

MERLE'S CRUSADE.

BY MISS SACCHETTA GARDNER.

Author of "Barbican Household," "The Queen's Will," "The Secret of Basil Lyndal," etc.

CHAPTER VI.—WHEELER'S FARM.

After all the difficulties were like Bunyan's chained lions—they did not touch me. How true it is that "one half our care and woes exist but in our thoughts." I had predicted for myself all manner of obstacles and troubles, and was astonished to find how smoothly and easily the days glided by.

From the beginning I had found favor in my mistress's eyes, and Mrs. Garnett had also expressed herself in warm terms of approval. "Miss Fenton was a nice, proper young lady, who gave herself no airs, and was not above her duties; and Master Reggie was already as good as gold with her." This was Mrs. Garnett's opinion; and as she was a great authority in the household, I soon experienced the benefit of her good will.

With the exception of Hannah, who generally called me "nurse" or "miss," I was "Miss Fenton" with the rest of the household; even the tall house-maid, Rhoda, who had charge of our rooms, invariably addressed me by that name.

Mrs. Garnett generally prefaced her remarks with "My dear." I found out afterward that she was the widow of a merchant captain, and a little above her position; but Anderson, the butler, and Simpson and Charles, the footmen, and Travers, Mrs. Morton's maid, always addressed me by the name of Miss Fenton; but I had very little to do with any of them—just a civil good-morning as I passed through the hall with the children. The messages to the nursery were always brought by Rhoda; and though Mrs. Garnett and Travers sometimes came in for a few minutes' gossip I never permitted the least familiarity on Travers' part, and, to do her justice, she never gave me cause for offense. She was a superior person, devoted to her mistress, and as she and Anderson had been engaged for years, she had almost the staid manners of a married woman.

I soon became used to my new duties, and our daily routine was perfectly simple; early rising was never a hardship to me—I was too strong and healthy to mind it in the least. Hannah lighted the fire, that the room should be warm for the children, and brought me a cup of tea. At first I protested against such a needless indulgence, but as Hannah persisted that nurse always had her cup of tea, I submitted to the innovation.

Dressing the children was merely play-work to me, with Hannah to assist in emptying and filling the baths. When breakfast was over, and Joyce and I had cleaned and fed the canaries, and attended to the flowers, Hannah got the perambulator ready, and we went into the park or Kensington Gardens.

Joyce generally paid a visit to her mother's dressing-room before this, and for our way out baby was taken in for a few minutes in his little velvet pebbles and hat. We generally found Mrs. Morton reading her letters while Travers beheld out her hair and arranged it for the day. She used to look up so brightly when she saw us, and such a lovely color would come into her face at the sight of her boy, but she never kept him long. "He's quick, Travers," she would say, putting the child in my arms. "I can hear your master's footsteps on the stairs, and he will be waiting for me." And then she kissed her hand to the children, and took up her letters again; but sometimes I caught a stifled sigh as we went out, as though the day's work was distasteful to her, and she would willingly have changed places with me.

On our return the children had their noontime sleep, and Hannah and I busied ourselves with our sewing until they woke up, and then the nursery dinner was brought up by Rhoda. Hannah always waited upon us before she would consent to take her place.

In the afternoon I sat at my work and watched the children at their play, or played with them. When Reggie was tired I nursed him, and in the twilight I sung to him or told them stories. I never got quite used to Mr. Morton's visits—they always caused me embarrassment. His duties at the house occupied him so much that he had rarely time to do more than kiss the children. Sometimes Reggie refused to be friendly, and struck at his father with his baby hand, but Mr. Morton only laughed.

"Baby thinks fardie is only a man," Joyce observed once, on one of these occasions. "But him is fardie."

Mr. Morton looked a little grave over this speech.

"Never mind, my little girl; Reggie is only a baby, and will know his father soon." But I think he was grieved a little when baby hid his naughty little face in my shoulder, and refused to make friends. "Go, go," was all he condescended to observe, in answer to his father's blandishments.

Mrs. Morton seldom came up to the nursery until I was putting the children to bed, but even then she never stayed more than ten minutes. There were always visitors below, or it was time to dress for dinner, or there were letters to write. It was evident that Mr. Morton's wife had no secure post. I think no hand-worked seamstress worked harder than Mrs. Morton in those days.

Now and then, when the children were sleeping sweetly in their little cots, and I was reading by the fire, or writing to Aunt Agatha, or taking about some work of my own, I would hear the soft swish of a silken dress in the corridor outside, and there would be Mrs. Morton, looking lovely than ever, in evening dress.

"I have just come to kiss my darlings, Merie," she would say. "Dinner is over, and I am going to the theatre with some friends; they are waiting for me now, but I had such a longing to see them that I could not resist it."

"It is a bad night for you to go out," I observed once.

"I never got enough for my own keep! For Miller Armstrong was that close that he only allowed his youngest son enough to buy his clothes, and took all his hard work in exchange for food and shelter; while Martin could help himself to as much money as he chose, only he was pretty nearly as miserly as his father. Molly was always going on at Luke to leave Scroggin's Mill and better himself among strangers, and there was some talk of his coming near London, only he was too lazy to leave the place where he was born. Well, if she must own it, Luke and she had broken a sixpence between them, and she had promised Luke that she would not listen to any other young man, and she had kept her word, and she was saving her money, because, if Luke ever

made a little home for her, she would not like to go to it empty-handed. All the girls were saving money. Lydia had quite a tidy little sum in the savings bank, and that is what Martin wanted her for, a wife; for though Lydia had saving qualities, she was even plainer than Molly, and no one expected her to have a sweet-heart."

I am not ashamed to confess that Hannah's artless talk interested me greatly. True, she was only a servant, but the simplicity and reality of her narrative appealed to my sympathy; the very homeliness of her speech seemed to stamp it more forcibly on my mind. I seemed to picture it all; the low-celled attic crowded with girls; the honest farmer and his strapping sons; hard-featured Molly milking her cows and feeding her poultry; young Luke Armstrong and his dog Rover strolling down to Wheeler's Farm for a peep at his rosy-faced sweetheart. Many an evening I thought of the insidious advances of homeliness by talking to Hannah of her home, and there were times when I almost envied the girl her wealth of Lome affection.

It seems to me that we lose a great deal in life by closing our ears and hearts to other people's interests; the more we widen our sympathies, and live in folk's lives, the deeper will be our growth. Some girls simply exist; they never appear to be otherwise than poor, empty-plants, and fail to thrust out new feelers in the sunshine.

In those quiet evening hours when I had work to do for my children, and dare not indulge myself in writing to Aunt Agatha, or reading some deeply interesting book that Travers had procured for me that morning, Hannah's innocent rustic talk seemed to open a new door to my inner consciousness, to admit me into a fresh phase of existence. A sentence I had read to Aunt Agatha that Sunday afternoon often haunted me as I listened: "Behold, how green this valley is, also how beautiful with lilies. I have known many laboring men that have got good estates in this Valley of Humiliation;" and I almost held my breath as I remembered that our Lord had been a laboring man.

Hannah never enquired in any way; she always tacitly acknowledged the difference in our station, and never presumed on these conversations, but she let me see that she was fond of me by rendering me all sorts of little services; and on my side I tried to be useful to her.

She was very clever at work, and I taught her embroidery. Her handwriting and reading were defective—she had been rather a dandy at school, she told me; and I helped her to improve herself on both these points; further than this I could not do.

I shall never forget my shame one evening when she came into the nursery and found me writing a letter to Aunt Agatha with a dictionary beside me, for there was no trouble to which I would not put myself if I could only avoid paining those loving eyes.

"Why, miss," she exclaimed, in an astonished voice, "that is what I am obliged to do when I write to father or Molly; Molly is a fine scholar, and so is Lydia; the hardest words never puzzle them."

I must confess that my face grew hot as I stammered out my explanation to Hannah. I felt that from that night I should lose caste in her eyes, for only an enlightened mind could solve such an enigma; but I need not have been afraid; truth is sometimes revealed to babes.

"I would not fret about it if I were you, miss," observed Hannah, pleasantly; "it seems to me it is only like St. Paul's thorn in the flesh. Molly says sometimes, when father worries about the cattle or the bad harvest, 'that most people have a messenger of Satan to buffet them'; that is a favorite speech of Molly's. We should not like to be born crooked or lame, as she often tells us, but it might be our lot, for all that, and we should get into heaven just as fast. It is not how we do it, but how we feel when doing it—that is Molly's proverb, and the most of us have our burden to carry some part of the way."

"True, Hannah, and I will carry mine; but as I spoke the tears were in my eyes, for though her words were true, the thorn was very piercing, and one had to get used to the smart."

The Men and Women of Brazil.

The Flumenenses, as the people of Rio are called, are in some ways polite and well bred, in others rude and vulgar. The men have a coarse habit of rudely staring at every lady who passes by, and a crowd on a street corner will never give way to let ladies pass through. If two or more Brazilians meet on the sidewalk, and stop to talk, they usually greet each other with a hearty handshake, and then they talk of their families, their children, and their domestic life. They are not very fond of the ladies sit about and talk—I know not what, for if a gentleman comes near they instantly stop short.

The men of native birth, as a rule, are of low stature and slender. But there are Brazilians of a girth and commanding presence. The Brazilian women are dark and not comparable to our Northern beauties. They make good mothers, though rather indulgent, but social usages allow them no liberty and their days are monotonous and without excitement. Their daughters are taught French. Music is a natural gift. They can embroider a little, but the world and what goes on it is a sealed book to them. Until they are married they are never alone in a gentleman's company. A young man cannot call often and manifest any particular preference for a young lady without being asked if his intentions are serious. The mother has scarcely more liberty than the daughter. Her place is at home, and he said to the Brazilians' credit the husbands, as a rule, are domestic in their habits. Their evenings are spent at home or at places of amusement with their wives and children.—Rio Janeiro Letter.

Farm Lands in the United States.

Taking the whole area of the United States, the farm lands comprise 289 acres in every 1,000, leaving 711 acres unoccupied. Of the former quantity 163 acres are productive, 103 woodland, and 23 unproductive, though partly susceptible of improvement.

BEFO' DE WAH.

How a Bright Young Slave Escaped Being Sold to a Dealer.

A little while ago a colored man from an adjoining county came over into this county, his former home, and met many old friends. To one he related a remarkable episode of the days "befo' de wahn."

He said that he was as tough a mulatto as the country ever produced, and his young master resolved to "send him down the river," as the slave owners used to express it. One day the young master told him to have the horses ready, and they would depart early the next morning for Knoxville. The young master had received information that a certain slave buyer from the cotton fields would visit the city mentioned in quest of "likely negro men."

The early dawn found the young farmer and his valuable human property speeding away over the smooth road South. After they had gone a little way, "Rich," for that was the nickname by which the "likely boy" was known, inquired of his master if he was going to Knoxville to put into execution a threat he had often heard him make—to sell him to a cotton planter. The master told him it was his mission. Rich became much affected by the announcement and shed tears. He recalled the hours of their boyhood, and dwelt upon the pathetic in general. The young master's heart was touched, but his resolve was not.

Night came on, as it always did when travelers by the "Old Wilderness Road" got well into the mountains. A jug of fine old Bourbon steeled their nerves and brought halcyon sleep to the restoration of their strained energies.

Next morning they were up with the lark, and all day they talked about the endless separation soon to follow, pausing occasionally to admire the rugged scenery and take a drink. The rabbit hunts by day, the con hunts by night, the romps, the flights they had, the floggings they have caught from the "old man" were all lived over again.

Another night and another day and their journey had ended. But the raid on the big jug had not. They "hit it purty lively" that "last night on earth together forever and evermore." They were comfortably full long before midnight. At least the young master was full of old liquor and the slave was full of pretence. He had dropped upon a scheme.

With dawn, Rich was up moving about the city. A shave, clean clothes, a cigar, a coat, and many extras were added. Finally he sought the slave buyer, and introducing himself as Mr. — of Madison county, Kentucky, stated that he was in the city with the "splendid young nigger" of which he had written him, and was now ready for a trade. The boy was described in glowing terms, and the price fixed at \$1,500, which the trader said he would give, provided the description was accurate.

So he proceeded to the tavern and into a little back room, where the young master was found snoring away on a pallet beside the bed, where Rich had taken the precaution to tumble him before going out. His beard of several days' growth, dusty and soiled attire, unkempt hair, and general appearance was anything but attractive.

"Fifteen hundred!" gruffly remarked the old dealer as he glanced at the pig-fur-looking object. "Fifteen hundred dollars for that d—d thing! I would not give you a cent more than half that much," and he walked out on the street. It is useless to say they didn't get their prices near enough for a trade.

About noon the young master awoke, not feeling the best in the world. He was compelled to borrow a shoe horn to put on his hat, and there was a mighty bad taste in his mouth, to say nothing of considerable red in his eye and a feeling of a sort of giddiness in general about his stomach. Rich told him that he had been out to see the buyer, and the old fellow wanted to know the price, as all depended on that—the least he'd take was the question, and to be in a hurry, as he, the buyer, had made about all the purchases he wanted, and was ready to leave town. The young master called for paper and envelope, and wrote as follows:

"Dear Sir: You have seen the boy. My lowest price is \$1,200. He is worth every cent of it." The note was duly conveyed, and was soon returned with an answer on the back, saying, "We can't trade."

The following day the well-rested horses, the happy mulatto, and a disappointed white man "might have been seen wending their solitary way through the woods" towards Kentucky.—Richmond Clinix.

Real Names of Indians.

The Indians have a neat way of fixing it. This Rain-in-the-Face, Spotted Tail, Man-Afraid-of-his-Horses, is good enough to palm off on the whites, but each Indian has another name the whites never hear. First he is named after his mother's gens or family. There are only half a dozen each, Snake, Wolf, Turtle, Bear, Eagle, and so on. You remember how, in "The Last of the Mohicans," the young Delaware chief was found to have a tortoise tattooed on his breast, that gave his family. He was a "Turtle," just as the folk of the Scotch are divided into a few clans, the Stewarts, Campbells, Camerons, McGregors and others. To the Indian's family name is attached another, but it would be bad medicine to have it spoken outside the family circle, and give some of his enemies a chance to work spells and hoodoo him. The Spotted Tail business is a nom de guerre, or de toot, which gets hitched on in later life.—Washington Post.

London's Fog Tower.

Four hundred plans have already been received by the committee who offered prizes for the best and second best plan for the proposed Watkin Tower—the English Eiffel. It will be so high that all that need be done when fog comes on will be to enter the lift and in a few minutes be up in the clear blue.



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"ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE."

How often do we hear the above said of some poor pilgrim on life's thorny path, whose tottering step, pallid face, unnatural glitter of the eye and hacking cough, and its accompanying involuntary pressure of the hand over the lungs, the seat of the dread disease—consumption—that causes the remark: "Too frequently, alas! and in the interests of such unfortunates this is pointed out to assure them that their steps need tend no longer towards that narrow receptacle that awaits all—that is, until life's allotted space is covered—from any such cause, for the scientific researches of Dr. R. V. Pierce, of the Invariable Hotel and Surgical Institute, of Buffalo, N. Y., resulting in his "Golden Medical Discovery," have wrested from Nature a remedy which never fails to cure this scourge of our race (which is really nothing more nor less than Scrophulous of the Lungs), if taken in time and given a fair trial.

For Scrophulous in all its myriad forms, whether affecting the lungs, throat or other organs or parts, Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery is a sovereign remedy, and the only one that is sold by druggists, under a positive guarantee from its manufacturers, that it will benefit or cure, if taken in time and given a fair trial.

Englarged glands, tumors or "bunches," are disipated by its use; old sores or ulcers healed; "white swellings," hip-joint disease, and kindred ailments, permanently cured. It's a medicine, not a beverage; a concentrated vegetable extract, without sugar or syrup in its make-up. Don't forget drunkards. As *peruvian* and marvelous in curative properties as in its composition. It's mission is to *cure*, not palliate.

"Golden Medical Discovery" invigorates and strengthens the liver and lungs, sharpens the appetite, improves digestion, purifies the blood, cleanses the system, and builds up both flesh and strength when reduced by "wasting diseases." It leads all other medicines in amount of sales. There's nothing like it for the diseases for which it is recommended, so don't be fooled into accepting any substitute, said to be "just as good." It's an insult to your intelligence when unprincipled dealers try to palm off something else upon you, just to make a little better profit! An honest dealer supplies what his customers want, without questioning their intelligence. WORLD'S DISPENSARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, Proprietors, Buffalo, N. Y.

Wearing the hat squarely on the head signifies "I love you madly." Other styles of using the hat have these meanings:

Tipping it over the right ear—My little brother has the measles.

Putting it over the eyes—You must not recognize me.

Wearing it over the back of the head—Ta, ta; awfully awful.

Taking it off and brushing it the wrong way—My heart is broken.

Holding it out in the right hand—Lend me a quarter.

Leaving it with your uncle—Have been to a church fair.

Throwing it to a policeman—I love your sister.

Using it as a fan—Come and see my aunt.

Carrying a brick in it—Your cruelty is killing me.

Kicking it up-stairs—Is the old man a kid?

Kicking it down-stairs—Where is your mother?

Kicking it across the street—I am engaged.

Hanging it on the right elbow—Will call to-night.

Hanging it on the left elbow—Am badly left.

Putting it on the ground and sitting on it—Farewell forever.—Hatter and Farrier.

Cured by Thread.

If there is any one in Macon who had little faith in hoodlums and charmers a few weeks ago that person was Chief Keenan, says the *Telegraph*. But at last all unbelievers are brought around, and it appears this was the case with the doughy chief. Some days ago he was suffering considerably with neuralgia. After trying every remedy under the sun he at last came upon a friend who had a recipe, which he was not caring particularly to reveal to the chief, but seeing the official in deep trouble, he finally consented to apply the remedy. Securing a spool of black silk thread, he cut off several bits. One he tied around the neck of the chief, another around his waist, another down the back connecting the one around the waist, and a fourth down his breast, connecting in the same way the two hands. This completed the outfit.

When the operation was finished, the chief, with an incredulous smile, asked what came next. "Oh, you will talk differently in a few minutes," replied the friend with a shake of the head. In a minute the official felt a strange sensation in the face, and within five minutes the pain had left him. To say that he was amazed would be putting it mildly. He has already given the cure to a dozen sufferers, and now he is at work solving the problem of how he was cured. As yet he has found no one who can give the cause of it.

A Hand Expedition.

The *Lewiston Journal* says a Maine constable had a hard experience the other day. He went out after a gang of poachers, and was not only cordially received by them but was invited to accompany them on a hunting expedition. The reason for so much cordiality was not apparent until the officer found that his late companions had managed to leave him alone on an uninhabited island, where they kept him for two days and nights.

facturers, that it will benefit or cure, if taken in time and given a fair trial, or money paid for it will be refunded. Englarged glands, tumors or "bunches," are disipated by its use; old sores or ulcers healed; "white swellings," hip-joint disease, and kindred ailments, permanently cured. It's a medicine, not a beverage; a concentrated vegetable extract, without sugar or syrup in its make-up. Don't forget drunkards. As *peruvian* and marvelous in curative properties as in its composition. It's mission is to *cure*, not palliate.

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How to Sharpen a Pencil.

"It really makes me tired to see the average man sharpen a pencil," said an old newspaper man in a stationary store to a Washington *Star* reporter. "He will cut his fingers, cover them with dirt and blacken them with lead dust, and still will not sharpen the pencil."

"There is but one way to sharpen a lead pencil and that is to grasp it firmly with the point from and not toward you. Take your knife in the other hand and whittle away as though you had lots of pencils to waste. By following these directions and turning the pencil over you will soon have it neatly and regularly sharpened, and your fingers will be unsoiled and you will not need any court plaster to put on the wounds because you cannot cut your fingers when whittling from them."

"This method is the best, whether the knife is dull or sharp. If the pencil is a soft one there is no sense in sharpening the lead. Simply cut away the wood, and in writing turn the pencil over, thus writing with the sides of the lead."

"Another disgusting and senseless habit is in placing the pencil in the mouth when writing. This is a relief of the days when pencils were as hard as flint and before the manufacturers were able to produce the smooth, soft pencils that are used to-day. The continual dampening of the lead will harden even a good graphite pencil and make it hard and gritty. It is simply a habit, any way, and moon habits are bad ones."