

GRANDFATHER'S PROPHECY.

By MARY ROWENA COTTER.

(Continued from page Eleven.)

"Jack, dear Jack," she said in an agonizing tone which proved that he was still all the world to her, "please do not ask me such a question. I cannot bear to hear it. I still love and respect you as one of the truest friends God has given me; but if you must know the truth, I will tell you that I love you too much to have you take upon yourself the burden of a blind wife."

"Is that it, Margaret?" and could she have seen the bright smile which came over his face she would have found it hard to keep her resolution; "then I will volunteer to take what you call a burden upon myself and we shall yet be happy together."

"Jack, I would never have told you so much had you not forced it from me, but my decision has been made so please do not urge the matter further."

"Think well of what you are saying. I have prepared a home for you and I could not give it to another."

After some hesitation she said, "It is not for me to say whom you shall marry, for you have a right to choose for yourself, but"—she paused again—"I have often thought that my darling sister Nellie would make as good and true a wife as you could find. I dreaded to have her go back to the mill alone when it was built, and they sent for her, for you know that she would in spite of all we could say because she said her money was needed at home. Not only that, but she has declared that she would work until she had returned every cent you spent for me at the hospital."

"Nellie is wrong, for, the little I spent for you was a free gift which almost any of your friends here could not have denied under the circumstances, so she need not think of paying it."

Scarcely heeding his words she added, "Jack, you said you wished me to enjoy the home you have bought for me; if you marry Nellie, perhaps, when father and mother are old and I will be too much of a burden on them you may permit your wife to give a home with yourselves to her poor blind sister."

"Jack saw that Margaret was firm in her purpose and her words reminded him that there had been a time when it would have been hard to have told which of the sisters he preferred. He almost believed now that he had chosen the elder because she was nearer his own age, while Nellie had seemed like a mere child. But Nellie was a woman now as old and far more experienced in the ways of the world than her sister had been when he first asked her to be his wife. It was a long time, however, before he could bring himself to fully break his part of the engagement with Margaret; but having learned at last that Nellie could fill her place in his heart he went to the city to ask her consent.

Nellie could scarcely believe she understood aright, and she at first refused the place which should have been her sister's, but when she learned that it was Margaret's earnest wish, she gave him some hope but told him that he must wait until some of the younger children were able to take her place in helping support the family.

CHAPTER VII.

APPLE BLOSSOMS.—It was on another bright May morning five years after the girls had come home that Nellie and Jack were married with a nuptial Mass in the little church at home. The altar was decorated with pink and white apple blossoms, because Margaret had insisted upon it on account of the fragrance, which was the only beauty she could enjoy from them.

"None of the guests appeared happier than she, when she sat beside the fair bride at the table, but in the afternoon she disappeared, and the aged grandfather, who was the first to miss her, hobbled out to find her alone in the orchard, tears falling from her sightless eyes.

"Poor child," whispered the old man putting his arms around her, "I am very sorry for you."

"I know you are, grandpa, but God is just. I suppose that I should not complain because he has punished me for my pride."

"Yes, child, God is just, but it is hard to see your sweet young life being worn away like this. I can sympathize more truly with you now, for I fear that I too am growing blind."

"Poor grandpa, I hope that will never be."

"God's will be done," fervently replied the old man. "It will not be long ere we shall both have our sight in Heaven."

"I hope so, grandpa, but while we remain here we shall never be separated, and can make each other's path brighter."

"God bless you, dear child, for you indeed make my days very bright."

Both Jack and Nellie tried to prevail upon Margaret to come and live with them at once, but she refused, saying that she would never leave her grandfather, but a stronger motive, of which they remained ignorant, was that she could not visit the home her folly had caused her to lose.

During the summer Margaret's health failed rapidly, and on the approach of autumn she was confined to her bed. One morning in October, after receiving Holy Communion, which was brought to her once a week, she spoke for the first time of dying.

"Nellie," she said to her sister who sat beside her, "I fear that the end has almost come, and I want you to be very kind to grandpa when I am gone. It will not be long, for I can see that he is failing fast and he will soon follow me."

"Do not talk that way, Margaret, for I cannot bear to hear it. I know grandpa is failing, and I fear we shall soon lose him; but you, dear sister, you are young and will soon grow strong again, and after grandpa is gone you will come to live with us."

"No, Nellie, I will not, for something tells me that I must go ahead to greet dear grandpa when his time comes."

"You are too gloomy, and should not harbor such thoughts."

"I cannot help it, but it does make me a little sad to think that I must die when there are so few flowers. If I could only live until the apple trees blossom again, but I shall never see them. You will pick the first apple blossoms next spring and put them on my grave, will you not, dear sister?"

At that moment their youngest brother rushed into the room all excitement, exclaiming:

"Oh, Margaret! guess what I have found."

"I could not guess, please tell me dear. Something wonderful, I know."

"You bet it is for this time of year, and I think God made the blossoms just to please you because you are so kind to everybody."

Nellie looked in silent amazement on what her brother held in his hand and Margaret's face brightening, she said:

"I imagine that I smell apple blossoms, but it cannot be, for this is October and the trees bear only ripe fruit now."

"You are right," exclaimed the boy; "one of the greening trees in the north orchard has a whole limb all in blossom and here are two bunches for you."

She pressed the fragrant flowers to her lips thanking God for sending them to her, then handed back one bunch saying:

"There, Willie, please give them to grandpa, and tell him I send them."

The old man's sight had not entirely faded through it was very dim and he could just see the delicate flowers. He was too feeble to arise from his chair to go to thank her, for her gift, but he sent his thanks by the boy after having learned when they came from.

"It's a sure sign of death," said the old man to himself when alone, "but Margaret and I are ready so I do not care."

Before noon, with her fragrant treasure still held firmly in her hand, Margaret passed peacefully away. It was with difficulty that the stem was removed from her grasp when the undertaker came.

As she had foretold, the girl had gone before the old man, but she had been right in saying that he would not linger long behind her. They did not dare tell him at once that she was gone, when the priest came in the afternoon he was given

"The author recalls an occasion when an apple tree at her own home and two in other parts of the village blossomed in October.

the task of imparting the news as gently as possible. He did not show the expected signs of grief, but his face brightened as he said:

"It seemed too bad to have her young life darkened as it has been, and she was too young to die, but the ways of God are just. She has been the sunshine of my last days and now, I am not sorry she has gone before me."

Before dawn the old man had gone to join his darling in the bright home where they could both see for all eternity.

The double funeral, which took place two days later, was attended by a large crowd, and the little church could not hold them all. Few strangers there were who came, because they had never known two corpses to be in that church at once; but the most of them were true friends who had known and loved the old man for years, and had fairly idolized Margaret, who had borne her affliction with such angelic sweetness as to endear herself to all. What surprised everyone was that both coffins were covered with apple blossoms for every flower had been picked for that purpose.

After it was all over Nellie in speaking to the physicians said:

"Can you tell me doctor the real cause of my sister's death?"

The reply was, "Her lungs have always been weak since she was overcome by the smoke in the fire, and I knew from the first that her life at most could be prolonged but a few years."

His keen eyes had discovered more, but he never told it, for he would run no risk of marring the perfect happiness of Nellie's married life by letting her know that her sister might have lived for many years had she not pined away with a broken heart on knowing that another filled the place which but for her folly might have been hers.

THE END.

Household Notes

GETTING OUT OF BED.—Don't jump up the first thing your eyes are open. Remember that while you sleep the vital organs are at rest. The vitality is lowered and the circulation not so strong. A sudden spring out of bed is a shock to these organs, especially to the heart, as it starts to pumping the blood suddenly.

Take your time in getting up. Yawn and stretch. Wake up slowly. Give the vital organs a chance to resume their work gradually.

Notice how a baby wakes up. It stretches its arms and legs, rubs its eyes and yawns and wakes up slowly. Watch a kitten wake up. First it stretches out one leg, then another, rubs its face, rolls over and stretches the whole body. The birds do not wake up and fly as soon as their eyes are open; they shake out their wings and stretch their legs, waking up slowly. This is the natural way to wake up.

WHAT TO EAT gives some useful food tests, among them the following: When purchasing coffee gather a little in the palm of the hand and press firmly. If it sticks together in a ball, or cakes in lumps, it contains some adulterating substance. Pure coffee falls apart when the hand is opened. Butter, when heated, bubbles up and burns; oleomargarine boils cheerfully and has a distinct odor. Tiny booklets containing red and blue litmus paper are to be had at the druggists. The blue strips will readily determine whether milk has begun to sour, and will be likely to curdle if used in custards. The red strips are useful when soda is in the recipe. If too much is added the red paper turns blue. This is better than guesswork.

DRESSING.—When bread crumbs dressing is made to accompany roasted fowl, it is well to use a teaspoonful of baking powder. Mix it thoroughly through the dry crumbs before adding the other ingredients. A light and fluffy dressing is the result.

RAISIN JAM is a dainty with which few housekeepers seem to be acquainted, but one worth knowing about in a city, where little preserving is done. Wash and drain seedless raisins and to each pound allow a cupful of cold water. Cook gently for an hour, and put in a cupful of sugar to each pound of fruit. A sliced lemon with the seeds removed may also be added. Cook for one hour longer, and put away in glasses. This jam keeps well, and is liked by children.

Consider from time to time what passions are most predominant in your soul, and having discovered them, adopt such a method of thinking, speaking and acting as may counteract them.

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ST. PATRICK'S T. A. AND B. SOCIETY.—Meets on the second Sunday of every month in St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander street, at 8.30 p.m. Committee of Management meets in same hall on the first Tuesday of every month at 8 p.m. Rev. Director, Rev. Jas. Kiloran; President, W. P. Doyle; Recording Secy., Jno. P. Gunning, 716 St. Antoine street, St. Henri.

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ST. ANN'S YOUNG MEN'S SOCIETY organized 1885.—Meets in its hall, 157 Ottawa street, on the first Sunday of each month, at 2.30 p.m. Spiritual Adviser, Rev. Father Flynn, C.S.S.R.; President, R. J. Byrne; Treasurer, Thomas O'Connell; Rec.-Sec., Robt. J. Hart.

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C.M.B.A. OF CANADA, BRANCH 26.—(Organized, 18th November, 1873.—Branch 26 meets at St. Patrick's Hall, 92 St. Alexander St., on every Monday of each month. The regular meetings for the transaction of business are held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, at 8 p.m. Spiritual Adviser, Rev. M. Callaghan; Chancellor, F. J. Sears; President, P. J. Darcey; Rec.-Sec., P. J. McDonagh; Fin.-Secretary, Jas. J. Costigan; Treasurer, J. H. Feeley, Jr.; Medical Adviser, Drs. H. J. Harrison, E. J. O'Connell and G. H. Merrill.

Vol. LIII, No. SHAMROCK

REV. V.

It affords the "True Witness" pleasure to reproduce a message of the zealous and good of St. Gabriel's parish, who presided at an enthusiastic reception and banquet, tendered parishioners to the Shamrock Team, champions on Wednesday evening in the parish.

The ladies of the parish, and carried out all the undertaking are deserving praise for the successful chivalry. After full justice done to the feast, Father proposed the first toast of "The King." Then the Chairman welcome the "The Only Team," in which left no room for doubt as to the "Boys that Wear Green" was a source of the greatest pleasure to realize that his parishioners in no small measure of the team by giving members to its ranks.

NOTES

CONVERSIONS.—That regular and increasing flow higher and more learned both in England and America. There is no current, and the days each bringing some fresh until now surprise is not but rather "matter of course" the conversion of the Rev. son, son of the late Archbishop Canterbury, in England, and Mr. De Costa, the eminent Canadian clergyman of New York seems to have grown more and more sweeping.

It has become a problem for circles to discover a solution for this wonderful marked change. Of course, Catholic standpoint there is a radical and fundamental change which may be summed up in words:—"The designs of Providence." But apart from this, we others, seek for the second or rather those that are of character. Several may be said; but there is one above