced by Diane with generous enthusiasm, the Marquis de Canilhac knit his brows and remained silent. De Mauververt, who, so far, had held aloof from the conversation, judged the moment opportune for taking his share in it.

"Mademoiselle," he said, "I am quite of Monsieur de Canilhac's way of thinking; to compromise the authority held by him from the king would be to render himself guilty of *lèse-majesté*. You are wrong to insist."

At this timely and wholly unlooked-for approbation, MONSEIGNEUR DE CANILHAC turned towards the captain, and smiled on him agreeably.

"Monsieur," continued De Mauververt, "will it please you to accord me, now that this discussion is finished, the moment's attention you were good enough to promise me?"

"With pleasure, captain," replied the governor, readily, delighted at the diversion which extricated him from the reproaches of Diane.

"Monsieur de Canilhac," the captain went on, "you see before you a man stung with remorse—a scoundrel on the eve of committing an abominable action!"

"Of whom are you speaking, captain?"

"Of your very humble servant, Captain de Mauververt, monsieur."

"Pray explain yourself, monsieur!"

"Alas! monsieur, this explanation will cover me with shame! I have hardly courage to expose my infamy—but I will try. You are aware, monsieur, that I am at the head of the League of Equity; but you are altogether ignorant of my future projects, of my secret hopes. Now, monsieur, I must humbly confess that these projects and hopes are terribly hostile towards you. My intention is—and, I need hardly say, that unless I were well assured of success I should not now make such an admission and put you on your guard—my intention is, I say, to lay siege to your place of residence; the city of Clermont."

"To take the city of Clermont!" repeated the marquis, in a tone of astonishment, mingled with alarm. "Are you mad, captain?"

"Monsieur, if you interrupt me at every sentence I shall never have done. Will you suffer me to proceed in my own way? I am very methodical in what I say, and dislike to be interrupted. I go on: The League of Equity, monsieur, at this moment bears no sort of resemblance to what it was at its foundation. Not only have I drilled these closhoppers in the use of arms and in military discipline, but I have, moreover, contracted numerous alliances with the smaller nobility of the province. An isolated clodpole is nothing, two clodpoles leagued together begin to count for something,