

In the Fowler's Snare

By M. B. MANWELL

CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

"It's our only chance, certainly!" instantly agreed the last comer. "If we silly-shally over the doing of it much longer, we shall die like rats in a hole, as the guard says!"

"Then we'd better tear these obstinate fools off the engine and man it ourselves!" suggested a frantic passenger. "We can rush it through somehow!"

"Not so!" was the calm answer. "Our only chance in rushing the danger is the speed. Now, if I and you, all amateurs, man the engine and bungle the thing, the chance is we should roast before we get quite through the flames."

"Now, ladies and gentlemen"—he turned courteously to the passengers surging round—"I must ask you to trust your bodies to me, and your souls—well, according to your several creeds!"

With a strangely harsh, empty laugh, the stranger ascended the engine, turning his dark face to say peremptorily: "Take your places aboard the train instantly, every man, woman and child!"

"Now, my friends, I'll tackle you!" He faced round to the engine men.

So near was the train to the fire that the heat was insufferable—the faces of the men were almost skinned.

"Warm work, my hearties, this!" the stranger said, almost cheerfully, as he beat the hot air slowly with waving hands, and pressed his face closer to the scorched visages on the engine.

"You get off this engine, mister!" furiously began the driver. "I'll brain any man who tries to boss—"

The wrathful words ended in a sudden sigh, and the driver's arms fell softly at his sides as the invader of the engine turned to the stoker, a powerfully built man.

"You heard what my mate said, didn't yer?" struck in the man. "You git off, or I'll—I'll—" There was the same singular collapse, the same lamb-like attitude. Both grim men stood motionless and meek facing the intruder.

"Just so," observed the last equably. Then, leaning over, his strident voice changed harshly along the snow shed: "Every soul aboard? Keep all windows and doors fast for your lives!"

"What is it, Gervis? Are we safe yet?" faintly whispered Gladly. The girl, who had only seemed to shake off her curious attack of insensibility within the last few minutes, was staring vaguely round the car.

She wondered idly why most of the women were on their knees, and why the little children were clasped so frantically to their mothers. Surely the tiny creatures would be smothered in such embraces.

And why was Gervis, her husband, breathing in that curiously labored fashion, as if he had been running hard?

Then she became aware, as he laid his cheeks against her own, that his face was wet and cold, clammy perspiration.

"Gervis!" she cried, a vague alarm awakening her at last, "speak to me!"

"Can't you pray, Gladly?" whispered Gervis, and the clasp of his arms tightened round his wife.

"Pray, Gervis? What do you mean?" wonderingly said Gladly. And Gervis drew his brows together.

And yet was it not better that she should know, poor little Gladly in her newly wedded happiness?

Outside the cars, now tightly closed, the men on the engine, who were going to fight the flames doggedly, were grimly and rapidly making ready.

The heat had become intolerable, and redly glowing sparks were showering down the blazing roof. The peril was already so deadly that there was no choice. A dash for dear life must be made!

Suddenly a great tongue of flame darted along the roof with a hissing sound. The haggard, white faces in the cars could distinguish every timber in the shed's wooden walls in the new glare. The fire was gaining with a deadly sureness.

"Quick, men! We are taking our lives in our hands! Here, reach me that bale of waterproofing! We must divide it between us to cover as much of our persons as we can!"

It was a sharp, vibrating voice, with a note of command, that hastily ordered.

Then came the hoarse order for which the cowed engine men were meekly waiting.

"Ready? Then go! Top speed!"

The long train, with its large cars, creaked and groaned; the tongues of flame darted upward hissing; the burning rafters cracked and snapped; the smoke rolled along in heavy clouds that choked all who rode on the ill-fated train.

"God in His mercy, help us! We're off!"

The train was cutting its way through the sheet of flame that had walled it in.

CHAPTER IV.

It was over—this daring venture—and over safely!

Outside in the open, in the clear cold air of the starless night, the long train drew up under the softly falling flakes of feathery snow.

Half-paralyzed men and fainting women in the cars knew they were safe, and there was a brief hush, while sobbing thanksgivings broke from lips

that seldom pray. Then there was a rush to examine the cars, which had, providentially, not caught fire.

"So far as we know, we are all saved," was the thankful chorus that went round, as the passengers stood about on the snow stamping their feet.

"How on earth did we get our here, mate?" was the hoarse whisper from one of the blackened, smoked figures wrapped in waterproof on the engine.

"I don't know!" was the answer. "I thought we was bound to roast in the fire, but here we are! Beats all!"

"That's so; but we're safe; that's good enough for me, anyhow!"

"The sooner you people get aboard the cars again the better."

It was a courteous, almost conciliatory voice, but it was the same that a short time before had given the word of command that saved the trainful of human beings. Instantly the speaker was surrounded and a torrent of thanks assailed his ears.

"Pray, don't overwhelm me!" He raised his long, lean hands deprecatingly. "What have I done? Merely suggested a way out of the difficulty."

But his modesty was overruled. The overwrought passengers found an outlet for their agitation in demanding the name of their preserver, in order, they said, "to add it to our prayers, and teach it to our little ones."

"My name is Paul Ansdell," politely said the stranger. Then he added hurriedly, as if to choke off any further questions: "I am a scientist by profession, and am at present traveling for material regarding a subject suggested by the society to which I have the honor to belong. I hope I have explained to your satisfaction, ladies and gentlemen."

Under the courteous tones there was a distinct element of mockery, which served to chill the warm gratitude of the passengers. In twos and threes they dispersed, some to get aboard the train into the shelter and comfort and warmth; others to stand in the snow and watch with awe the roaring flames now mercifully behind them.

"The weather tonight is so dry-cold, even for the time o' year, that the fire has got a firm hold. The whole shed's doomed," said the guard. "It's bin a wonderful deliverance from an awful death, gentlemen. We've need to thank God on our knees."

The man looked round on the groups huddled together on the snow, which the roaring fire lighted up around them.

And, indeed, the delivered passengers were, each in his or her own way, thanking God.

Here a young mother, her soft arms round a little child, knelt in the snow murmuring. Near her a clergyman was, with lips rapidly moving, thanking God for his safety.

Here, again, an iron gray-haired man stood bowed for a few seconds to offer up his thanks for the frail invalid wife, the love of his youth, whom he had just lifted back into the car.

It was indeed a solemn sight, the little thanksgiving service out on the snowy plains, upon which the grim mountains frowned down through the small, dry flakes of falling snow.

"Now it strikes me we should do well to be getting ahead. The night is upon us, and I can tell you it will take us all we can to stand the colds of midnight and early morning."

It was the voice of Paul Ansdell that broke the spell. He was standing with arms folded on the rear platform of the cars, looking down with half-shut eyes upon the reverently bowed heads of his fellow travelers. No meaning for him had this communing with the Divine Creator, who had stretched out a helping hand in the grave peril.

Had any cry broken from his lips to ascend on high it would have been the exceeding bitter one of the Psalmist: "Lord, why castest Thou off my soul? Why hidest Thou Thy face from me?"

But it was many a year since this man had abandoned prayer. He was not an unbeliever in one sense, for no man knew better than Paul Ansdell that there exists an over-ruling Power, who moves and shapes humanity at His will. Otherwise it would have been the worse for his fellow men, seeing that Paul Ansdell held certain ill-gotten secrets that would have ended himself with an illimitable dominion over the lives and the fortunes of others. But as it was he gnashed his teeth over the checkmates that blocked his wicked way and protected his victims. So far the man had faith in his larger and bolder flights.

The two aims he lived for were to win a colossal fortune, and to preserve his life as long as possible. To die, to crumble into dust, was to him a hideous prospect, and he had no other—his creed forbade all such. To save himself more than his companions he had put forth his utmost strength of will. He had succeeded strangely, even marvelously. Paul Ansdell smiled contentedly as he leaned, strangely exhausted for a man who had simply lifted his voice, not his hands, to the rescue. He was congratulating himself that his will power was increasing enormously. Then he heard a hurried voice at his ear.

"Mr. Ansdell, I've brought my wife to thank you for your splendid bravery in saving the whole lot of us." Gervis Templeton was saying earnestly, and his hand was pressing the shoulder of Paul, who wheeled sharply around, to glance for one swift second at the lit-

tle shrinking figure behind Gervis. Then his eyes turned away to the flame-reddened snow.

"Come, Gladly, this is the hero of the hour. Haven't you a word to give him?"

Gladly must have heard her husband's urgent whisper, and yet she spoke not a syllable. Silently and wistfully the girlish bride was gazing up into the dark face of Paul Ansdell. It was as though her soul was dumbly questioning that of the man who had saved her life.

"Dear, say something!" In the lowered voice of Gervis there was a peremptory note. He was annoyed at his wife's extraordinary awkwardness as much as he was puzzled. What could the man think of her? The thought crossed his mind as he took Gladly's cold, small fingers in his to encourage her. But Paul's attention as well as Paul's eyes were being given to the outside world.

"I fear we're going to have a night of it, perhaps another chapter of accidents—who knows?—for the snow will be tremendously deep at certain curves I know of ahead," he said. And, under cover of his words, Gladly drew her hand from that of her husband, and slipped back into the drawing-room car. She was the only one of the passengers who had failed to offer thanks to the rescuer of the train. The cars were moving off on their journey once again, and the men were chatting to one another.

"Not so bad for the first move in the game!"

The triumphant words whispering from the lips of Paul Ansdell as he sat alone in the smoking compartment, leaning back in his chair, his dark, baleful eyes watching the smoke wreaths lazily rising over his head.

CHAPTER V.

Paul Ansdell was right in his surmises. The scientist, as a rule, was right somehow. The fine, feathery snow resolved itself into a perfect blizzard a few hours later, and the train, after plunging through deep drifts, cutting its way gallantly, was brought to a standstill.

Fortunately they were close to a prairie station when the stoppage took place.

"We must make the best of it," cheerfully agreed the passengers. "There's plenty to eat and drink aboard the train, thank goodness, and we can get out and stretch our legs without any danger of being lost in the snow, for it's hard as iron."

"Will you come out and take a turn with me?" pleasantly asked Paul Ansdell, coming over to Gervis Templeton, who was staring disconsolately out of the window.

Gladly had chosen to remain in her berth for breakfast, and showed as yet no inclination to leave it.

"I should like it above all things!" the young Englishman eagerly said. And presently the two men, wrapped up to the eyes, were tramping over the shining, snowy expanse beyond the little station.

"Are you going to make any stay at Montreal?" asked Paul carelessly.

"Not over a few days, to see the place," was the answer. "I am taking my wife to England to spend Christmas in the old home, so our time is limited. Otherwise there's nothing I should like better than to winter in the Dominion. It's a glorious land, and Gladly, my wife, would have revelled in the ice carnival and all the other delights of a Montreal winter. But it can't be helped. My people are eager to see and know her. We have not been long married, you see," he added, a little lamely.

"I know," curtly said Paul Ansdell. "I was in 'Frisco when your wedding took place; and I knew old Hiram Fairweather, your wife's father—personally, I mean. A sharp, astute old chap, that. Made his pile, eh?"

(To be continued.)

SOME ARE ODD.

Geographical Names Out in Arkansas.

A commercial traveler recently returned from a trip through Arkansas was speaking the other day of the nomenclature of the towns and counties of that state. "As a township name," said he, "nothing seems so popular as a name ending in 'creek.' There are Beech, Mill, Barren, Dutch, Long, Big, Peter, Clear, Pierre, Flat, Crooked, Sugar and Day creeks scattered through the state as townships. There are Eagle and War Eagle townships, and one is named after Grover Cleveland. Yell is both a township and county name, but the people are not particularly noisy in those places, in spite of the name. Many names are reminders of the old French occupation, such as Petit Jean, Terre Noir, Fayette, Lagrue, De Bastrop and St. Francis, names of townships. Sugarloaf seems to be a popular name for towns in Arkansas, why, I do not know; and one community calls itself by the intensely prosaic name of Railroad. Colonel Bowie, he of the celebrated knife, has his name perpetuated by a township name, and so has Daniel Boone and Bryan. The population of Arkansas is now ninety times what it was when the first census was taken of it, in 1820, but the increase has been slow in the last decade compared with previous ones. The population has increased in the last ten years only 16 1/2 per cent, while in the ten years before the increase was over 40 1/2 per cent."

Precious Woods Wasted.

Rosewood and mahogany are so plentiful in Mexico that some of the copper mines there are timbered with rosewood, while mahogany is used as fuel for the engines.



The train due at Paris Junction at 9:35 was ten minutes late on Thanksgiving morning. As it halted before the little station, which stood amid bare brown fields at the crossing of the two railroads, a gentleman and a lady stepped to the platform.

The lady gathered her sealskin cape around her and hurried into the depot. She was a plump, middle-aged woman with a clear, dark face. When the gentleman entered the room, she was addressing the station agent.

"How long before the next train west on the other road?" she asked in a voice of peculiar sweetness.

The man started and drew nearer. "There won't be 'nother train till 4:10."

"But there is one due in a few minutes."

"It's gone. Your train was late."

She gasped. "What am I to do? I must be at Latimer before 2."

"I don't know."

She turned appealingly to her fel-



low traveler. He stepped forward, lifting his hat.

A glance into the strong face lighted by frank gray eyes, and she gave a little cry, a soft rose-pink flush staining her cheeks.

"Leon Bartley! How do you happen to be here?" and she timidly extended her hand.

"I am on my way to spend Thanksgiving with my old friends, the Herringtons, at Latimer."

"And I to eat my Thanksgiving turkey with my cousin, Lulu Myers."

A moment's silence fell between them. The station agent had retired to his little den, which contained his desk, leaving the two travelers in possession of the room. There was a brisk fire in the stove, and the air was laden with the fumes of the soft coal. Aside from the stove, the sole furniture of the room consisted of a wooden bench which extended along two siles. The uncurtained windows were dingy and dirty.

Outside there was only the shining tracks and the fields. At a little distance a solitary farmhouse could be seen.

They were roused by a dash of frozen sleet against the windows. Bartley advanced to the door of the little inner room, saying:

"I will see if there is not some way out of our trouble."

Left alone, Zoe Freeman drew her cloak around her and let her mind wander back to the past. Fifteen years before she had been the promised wife of Leon Bartley. They had quarreled and, in a fit of pique, she had married Robert Freeman. Wealth and social position had been hers, but Freeman soon became a helpless invalid, and life held little for her save the cares and duties of a nurse. A year ago death had set her free.

Leon Bartley had never married. They had met occasionally; but never since Freeman's death.

Here her thoughts were interrupted by the return of Bartley.

"It is as you feared. There is no way you can reach Latimer before 5. There are few passenger trains upon either of these roads, I am very sorry for your disappointment."

Her face flushed, then paled. "We must wait with what patience we can," she said, unconsciously using the plural.

He brought her from the inner room the only chair in the building. A few moments later the station agent said:

"I'm goin' to the house awhile."

He strode away, and they were alone. Outside the sleet continued to fall. Zoe turned from the dreary picture framed by the window with a sigh that sounded strangely like one of content.

They talked fitfully. Both avoided referring to the past, and the present held little in common for them. Yet as they talked of the events of the day, of books, and of people whom they both knew, an unconscious change came over them. As in the days of old, she was aware of a tender deference shown toward her, a deference

that was genuine and had in it nothing of patronage.

After a time Bartley glanced at his watch and rose to his feet.

"I am going to raid the surrounding country and see what I can do in the way of a Thanksgiving dinner."

"Not in this storm," she cried, and her clear dark eyes fell before his.

"I have an umbrella. Besides I am used to storms."

He was gone some time. When he returned, she was at the door to meet him.

"I see you were successful," pointing to the bundles he carried.

He shook his head. "You will think it a poor success. At the agent's home dirt was too plentiful. I saw we could not think of dining there. I made my way to another house, only to find it locked. However, there is a postoffice near, where the agent assured me I would find a 'store.' There—well, the contents of these paper bags will tell the story."

She laughed as merrily as a child, and began to peer into the bags. Soon they were seated, she in the chair, he on the bench in front of her. Sheets from a newspaper he happened to have in his pocket were spread over their laps, and on these they placed crackers, cheese, peanuts and sticks of red and white striped candy.

"I'm sorry," Bartley began, eyeing the spread with evident disfavor, "but it is the best the land affords. Here is a part of every eatable thing in the merchant's stock, save gaza, molasses and articles that must be cooked. It is a poor Thanksgiving dinner to offer you, Zoe."

The name slipped from him unawares. She blushed and began to talk lightly. All constraint vanished. The burden of years seemed to have fallen from them. Suddenly she looked up, an arch smile curving her lips.

"Think of the tables at which we expected to sit today. Remember the various delicacies, the silver, china, embroidered linen and flowers, then note the contrast. Is not this a strange Thanksgiving?"

He leaned forward, and again her eyes sank before his. "I remember it all, and yet I feel like returning thanks because I am here—with you."

Just then the station agent entered. A freight train came in sight and halted. Zoe retreated to a window while the men went out and in the depot. After a short time the train went on, and the agent again left the travelers alone.

Bartley came at once to her side. "In an hour there will be a train going back to your home. You will take it, will you not?"

She nodded. In an hour they would be separated. There would be nothing of this strange Thanksgiving day save a memory.

He came a step closer. "Let me go with you, Zoe."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean I love you still. Neither have you forgotten. Why should we lose one hour of the happiness life holds for us? We will go to your home and this very night become husband and wife."

She shook her head, although she



did not draw back when he took both her hands in his.

"No, Leon. Not today."

"Why not?"

"It's—well, it's unconventional."

He laughed lightly, for he knew his victory was won.

"This has been an unconventional Thanksgiving, darling. It is a real one, though. I never knew what the word meant until I could give thanks for you and your love."

Raisin Cake.

Cream one cup of butter and two cups of sugar. Add one cup of milk, three eggs, two cups of raisins (stoned) one grated nutmeg, a tablespoonful each of grated cloves and cinnamon, about four cups of flour, two heaping teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Make about as stiff as pound cake.

Joy softens more hearts than tears. —Madame de Sartory.

THANKSGIVING.

To the popular mind the word "Thanksgiving" stands for a day of festivity. But they who lose its subjective meaning in mere creature enjoyment suffer a misfortune and miss an opportunity.

To our fathers, Thanksgiving was a sacrament. It was one of their acts of religion to set apart for it an annual day. Heaven had blessed their harvests, and they wished to express in a special way appreciation of its favors.

Nothing in their example was more sane and sensible than the creation of this November family custom, now become national. There have been changes of our social life since the old time. These have made it less easy to observe the day so generally with public rites of worship, but the ordinance holds its place with pleasing fitness, and with ample reason.

We have a thousandfold more to be devoutly glad for than our fathers had; and the feeling and the faith they carried with them to the "solemn assembly" we can radiate in brighter homes and wider activities of kindness.

The unfolding Christian age has given us the larger thought of the meaning and mission of freedom and of civilization; the grander type and idea of benevolence; the tenderer beliefs that sweeten life and death with hope. For all these let us thank God.

Gratitude is not only "a natural function of the healthy soul"; it is its wealth. Invest it. Its interest will enrich the character, and uplift the whole life.



The snow upon the hillside lay. And thatched the cottage roof. The web of vines by the Pilgrim's door Was filled with icy wool. The boughs were leafless on the trees. Across the barren plain to eat. The north wind swept despairingly And moaned like one in pain.

(It whimpered like some hungry child That clasps its parent's hand And pleads for bread when there is none In all the broad land.) Above the little Plymouth town, Circling with empty maw, Mocking their hunger, flew the crow, Shrieking his "haw, haw, haw."

Patience, a blue-eyed maiden, (Her eyes with tears were dim.) From hunger feeble, trembling knelt "Dear God," she said in pleading tones, Tender, plaintive and sweet, "We've almost starved, an' won't 'ee please Send down some fings to eat?"

Then all day long her watchful eyes Gazed down the village street, Not doubting but she soon would see Some one with "fings to eat." And, lo! before the sun had set, With wild fowl laden down, Four hunters from the forest drear Came marching into town.

And 'twas in answer to the prayer), To add to all the cheer, And bawle families from the place, Came Indians with deer. The joyous villagers rushed out The indented ones to meet. But Patience knelt and said: "Fanks, Deo, For sendin' fings to eat." —Arthur J. Burdick.

- THANKSGIVING MENU.
- Oysters.
 - Cream of Game.
 - Red Snapper a la Provencale.
 - Stuffed Tomatoes. Broiled Mushrooms.
 - Roast Turkey. Cranberry Sauce.
 - Cauliflower. Stuffed Egg-plant.
 - Saratoga Potatoes.
 - Escalope a la Compoite.
 - Roast Saddle of Venison.
 - Macedoine Salad. Plum Pudding.
 - Cheese. Coffee. Fruit.

Thanksgiving House Parties.

The country has its charms for not a few Thanksgiving lovers. Country-house life has grown in popularity of recent years. Thanksgiving house parties at the great country mansions on Wednesday (Thanksgiving Eve) last until the following Monday.

Twenty-five people at least, perhaps thirty, are invited for these festivities. The girls bring wardrobes. They must have ball gowns, morning frocks and athletic costumes. The days are devoted to sports, the evenings to singing and music. There are horses, bicycles and carriages for everybody. Thanksgiving day itself is marked by a superb dinner. A ball follows.

Servants at Thanksgiving.

In the great houses of New York the masters and mistresses do not have all of Thanksgiving.

It is generally felt that the servants should have an hour or two. A special "Servants' Thanksgiving Dinner" is provided, generally at midday.

The family makes arrangements to go out at this hour, so the servants may not be called upon. The table in the servants' hall is spread with almost the same meal the household itself will have.

It is a long course dinner. The butler takes the head of the table, the housekeeper the foot. Between come the maids, the men, perhaps a dozen.

The Instinct of Liberty.

Nature imprints upon whatever we see, That has a heart and life in it, "Be free!" —Cowper.