My Fellow Laborer.

By H. RIDER HAGGARD.

CHAPTER V.—(CONTINUED.)

"The work must take care of itself, Geoffrey. You must discover the Secret of Life yourself; or perhaps you had better put the whole thing in the fire and go back to practice. At any rate, it has served my turn, and I have done with it!"

"I don't understand you!" I answered, sinking into a chair. "Perhaps if you are not in too great a hurry you will explain a little."

"Of course I will, when I have poured out your tea. There now, listen, and I will give you a lesson in human nature, which, with all your brains, you very much want, Geoffrey. I have been in this house for fourteen years, and I will begin by telling you that from the day that I came in till to-day when I go out, you have never understood me in the least. You have always looked upon me as a simple-minded woman of intellectual capacity, and with a genius for mathematics, and no aims beyond the discovery of scientific secrets. Now, I will tell you. When I first came to this house as a girl of fourteen, I fell in love with you. You need not look astonished—young girls sometimes do that sort of thing. You were good looking in those days, and very clever, as you are now; and then you were really and truly a gentleman, and one sees so few gentlemen—I always think they are the scarcest people in the world!

"Well, I nursed my secret passion and held it so tight that neither you nor your wife even guessed it. Even in those days I could form a clear opinion, and I saw that she would not live long, and that the time would come when I should step into her shoes. So I played upon her weak points, to strengthen my hold over her, and waited. In due course the time came. You were a long time before you proposed to me after her death, and your head was so full of your work that I believe yould would have been longer, had I not, by means that were imperceptible to you, kept continually turning your mind into that channel. Even then you did not love me as I wanted to be loved; but I knew that this would come after marriage. And then came the crash, and the sudden appearance of an obstacle against which no scheme of mine could prevail, overwhelmed and confused me, filling me with a sense of impotence that I have never experienced before or since. If you could know, Geoffrey, what a flood of unutterable contempt rushed into my mind, as I heard you maundering on about your scruples and posterity! It drowned my passion. I felt that I was well rid of a man who could in cold blood give me up to satisfy what he was pleased to call his conscience! But perhaps you will never quite know or understand how near I went to killing you that night!"

Here I started—the whole thing was like a nightmare. Fanny laughed.

"Don't be frightened," Fanny went on; "there's nothing more melodramatic to come. I am glad to say that prudential considerations prevailed! Well, after that fiasco, I reviewed the position and determined to stay on—partly from habit, partly on account of John—partly, indeed chiefly, because I was still foolish enough to believe in the Secret of Life business, and foresaw that when it did succeed my name would be made, and that I should then, backed as I am by my personal appearance and capacities, be able to marry whom I liked, or, if I preferred it, not to marry, but to follow any career in life that might recommend itself to me.

"At last, however, the end came. I lost all faith in our work, and saw that you and I had only been making fools of ourselves; and consequently I determined to sever a connection that could not bring me credit or profit,either now or in the future, and, being a woman, the only way that I could possibly sever it with advantage was by marriage. For a long time I could not fall in with anybody rich enough; when at last a happy accident brought the man within my reach—by the way, I had thought of him for several years—and, of course, I took my chance, and married him before anybody could interfere. What is more, I actually persuaded him to enter into an engagement to settle four thousand a year to my separate use; so you see I shall in reality be totally independent of the man!"

"And what do you mean to do with yourself now?" I asked, feebly.

"Do! I mean to bask in the sunshine and drink the wine of life—to know what pleasure and power mean, to live and become rich and great, and avenge myself upon everybody who has ever slighted or injured me! Oh, yes, I shall do it, too! I shall use even that miserable little Joseph, whom I just now had the pleasure of promising to love, honor and obey, as a means to advance myself. He is a poor creature, but sharp enough to be a member of Parliament, you know.

"That reminds me, ... is waiting for me at his club; he was afraid to come back and face you, so I must be going. Well, good-bye, Geoffrey; I hope that you will think kindly of me sometimes, notwithstanding it all, and although I have for the first time in my life indulged in the luxury of telling you everything that is in my mind. Ah, you don't know what a luxury it is to be able to speak the truth just for once! Do you know now that I am going to leave you—it is very odd—but I almost feel as though I loved you again, as I used to do so many years ago! At least I am glad to have spent all this time with you, though I was often dreary enough, because I know that I shall never meet a man like you again, and my mind leaves you hardened and braced and polished by contact with your bright intellect, and by the constant study and application you have insisted on till it has become a second nature to me. I shall miss you, Geoffrey, but not so much as you will miss me. You will be miserable without me, and no other woman can ever fill my place, because I do not believe that you can find any who is my equal in intellectual resource. You see what happens to people who indulge in scruples! Are you not sorry that you did not marry me now?"

"Fanny," I answered, solemnly, for by this time I comprehended the whole horror of the position, "I thank the Providence which preserved me from joining my life to that of a woman so wicked as yourself!"

"Really, Geoffrey, you are quite energetic! I suppose that you are piqued at my going. Well, I must be going, but before I go I will lay down a little axiom for your future guidance; I fear you will think it cynical, but the truth is often cynical. 'Never trust a woman again. Remember that she always has a motive. If she is under twenty-five, seek for it in her passions; after that in her self interest.'"

At this moment her face changed, and as it did I heard the tap! tap! of poor John's crutches as he came down the passage. The door opened and the boy entered—a feeble, undersized lad, with a pinched-up white face and a pair of beautiful blue eyes.

"Cousin Fanny," he said (he always called her cousin), as he entered, "where are you? I have been looking for you everywhere. Why have they been taking away your big box? You are not going away to stay without me, are you?"

"Your cousin is going away for good, John," I said; and next moment I regretted it, for it was dreadful to see the look of agony that came upon the poor lad's face. He loved Fanny with all the strength of his sensitive and exaggerated nature, and for years had scarcely been able to bear her absence, even for a day.

"Oh, no! no!" he screamed, hobbling up to her and catching hold of her dress in his hands. "Don't say you're going, cousin! You can't go and leave me behind."

"Geoffrey," she said in a choked voice, "let me take the boy with me. He is my weak point. I love him as though he were my own. Let me take him. He shall be looked after!"

"I had rather see him dead!" I answered, sternly, little guessing how soon I should be taken at my word. She stooped down and kissed the lad, and then turned and went swiftly—almost at a run. He seized his crutches and limped down the passage after her at an astonishing pace, calling her by name as he went, till presently one of the crutches slipped, and he fell helpless upon the stone flooring, and lay there, still screaming to her through the hall door, which she slammed behind her. When I reached him he was in a fit!

The whole thing formed the most horrible, and in its way the most tragic scene that I ever saw; and I often dream of it even now. And here I may add that my poor boy never recovered from the shock. He lingered three months and then died in his sleep, apparently from pure inanition. Well, it was a merciful release from a life of almost constant pain!

That was the last time that I ever saw Fanny Denelly, or rather Fanny Hide-Thompson.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN John had temporarily recovered under the treatment that I had applied, seeing that I could do nothing else for him, I gave him a sleeping draught, and as soon as it had taken effect, I went down stairs into the study in a very strange state of mind. I felt as though I had received some dreadful physical shock. I had believed in and trusted Fanny as I had trusted no other woman on earth, except my dear wife, and the lurid light in which she now suddenly revealed herself after these long years positively staggered and blinded me! And yet, after it all, I was astonished to find that I remained fond of the woman and missed her dreadfully. Indeed, it was a year or more before I got over the feeling, and then I only did it by the exercise of great self-control. I had grown to depend upon her so entirely that her help and society seemed a necessity to me, quite alone as I was in the world. Indeed, had it not been for my own rather well-developed pride, I do not think I should ever have got over it. But this came to the rescue. I could not bear to reflect that I was intellectual and socially bound to the chariot wheels of a woman who had for years been making a tool of me, and who was, after all, my inferior. And so by degrees I did get over it; but it has left its mark on me—yes, it has left its mark!

And then it was on that same disastrous morning that a wonder happened, so strangely and opportunely, that I have at times been almost inclined to attribute it to the direct interference of Providential Power. When I was worn out with thinking, I turned to my work, more from habit than anything else, I think, only to be once more overcome by the reflection that there too I was helpless. The work could not go on without the calculations, and who was to do them now that Fanny had deserted me? I could not, and it would be the task of years to teach anybody else, however clever, for the understanding of them had grown with the experience. Besides, this I could never afford to pay a man of the necessary ability. It appeared, therefore, that there was an end of my search for the Secret of Life, to which I had devoted the best years of my precarious existence. It was all but labor lost, and would benefit neither myself nor mankind. This conviction rushed upon me as I stood there by the pile of papers, then for the first time I quite broke down under the accumulated weight of sorrows, and, putting my hands before my face, I sobbed like a child! The paroxysm passed, and with it passed, too, all my high ambitions. I must give it up, and go back a failure to what little practice I could get, until such time as the end came.

CHAPTER VII.

AS I stooped to gather up the various papers, I noticed that on the table before me lay a great sheet of Fanny's calculations, which she had been employed upon the previous night. The top of the sheet was covered with two dense armies of figures and symbols, marching this way and that, but toward the bottom they thinned out wonderfully, till there remained two little lines only of those that had survived the crooked ways of mathematical war. Evidently she had laid down her pen (as she sometimes would) just before the termination of the problem, which I was aware she had been engaged on for several days. I knew but little of the higher mathematics, but I could see if the left-hand line were subtracted from the right, the difference would be the result sought for, provided the problem had been worked out without error. I took a pencil and did this idly enough. The first time I made a mistake, but even with the mistake the result was sufficiently startling to make me rub my eyes. I did it again, and then sank back into the chair behind me with a gasp, and trembling as though I had unwittingly raised a ghost!

And no wonder. For there before me was the Key to the great Secret for which we had been wearily seeking so many years! There was no mistake about it! I knew what it ought to be, and what conditions it must fulfill; and there it was, the last product of scores of sheets of abstruse calculations based upon laws that could not lie. There it was! She had stopped just short of it, and at length I had triumphed!—the fast obstacle to success, complete, absolute success, was gone! I had wrung the answer to the great question which torments the world from the stony heart of the almighty law that governs it!

"If she had known this, Fanny would not have gone!" I said aloud, and then, what between one thing and another, I fainted!

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Sparrow's Ride in a Fly Wheel.

Birds have all sorts of queer adventures, but perhaps what was the oddest one of recent days is that which befell a sparrow at Anderson, Ind. It flew into a knife and bar manufactory, and, getting too near a small wheel, was sucked in. The workmen noticed it go into the wheel, but knowing that the cylinder was revolving at a speed of 130 revolutions a minute, took it for granted that the bird was killed. When the factory shut down at noon the men were astonished to hear a gentle chirp from the wheel, and lo, there was the sparrow as well as ever. They found that the bird had clung to the strengthening rod of the wheel, and was in a semi-dazed condition. They picked him up and put him on a table, and thence, after collecting his wits, the little bird flew to freedom. The wheel in which the bird rode made 31,000 revolutions while it was upon it, and so the tiny feathered creature traveled seventy-three and eight-tenths miles in the embrace of a fly wheel.

A Queer-Looking Word.

Supposing that you had been born blind, and after living many years shut out from the beautiful things of the world, some skilled surgeon should give to you your sight, wouldn't you have some marvelous experiences? says the Chicago Record. An old man who had been born blind had his sight thus restored to him. At first he started violently and was afraid of the strange things around him, the hugeness of his room and its contents. One of the first things he saw at the window was a flock of sparrows. "What are they?" asked the physician.

"I think they are teacups," was the reply.

A watch was then shown to him and he knew what it was, probably because he heard it tick. Later, on seeing the flame of a lamp, he tried to pick it up, not having the slightest idea of its nature.

A Great Help.

Mrs. Poorman—It has been a hard winter, ma'am. My three grown girls have been very little help to me. The poor things are not strong enough to do the washing and they haven't clothes good enough to apply for any work. District Visitor—But, you say they have rich relatives; don't they look after them? Mrs. Poorman (sadly)—Only their morals, ma'am—only their morals.—Goshen Democrat.

Almost Uncanny.

Yeast—We've got a new cook that's a wonder. Crimsonbeak—What's the matter with her? "She's been in the house three weeks and no one has heard her say what make wheel she rides."—Yonkers Statesman.

GOODCROPS AND PRICE

PROSPERITY RAPIDLY RETURNING TO THE LAND.

Talk With a Distinguished Statesman and Agricultural Expert—B. W. Snow Has Some Interesting Views on Conditions and Prospects.

Washington, D. C., Aug. 1, 1897.

It is seldom that the entire country is blessed with such an abundance as this year. In no section is there reported "no crops." Illinois has pehaps the poorest wheat yield but her corn crop is magnificent and the small losses from winter killed wheat sections do not amount to anything in the grand total yield.

Mr. B. W. Snow, the ex-assistant statistician of the department of agriculture, who is still making a specialty of agricultural statistics, said, in speaking of the great agricultural wealth of the country at this time: "With the bountiful crops throughout the United States not in prospect but actually in hand, with increased and increasing consumption at home and a larger foreign demand for American products and with prices on the up grade even while the crops are still on the farms, this year of 1897 will be remembered as a year of great agricultural prosperity and plenty."

"Harvesting is so far advanced, Mr. Snow, that it is no longer a matter of estimate and conjecture as to the yield, but in many cases you have the actual approximate figures?"

"Yes. The crop season is now so far advanced that the final results can be safely promised. Nevertheless the result is no less pleasing than the earlier prospective hopes of the most optomistic. In no line of agricultural production is it a light year and in most the yields are heavy. Hay has rarely flourished as it has this year. The abundant rains have given us a very unusual crop and hay is a more important crop than usually thought. The rates of the new tariff law thoroughly protect our farmers in this respect. The year's wheat crop is the second largest in the history of the country, running upwards of 500,000,000 bushels and well distributed over the country. The corn crop promises to be a very large one. The oat crop is also well above the average. All the minor crops are in promising form. The fruit crop generally promises good results. But these facts of large yield and good promise do not tell the whole story of prosperity. Prolific crops have been harvested before, but in some cases, have for want of consumption and demand, proven a burden rather than a blessing. It was a common saying that the farmer would rather have small crops with good prices than large crops and no prices. But this year come the abundant crops and high prices, a rare combination and one calculated to warm the cockles of the heart of the thrifty farmer. Prices are high and inclining upward. There is no reason to fear a reaction and slump because of the actual conditions of the world's crops. The United States holds the key to prices. The wheat crop of the world is known to be about 100,000,000 bushels short. Argentina, India and Australia have no surplus and Russia practically none. Great Britain, France and Germany are far short in their production of their home demand. There was an American surplus of last year's crop of 70,000,000 bushels and the fortunate thing is that this is in the hands of the farmer. The advanced position of wheat developed before the farmer had disposed of his wheat to buyers and now he will reap the full benefit of the advance."

"Is not the present crop larger than was expected sometime ago, Mr. Snow?"

"It is, and the quality is of the finest. In winter killed sections the wheat braced up wonderfully. Fields in Illinois whose plowing under was contemplated early in the season have made very fair yields and others with a supposed small yield have shown by the thresher enormous returns. The actual increase in money in the hands of the farmers through their wheat holdings throughout the country is an enormous sum. Wheat is worth now about 20 cents a bushel more than the crop last year and the advance for this year has just begun. The market will continue to rise. The increased value of the wheat crop of Kansas alone this year in comparison with last amounts to nearly or quite $25,000,000, while the increased value of the country's crop at present prices is in excess of $100,000,000 over that of last year."

"What are the corn outlooks, Mr. Snow?"

"Most gratifying. Although the season started late the yield will be large. 2,000,000,000 bushels is a fair estimate as the acreage is the largest ever planted. Every indication points to advancing prices in corn. Last year at this time prices were shrinking at the prospect of a large crop; this year the tendency is upward. Millions of bushels of old corn now lie in the cribs in the west and with rising prices for this as well as the new crop, there can be but one result."

"All along the line of agricultural production, including all live stock, there is a general steady increase. Large new flocks of sheep are contemplated as a result of the wool tariff and the demand has increased the value of the sheep holdings of the country $10,000,000.

"But the finest point in all these increases is the fact that they come at a time when the farmer holds his products and that he individually will reap the full benefit. I have a little table here prepared some days ago for publication which shows the improvement in cash values of leading farm products. They are recent Chicago quotations for 1897 in comparison with those exactly one year ago:

	1896	1897.
Wheat	.58	.77
Corn	.25⅝	.27⅝
Oats	.18	.17
Rye	.29	.39
Barley	.27	.31
Flaxseed	.73	.83
Hogs	$2.90 to $3.20	$3.40 to $3.60
Cattle	$3.95 to $4.30	$4.40 to $4.90
Sheep	$2.00 to $3.80	$2.35 to $4.00

"In these articles named, with the single exception of flaxseed this year's supply is larger than that of last and the supply, as I have said, is in the hands of the producer."

G. H. WILLIAMS.

"Come In Out of the Wet Johnnie."

The Outlook for Wool.

We congratulate the American wool growers upon their outlook. After nearly five years of steady depreciation in the value of sheep and wool, brought about solely by the Democratic policy of free trade in wool, our American sheep owners will have protection restored to their agricultural industry and with it, we trust, an increase in the number and value of their flocks. While we wish no harm to Australian sheep owners, the following extract from the monthly wool circular of Messrs. Goldsbrough, Mort & Co., of Melbourne, dated May 7, is of interest:

The pastoral position almost throughout Australia is at present one of great gravity; the severity of the drought is almost as acute as it is widespread. The preservation of stock requires incessant effort, and mortality is increasing with painful rapidity, while the prospects of a lambing season have seldom, if ever, been more unpromising.

Even in stronger confirmation of the unfavorable outlook for the Australian flocks, with a consequent decrease in the production of Australian wool, is the following extract from a printed letter dated at Sydney, Australia, May 8:

"Here we are passing through a severe drought—one of the worst experienced for many, many years, and I think that nearly the whole crop of lambs will be lost and possibly eight to ten millions more sheep, so that you may look for the numbers in this colony (New South Wales) going down from 47 millions at December 31 last year to about 35 to 37 millions at the end of this year, because, even though rain may come now, there must be a tremendous mortality as the ewes are lambing and the sheep generally are in a very weak condition in most parts of the colony. The bad season will also militate largely against the crops."

If it be possible to collect a duty upon all foreign wool imported in anticipation of the enactment of a protective tariff, either in such manner as has been suggested by Senator Warren or by an internal revenue tax, then the improvement in the outlook for all American wool interests will be even quicker, stronger and surer.

That "Endless Chain" Smashed.

The eagerness of importers to evade the new tariff had one noteworthy result. It smashed the Cleveland invention, that the drain of gold from the treasury was due to our currency, which furnished an "endless chain" for the drawing out of gold. The currency is the same to-day it was when Messrs. Cleveland and Carlisle were casting about for any reason but the true one to account for their bond sales. The currency is the same and the treasury is not drawn upon for gold exceptionally. The reason is the treasury has money enough to meet the government's expenses. Republicans said all the while the drain of gold and the bond sales were due to the tariff for deficit and would cease as soon as revenue receipts equaled expenses.—Utica, N. Y., Herald.

Democrats Not Free Traders.

There are a great many editors and a few public men who have deceived themselves into believing that the democratic party is a free trade party. We need not pause here to inquire how so confusing an error got afoot. It is sufficient to say that the time has come to correct it.—"Constitution," Atlanta, Ga.

We are indeed very glad to hear it, and gladly do our part toward correcting the misapprehension by giving the above Democratic statement the widest possible circulation among our exchanges and through our various press services.

M'LEAN A GOLD BUG.

Mr. McLean, it appears, has quite as great a fondness for gold as those other gentlemen with whom he vies in his alleged friendship for silver. While he evidently considers silver good enough for the poor man, he does not consider it good enough for John R. McLean.

There are plenty of evidences of this in Mr. McLean's business transactions in the District of Columbia. In his investments, which have been numerous and large here, he has, where possible, selected those payable in gold, and has even gone so far as to discard any silver obligations which may have incidentally fallen into his hands, so soon as he found opportunity. An instance is related in which a few years ago he purchased a number of bonds of the District of Columbia of two classes. These purchases were made indiscriminately without reference to the classes of bonds, but were soon followed by a sale by McLean of a number of those which he had apparently bought as a permanent investment. Observation as to the class of bonds of which he was disposing disclosed that he invariably retained the gold bonds and disposed of those which were not specifically made payable in gold coin, although they were guaranteed by the United States. Mr. McLean has made no concealment of his motive in these transactions, saying frankly that he wanted the obligations which he held as an investment payable in gold. On another occasion, when one of Mr. Bland's silver measures was pending in congress, and there seemed a probability that it might become a law, it is related on good authority that Mr. McLean hurriedly disposed of large quantities of United States bonds, taking gold coin in exchange therefor and depositing it in the vaults of one of the great safe deposit establishments of this city, piling up many thousands of dollars of the yellow metal against the possibility of legislation in favor of silver, which, however, did not take place.

There are plenty of circumstances of this kind which might be detailed to show Mr. McLean's personal fondness for the yellow metal and his unwillingness to accept obligations which could be paid in silver, of which he now poses as a champion. While these are interesting and plentiful, they are omitted on this occasion in order to give space for the details of a single transaction showing his fondness for gold and distrust of the other classes of currency which he and his associates in Ohio are now seeking to force upon the masses.

The transaction in question is that of a contract made by him with the Columbia Athletic club of this city in 1889, in which he requires that organization to make sundry obligations, amounting to $70,000, payable to him individually in gold coin, both principal and interest.

The transaction related to the construction of a club house for this organization, the Columbia Athletic club of the District of Columbia. In that year he made an agreement with the club by which he sold to it certain lots in the fashionable northwest part of Washington, near the War, State, and Navy Departments, and erected thereupon a commodious and costly club house, the price of the land and the club house being $70,000. This money the club agreed to pay on or before the 1st of March, 1909, and issued bonds payable to John R. McLean, bearing his name upon their face. These bonds he required the club to agree to pay in "gold coin of the United States of the present standard of weight and fineness," also requiring it to pay the "interest thereon in like gold coin."

There can be no doubt about the accuracy of this statement. The bonds were prepared and signed by the officers of the club and turned over to him, and some of them have since passed into the hands of other parties who now hold them. Not only are these bonds still extant and readily obtainable by those who desire to verify this statement, but a still more permanent and unimpeachable record of this transaction is found upon the official records of the District of Columbia. The details of the entire transaction between Mr. McLean and the Columbia Athletic club are set forth in a copy of a deed of trust given in connection with this transaction.

Turned Over a New Leaf.

The Lot of the Workers.

In the United States, as well as in Germany and Belgium, the lot of the workers is, upon the whole, more favorable than that of the British iron and steel worker.—Newcastle, England, "Journal."

Precisely so, because the policy of protection in Germany, Belgium and the United States improves the condition of wage earners. British free trade, on the other hand, impoverishes their condition.