



CHAPTER XXVI.

Eight or nine months passed with little or no change in the village of Littlehaven. At the Dower House matters were exactly as they had been before Mrs. Priolo's machinations wrought such distressful excitement. Mr. Bowyer was perhaps a little stronger. His ward was more to him than ever—he could scarcely bear her out of his sight; and his sister-in-law was relegated to her old place as housekeeper.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Early in the spring Charlie Severn had come to the Abbey with his tutor to be coached for his examinations. At first he felt some shyness in going to the Dower House, but by and by that feeling died away as the love that had prompted it also died a natural death.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Circumstances had combined to keep Col. Severn away from England for a longer period than he had anticipated. How long and anxious a time it stood once more in his own house and felt a question burning on his lips which he could not utter at once.

CHAPTER XXIX.

There was no doubt that Mr. Bowyer was seriously ill—his life in danger. His constitution was utterly broken, and he had not strength to combat the disease. One day, when Colonel Severn was sitting at his bedside, he opened his eyes, and the glance that wandered round the room showing that they were quite alone, he began to speak slowly and with difficulty.

CHAPTER XXX.

The broken sentences came in short gasps, and Severn perceptively forbade him to say more. Enough had been said for him to understand that at some critical moment of her life Elaine had acted on the old lawyer's advice, and that now

before the doctor had seen her, Elaine, always prompt to help when help was needed, had been to the sick room, and afterward would not be sent away. No one else was willing to nurse the poor girl, and the doctor was at last fain to consent.

The two sides of the house were kept entirely separate, as Mr. Bowyer was terribly nervous, and the housekeeper encouraged rather than sought to calm his fears; so Elaine performed her self-imposed task alone and unaided.

It was no want of care or skill that caused her non-success. The disease was of a most virulent type, and so it happened that some ten days later, when the violence of the attack had expended itself, and nothing was wanted but careful nursing and the patient courage of endurance, Jane died.

Early the next morning Elaine was surprised to receive a summons from Mr. Bowyer. She had taken every precaution, using all the disinfectants the doctor gave her with the greatest exactitude. After some hesitation she went over to his room and knocked at the door.

He was in bed, and looking unnaturally flushed and excited as he beckoned to her to come nearer.

"I—I think," gasped the old man, painfully, "I have taken the disease." In a moment Elaine sprang forward and peered anxiously into the poor thin face; she laid her hand gently against his—it was burning, and at the contact of her cool fingers a convulsive shivering fit ensued.

"When do you think of being married?" he asked loudly. Charlie looked grave. "That is just what I want to know. I have not seen her for nearly three weeks. Ah, I forget—you did not know that typhoid fever is in the village. Mary has been nursing some of the people, and is put in quarantine in consequence."

"Has it been very bad?" "Nine or ten cases at present. Only one has died besides the wretched woman who brought the sickness here."

"And that was—?" "Carelessly interested in the reply. 'Mr. Bowyer's house maid.' A sudden light flashed from George Severn's eyes, a sudden dread kept him mute, though his very soul seemed to hang on the next few words that should be spoken.

"Mr. Bowyer has it now," went on Charlie, quite unconscious of the emotion seething in his father's heart—"rather badly, I am afraid."

Col. Severn snatched up his hat and went out quickly, passing through the hall, but quite forgetting to take an extra coat, though there was a hard frost and a keen east wind blowing.

He did not feel the cold—he did not once give a thought to the danger there might be in going to the house where the sickness was raging. Frequent cholera camps in India had familiarized his mind with the idea of infection, and if it had been a plague-stricken city in which Elaine was dwelling, he would have gone to her all the same, and wasted no time in the going.

The last few paces seemed miles to his hurrying feet; he could scarce restrain his impatience, and when he found the outer door open, he walked straight in, not waiting to summon any servant.

Without hesitation he turned into the sitting room, feeling sure that he should find her there. Nor was he mistaken. She was kneeling in front of the fire, as much for rest as warmth, it struck the man who watched her so yearningly, for every line of her figure had fallen into an attitude of repose, and her head was leaning against the side of the mantelpiece as though too heavy, too weary to hold itself erect.

For a few moments he stood there, silently taking in every detail of herself and her surroundings, content for the time to know that she was near. Then, no longer able to resist the longing to clasp her to his heart and with a kiss to wipe away the marks of all the tears she must have shed in her loneliness, he stepped forward impulsively.

Instantly she turned, then rose slowly to her feet, coming to meet him with outstretched hand and smileless lips, though an intensely happy light was shining in her eyes. Severn took her hands in his and drew her closer and closer, till the small fair head lay upon his breast; then he stooped and showered passionate caresses on her mouth.

he feared he might have counseled wrongly. When the doctor paid his next visit he found his patient so much worse that he no longer held out any hope, and considered it his duty to warn the old man of the dangerous state that he was in, least there should be any arrangements he might neglect before his death.

To his surprise, Mr. Bowyer evinced neither grief nor fear. He was a man of strange opinions. Not religious in the ordinary acceptance of the word, he had always endeavored to do his duty, performing many a kindly act in secret. His only anxiety was lest he should die before he could make a new will, and at his own desire a telegram was at once sent off to Mr. Levison requesting his immediate presence.

This was about his last expressed wish. Afterward he seemed to sink rapidly, and neither Elaine nor Colonel Severn left him through that night.

When daylight dawned they were watching still, and Elaine first became conscious of an anxious glance that now and then was directed to her face. It was as though there was something weighing on his mind of which he longed to disburden himself.

"Is there anything you wish me to do for you?" she whispered. Severn rose softly from his chair and left them alone. As he did so the sick man motioned Elaine to come nearer—nearer still. His voice was so weak and broken that, even with her ear almost touching his lips, she could scarcely comprehend his meaning.

"Tell me—I am dying—it can do no harm now to you or me—were you really guilty—really guilty of your sister's death?" "You thought it possible—you thought I could!" broke from her at last, in uncontrollable surprise and inexpressible reproach.

Now the assurance received so late was not all relief; it had its element of bitterness as well, for he could not but feel ashamed of his own action in the matter, and knew that by his moral cowardice he had done her as well as himself incalculable harm.

"Forgive—forgive me," he implored. "I was wrong—all wrong! Can you forgive?" For answer she stooped and kissed him affectionately as his own child might have done, no trace of resentment on her face or in her heart.

Presently he fell asleep from sheer weakness, and Colonel Severn, coming in, insisted on her going down to get a cup of tea. As she reached the foot of the stairs, the hall door, which stood ajar, was pushed further open, and some one entered rapidly in a heavy coat, with a small black bag in his hand.

It was Mr. Levison, arrived some hours before they had thought it possible he could come. He advanced hurriedly with outstretched hand, and when she persisted in the swallow of a cup of tea hastily, hurrying upstairs immediately afterward, as though grudging even that slight delay on her account.

Half an hour later she was called upstairs, and answered the summons with a beating heart, for she guessed what it portended.

HELPFUL FARM HINTS

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE AGRICULTURIST AND STOCKMAN.

Productiveness of the Elberta Peach—How to Make a Cheap and Practical Causeway—Good Device for Smoothing Ground—Farm Notes.

The Elberta Peach. Among the whole list of peaches both old and new, there is no variety that has attained a higher place in public estimation than the Elberta. It is liked equally well by the grower and consumer. About twenty-five years ago Dr. Samuel H. Rumph, of Georgia, raised about 12,000 seedling peach trees from the seeds saved from the very



ELBERTA PEACH TREE.

choicest named varieties, and in the whole lot there was but one that he deemed worthy enough to be preserved. This was the product of a cross between the Chinese Cling and Crawford Early. He bestowed upon it the name Elberta, in honor of his wife, and it has in turn been an honor to its namesake.

Knowing something and hoping more of its good qualities, he planted extensive orchards of it, from which he shipped large quantities of choice fruit, and realized profitable returns. It was not long before other peach growers learned of the good qualities of the Elberta and began to plant it; first in the Southern States, where it had already proved its value beyond question, and then in the northern peach-growing sections. It has proved to be one of the standards in all regions, from Georgia to Michigan, and from Connecticut to California.—American Agriculturist.

Pattening Animals Quickly.

The old saying that time is money is doubly true with regard to fattening animals. There is no profit in slow fattening of anything. The largest amount of nutritious food that can be digested and assimilated is always the most profitable for the fattening animal.

Device for Smoothing Ground.

Many people sow their grain and cover it with the harrow simply. A good bar sh and a rough roller ought to follow the harrowing, but much better than the simple harrowing (which leaves the land in ridges to dry out rapidly), is an arrangement like that illustrated in the engraving. A heavy



IMPROVED SMOOTHING HARROW.

wide plank is attached to a rear of the harrow; the ridges are thus level, and any lumps that may have been left are pulverized. But, best of all, the soil is pressed down over the seed, causing it to sprout more rapidly, and giving it a better chance to get hold of the ground with its roots.

Warning Ground by Plowing It.

It used to be the practice of a farmer of our acquaintance to replot the part of the garden yet unplanted whenever a new piece was to be put to use. The whole garden was plowed as early as possible, and the parts devoted to peas, lettuce, onions and other hardy plants were planted at once. When corn, beans and the tenderer plants were to be put in the ground was replowed, mixing the manure thoroughly with the soil, and also imprisoning a new supply of warm air from the surface. In this way the soil was made much warmer for the late-planted crops than it could be by cultivation without plowing.—American Cultivator.

Early Lambs Not Profitable.

Unless making a specialty of early lambs for the market, there is no object in having them come before April. By that time the weather is warmer, the grass has started, and the conditions of growth are more favorable in every way; and, as with all young stock, it is quite an item to procure a strong, vigorous growth from the start.

Potash Salts on Manure Heaps.

The German potash salts are excellent applications for the manure heap. They help to keep it moist, and they absorb whatever ammonia the manure gives off while it is fermenting. They are much different in this respect from caustic potash in the form of soda,

which will liberate much ammonia before it is itself changed to a nitrate. The potash salts are so changed almost immediately, and when applied with manure they furnish plant food that can at once be taken up by the roots of plants and thus greatly increases its value.

Too Early Sowing of Root Crops.

Most of the roots, like beet, carrot, parsnip and turnip, are true biennials, growing their root the first year and sending up their seed stalk after the root has been partly dried out and is replanted the following spring. But in our hot summers this drying out, which usually requires a whole winter, is accomplished in midsummer. The result is that the very early planted seed of beet, carrot and other root makes its root growth early in the season and by fall is ready to send out a seed stalk. This, of course, makes the root worthless. The common radish is one of these natural biennials that always tend to become annual when early planted. If seed is put in the ground any time before midsummer, it will produce seed pods before cold weather comes.

Rich Soil for Early Potatoes.

In planting early potatoes there is never any danger of making the soil too rich. It will rot late potatoes to manure very heavily, especially with stable manure. But the early crop is got out of the soil soon after it is fully grown and before the time for rot to begin its work. One caution is to be observed, however, in manuring even for early potatoes. Coarse, strawy manure or that which is apt to dry up quickly should never be plowed in for them. It will keep the soil above the furrow too dry, and this will often lessen the yield more than the fertilizing will increase it. If the season is very wet the manure will heat and develop rot very early in the season, sometimes even before the potato crop is got out of the ground.

A Practical Causeway.

The usual method of building a causeway is to lay down two rows of stone, to stretch flat rocks across from one row to another, and to cover the whole with earth. The two rows of stones soon work together, while brush and other rubbish will work in and clog the drain. A better plan is shown in the accompanying sketch, taken from the Orange Judd Farmer. A few six-inch drain tiles are laid down, and both ends are covered with wire netting. The whole is then covered with earth to make the roadway. Such a drain cannot clog, nor can the



SECURE CAUSEWAY.

sides settle together, while the labor of making it is not one-half that required where stones are used.

Topdressing Grass Lands.

Almost anything spread thinly over grass lands will help them. Even material not very rich and which itself will not grow a good crop will make the grass grow better, because it acts as a mulch for the grass roots beneath. The washings of poor uplands will fertilize the richer soil of the valleys below. But except where topdressing can be thus done naturally by irrigation, it will not pay to topdress with poor material. The labor will be too great, and it will trample and cut up the grass too much unless the fertilizing material is put on during the winter.

Remedies for Neuralgia.

The following are homely remedies for neuralgia: Boil a handful of lobelia in half a pint of water, strain and add a teaspoonful of fine salt. Wring cloths out of the liquid, very hot, and apply till the pain ceases, changing as fast as cold. Two large tablespoonfuls of eau de Cologne and two teaspoonfuls of fine salt mixed in a bottle make an excellent mixture to be inhaled for facial neuralgia. Horse radish, prepared the same as for table, applied to the temple or wrist, is also recommended.

Notes.

Grow a small plot in horseradish. Simply place the roots on top of the ground and turn a furrow on them. They will grow and thrive without further labor.

A writer in an English paper asserts that only one steer out of every 200 shipped from the United States is lost, while from the River Plate from one to twenty-five and from Australia from one to over seven.

It is much easier to feed whole grain than to grind it, but it is better to put the labor to it than to lose in the feed. Ground grain can be more intimately mixed with coarse food, and in that respect it not only serves to balance the ration, but the combination of foods cheapens the whole and more perfect digestion results.

If your wheat does not appear promising apply from fifty to 100 pounds of nitrate of soda per acre upon it. The effect will be quickly noticeable, and the wheat will appear to take on a new growth at once. The nitrate is somewhat expensive, but the results at harvest time will show that the increased yield will nearly pay for the fertilizer.

How a patch of oats to be cut as green food. The oats should be cut just as the seeds are in the milky stage, which arrests the nutritious matter in the stalks and renders them palatable. They are cured the same as is done with hay. Farmers who use oats in this manner run them through a fodder cutter (stalks and heads) and sprinkle a little cornmeal over them. They are highly relished by cattle and horses.

The shuttle of time weaves the garments of eternity.