

Meadow Brook

BY
MARY J. HOLMES

(Sunny Bank Farm)

CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)

From that time Herbert made no further attempt at reform, but night after night came reeling home, until at last poor Anna learned to tremble at the sound of his footsteps; for he daily grew more and more violent and unmanageable, defying every one save Mr. Watson, who possessed over him a singular power. Thus the spring and summer passed away, and when the autumn came few would have recognized the once handsome Herbert Langley in the creature who, weak and feeble, lay all day long in bed, begging for "brandy—more brandy," to fan the flame which was feeding upon his vitals. Sometimes in his fits of frenzy he would spring upon the floor, and shriek for us to save him from the crawling serpents, which, with forked tongues and little green eyes, hissed at him from all parts of the room. Again he would say that the spirit of the murdered maiden was before him, whispering to him unutterable things concerning the drunkard's home beyond the grave, while goblins of every conceivable form beckoned him to come and join their hideous dance. They said he could not live; and though it was a painful task, Anna wrote to his mother appealing her of his danger, and bidding her hasten, if she would see him again.

During the few remaining weeks of his life he was subject to strange fancies. For a time a prayer book beneath his pillow had the effect of keeping him comparatively quiet; but, anon, it lost its power, and one day he awoke with a fearful shriek. The nurse, as he called them, had again returned, and was mockingly taunting him with the victory he vainly imagined he had obtained.

About noon one day he awoke and inquired for me. With some trepidation I approached him, for his eyes were those of a madman; but he meditated no harm, and only asked if I supposed that the prayer book laid upon the outside of his pillow, where the nurse could see it, would have the effect of keeping them away.

"Perhaps so," I said, at the same time placing it so that his heavy brow hair fell partially on it.

"I won't do it—I won't do it," he sobbed. "All the hymns Dr. Watson ever wrote can't help me, for they come nearer and nearer, as wolves hover round their prey, with the energy of despair, adding, as a sudden look of joy lighted up his ghastly features, "Yes, the Bible! Strange I have not thought of that before. The Bible will keep them at bay. Bring it, Anna, quick, for they are almost here." She obeyed, and grasping the word of God eagerly in his hands, he laughed aloud, saying, "Now do your worst, ye fiends incarnate. The Bible will save me!"

There was a moment of perfect silence, and then, with a groan so full of anguish that I involuntarily stopped my ears to shut out the fearful sound, the Bible was tossed from the clamy hands, which for a brief instant fought fiercely in the empty air, and then dropped lifeless at his side. Herbert was dead.

At the foot of the garden, near the long avenue where the shadow of the maple trees would fall upon his grave, and the moon of the lake be always heard, we buried him; and then, the broken-hearted Anna, widowed thus early, went back to her accustomed duties, performing each one quietly and gently, but without a smile upon her white, stony face, or a tear in her large, mournful eyes. Aunt Charlotte, utterly crushed and wretched, went back to her city home. And then we were left alone with our great sorrow, wholly dependent, as it were, upon Mr. Watson for support and counsel.

There had always been about him a mystery I could not fathom, and greatly was I surprised when one evening, a week after Herbert's death, he asked me to go with him to his room, as there was something he wished to tell me. Drawing a seat to my side, he said, taking my hand in his, "Rosa, what do you think I am going to tell you?"

I tried to wrest my hand from his grasp, for the unwonted liberty angered me. But he held it fast, smiling at my fruitless endeavors, and after a moment, continued, "Why do you try to remove your hand from mine? I have held it many a time, and I have a right to do so—a cousin's right. Look at me, Rosa; don't you know me?"

Involuntarily I started to my feet, gazing earnestly upon him, then with a cry of joy I threw my arms around his neck, exclaiming, "Cousin Will! Cousin Will!" It was indeed he, come back to us when we had thought of him as dead. A few words will suffice to tell his story. Perfectly disgusted with sea life, he had deserted at Calcutta, where he kept himself secreted until the vessel sailed. But it was not his wish to remain there long, and the first time an English ship was in port he offered to work his passage to Liverpool. The offer was accepted, and while we were mourning over his supposed death, he was threading the smoky streets of London, doing sometimes one thing and sometimes another, but always earning an honest livelihood.

quickly if we would again see him alive, adding that he talked almost constantly of Ross, asking if they thought she would come. It was impossible for Anna to accompany me, and as William would not leave her, I started alone, my heart filled with many dark forebodings.

Lonely and desolate was the home at which I arrived one day too late, for they had buried him, and there was naught left to me of my father save the lock of hair which they severed from his head as he lay in the coffin. Yes, he was gone; but so long as life and being endure, so long shall fond remembrances of him linger in my memory.

CHAPTER XV.

After the first shock of our sorrow was over, the question arose as to what we were to do in future for our support. Grandma was already old, while mother was not so young as she had been once, and neither could do much toward their own maintenance. It had ever been a pet project of mine to go South as a teacher, and when one day in looking over a Boston paper I accidentally came across the advertisement of a Georgia lady, Mrs. A. D. Lansing, who wished for a private governess, I resolved at once to apply for the situation, greatly fearing lest I might be too late.

I was not, however; for after waiting impatiently for a few weeks, I received a letter from the lady herself, who, after enumerating the duties I was expected to perform and the branches I was to teach, added in a P. S.: "Before making any definite arrangements with Miss Lee, Mrs. Lansing wishes to be informed if, either by her friends or herself, she is considered pretty, as a person of decidedly ordinary looks will be preferred. I answered her letter forthwith, assuring her that neither my friends nor myself had ever been guilty of calling me pretty—in short, I was decidedly homely, and trusted that on that point at least I should please her."

I had nearly given up all hopes of ever hearing from the lady again, when one day I received a letter containing a check on a Boston bank for money sufficient to defray my expenses. There were also a few hastily written lines, saying that "Mrs. Lansing considered our engagement as settled, but she should not expect me until the latter part of April, as she could not immediately get rid of her present governess—a painted, insipid creature from New York, and the veriest humping in the world."

It was a cold, dark, snowy morning in the latter part of April when I started on my journey. The surface of the ground was frozen hard, the trees were leafless and bare. It is not strange, then, that I almost fancied myself in another world when, after a prosperous sea voyage, I one morning went on shore at Charleston, and first breathed the soft, balmy air of the South. Dense and green was the foliage of the trees, while thousands of roses and flowering shrubs filled the air with a perfume almost sickening to the senses. From Charleston to Augusta was a wearisome ride, for the cars were crowded, and there was to me nothing remarkably pleasing in the long stretches of cypress swamps and pine barrens through which we passed.

It was late in the evening when we started for the town of Chester by stage. It was a most beautiful night; and for hours I watched the soft moonlight as it glistened among the trees which lined either side of the narrow road, and whose branches often swept against the windows of our lumbering vehicle. It was long after sunrise when we arrived, but so thickly wooded is the country around, that I obtained not a single glimpse of the town until I suddenly found myself "there," as the driver said, dismounting and opening the door of our prison house. The hotel into which I was ushered would perhaps compare favorably with our country taverns at the North; but at each step I took, I felt a more and more painful consciousness that home, my home, was far away.

After shaking the dust from my traveling dress, and slaking my thirst from the big gourd shell which hung by the side of a bucket of cool water which stood on a little stand in the parlor, I inquired for some one who would take to Mrs. Lansing my card, and thus apprise her of my arrival. The landlady immediately summoned a bright, handsome mulatto boy, who, after receiving my orders, started off bareheaded for Cedar Grove, which the landlady pointed out to me in the distance, and which, with its dense surroundings of trees, looked to me delightfully cool and pleasant. After waiting rather impatiently for an hour or more, a large, old-fashioned carriage, drawn by two rather poor looking horses, stopped before the door. It belonged to Mrs. Lansing; and the footman, jumping down from the rack behind, handed me a note, in which the lady begged me to come directly to her house, saying she was herself indisposed, or she would have come down to meet me.

At the extremity of Main street, we turned in at a penderons gate, and after passing through two or three fields or lawns, stopped at last in front of Cedar Grove, which stood upon a slight eminence overlooking the town. In perfect delight I gazed around me, for it seemed the embodiment of my childish dreams, and involuntarily I exclaimed, "This is indeed the sunny, sunny South." It was very beautiful, that spacious yard and garden, with their winding walks, on which no ray of sunlight fell, so securely were they shaded by the cedar and the fir, the catalpa, the magnolia and the fig tree, most of them seen now by me for the first time in all their natural beauty, reminded me so forcibly of Eden. The house itself was a large, square building, surrounded on three sides by a piazza. The floors within were bare, but scrupulously clean; while the rooms lacked of the costly furniture I had confidently expected to see.

Seated in my seat in the parlor when I heard a sweet, childish voice exclaim, "She is in there—she is," while at the same time a pair of soft blue eyes looked through the crevice of the door, and then were as quickly withdrawn, their owner laughing aloud as if she had

accomplished some daring feat, and calling out, "I seen her, Hal—I did. And she don't look cross neither. You dassn't peek in thar, dass you?"

They were my future pupils, I was sure; and already my heart warmed toward them, particularly her with the silver voice, and I was just thinking of going out to find them, when I heard a light footstep on the stairs, and the next moment a tall, dark-eyed girl, apparently fourteen or fifteen years of age, entered the room, introducing herself as Miss Lina Lansing, and welcoming me so cordially that I felt myself at once at home.

"Mother," said she, "is indisposed, and has sent me to receive you, and ask what you would like."

I had scarcely slept a moment the night previous, so I replied that if convenient I would go immediately to my room. Ringing the bell, she summoned to the room a short, dumpy mulatto, whom she called Greasy, and who, she said, was to be my attendant. Following her up the stairs, I was ushered into a large, airy chamber, which, though not furnished with elegance, still contained everything for my comfort.

"Shall I wash missus' feet first, or comb her hair?" asked the negress, pouring a pitcher of water into a small bathing tub.

This was entirely new to me, who had always been accustomed to wait upon myself, so I declined her offers of assistance, telling her "I preferred being alone, and could do everything for myself which was necessary."

My toilet was neatly completed when I heard in the hall the patter of childish feet, while a round, bright eye was applied to the keyhole. It was the same which had looked at me in the parlor; and anxious to see its owner, I stepped out of the door just as a fairy creature with golden curls started to run away. I was too quick for her, however, and catching her in my arms, I pushed back the clustering ringlets from her brow, and gazing into her sunny face, asked her name.

Raising her white, waxen hand, she did for me the office I had done for her, viz., pushed back my curls, and looking in my face, answered, "Ma says it's Jessie, but Lina, Hal and Uncle Dick call me Jessie, and I like that a heap the best. You are our new governess, ain't you?"

She was singularly beautiful. A light shone in her lustrous blue eyes, which gave her the expression of an angel, for such she was—an angel in her Southern home, which, without her, would have been dark and cheerless. Her brother, whom she called Hal, was three years older, and not nearly so handsome. He was very dark, and it seemed to me that I had seen a face like his before; but ere I could remember where, a faint voice from a piazza called out, "Halbert, Halbert, come here."

"That's ma," said Jessie, getting down from my arms. "That's ma—come and see her," and following her, I soon stood in the presence of Mrs. Lansing, who was reclining rather indolently in a large wicker chair. She was a chubby, rosy-cheeked woman, apparently thirty-five years of age. Her eyes were very black, and she had a habit of frequently shutting them, so as to show off the long, fringed eyelashes. On the whole, I thought, she was quite prepossessing in her appearance, an opinion, however, which I changed ere long; for by the time I reached her, there was a dark cloud on her brow, evidently of displeasure or disappointment. Still, she was very polite, offering me her jeweled hand, saying, "Miss Lee, I suppose. You are welcome to Georgia;" then, after an instant, she added, "You don't look at all like I thought you would."

I was uglier than she expected, I presumed, and the tears started to my eyes as I replied, "I wrote to you that I was very plain, but after a little I shall look better; I am tired now with traveling." A strange, peculiar smile flitted over her face, while she intently regarded me as if to assure herself of my sanity. I was puzzled, and in my perplexity I said something about returning home if my looks were so disagreeable. "They were used to me there, and didn't mind it," I said, at the same time leaning my head against the vine-wreathed pillar. I sobbed aloud. "Like a kitten, little Jessie sprung up behind me, and winding her arms round my neck, asked why I cried."

"Jessica, Jessica, get down this moment," said the lady. "I did not intend to hurt Miss Lee's feelings, and do not understand how I could have done so. She is either acting a part, or else she strangely misunderstands me. Do you really think yourself ugly?"

"Of course I did. I had never thought otherwise, for I hadn't been told so ever since I was a child." Thus I answered her, and she believed me, for she replied, "You are mistaken, Miss Lee, for, however plain you might have been in childhood, you are not so now. Neither do I understand how you can think yourself ugly. I do not believe you meant to deceive me, but, to tell the truth, I am disappointed; but that cannot now be helped, and we'll make the best of it."

Perfectly astonished, I listened to her remarks, giving her the credit of meaning what she said, and for the first time in my life I felt as if I suppose folks must feel who think they are handsome. After this little storm was over, she evidently exerted herself to be agreeable for a few moments, and then rather abruptly asked me how old I was.

"Not quite eighteen," she repeated in some surprise. "Why, I supposed you were twenty-five at least! Don't you think she looks older than Ada?" turning to Lina, who answered quickly, "Oh, no, mother, nothing like as old."

Mrs. Lansing, "and will be here in a week."

"Oh, I'm right glad," said Jessie, while Lina asked if Ada was with him.

"No," returned Mrs. Lansing. "She is still in Paris with her cousin, and will not return until autumn."

"I'm glad of that," said Lina, to which Hal rejoined, "And so am I. She's so proud and stuck up I can't bear her."

(To be continued.)

IN A FIFTH AVENUE STAGE.

The Courtroom Man Who Bought to Aid a Fair Passenger.
"Allow me, madam?" "Thank you." And the quarter is passed up to the driver—no, not to the hole, where it remains tapping on the glass during the intervals when the hand is not engaged in ringing the bell. After a dozen blocks of ringing, tapping and calling, the fair passenger, with an amused face, quietly alights from the vehicle just before her would-be assistant turns triumphantly from the window to present her with the tardily procured change. A black look gradually steals over his countenance as he gazes in vain from one passenger to another; then he laughs heartily as an old gentleman dryly remarks:
"The bird has flown."

The truth dawns upon him. "Well, what shall I do with it?" he questions, shaking the envelope until the money jingles.
There are many suggestions, for riding together in one of those omnibuses is equivalent to an introduction. One says, "You deserve it for your trouble;" yet another, "Advertise for the owner;" yet another, "Drop it in the box." But still the present possessor is not quite satisfied.
"Well, 5 cents belongs in the box," he reasons, and all agree; he drops it in. "Five cents might pay my fare back, as I have overriden my street." Again all assent. "But what becomes of the rest?" and a worried expression crosses his face. "Oh, I know! Poor beggar, I'll give it to the driver; he needs it most."

Again a ring and a tap, the hand reaches in more promptly, and soon two envelopes are thrust back.
"I say, I don't want that."
"Why not? What do you want?"
"Nothing; it's for you."
"For what?"
"For you?"
"Oh? What d'yer say?"
"For you! for driving! for your health! for anything!"
The stage door is torn wildly open, says the New York Times, and the courteous man disappears amid the convulsive laughter of his late companions.

A Country of One Town.
When the Crown Prince of Siam was in America most of us realized how little we know of the only progressive Oriental state which remains independent of all European governments. One of the oddest things about the country is that for all its size and wealth and large population, it is a country of one town. Bangkok is everything to Siam. The author of "Siam in the Twentieth Century" says that Bangkok is so Europeanized that it does not fairly represent Siam as a whole, but Siam without Bangkok would be worse off relatively than France without Paris.

Bangkok is the seat of a very centralized system of government and administration. It contains the only permanent residence of the king, and all officers and nobles, except a few provincial officers, have their work and their dwellings in the capital. It is here, too, that they take all their pleasures, for the Siamese know nothing like the country life that the Anglo-Saxons love. If the Bangkok gentleman owns estates in the interior he does not live on them.

To the European, Bangkok is all Siam. Here he meets all the foreigners in the country, all officials of foreign governments and the mercantile community.
Apart from this unique importance which Bangkok holds in Siam, it is one of the most interesting of the great cities of the East. Tokyo and Kyoto have finer works of art. Peking strikes the political imagination more forcibly. Shanghai shows evidences of its enormous commercial importance, and Hongkong and Singapore appeal to Britons as outposts of their empire. But none of these towns claims such variety of interests as Bangkok.

None presents in such close juxtaposition a thriving European community side by side with an Oriental court which still keeps up the formalities of bygone centuries none such a quaint mixture of the ancient and modern, of material comfort and squalid barbarism; nowhere else are to be seen such diversities of life and nationality.

He Guessed It.
In one of the public schools of Brooklyn the other day the teacher of a class was suggesting to the young pupils words to be incorporated into sentences.
"Who can tell me something with man in it?" she asked with an encouraging smile.
There was deep silence for a moment, and then the chubby head of a fat, dull-looking boy in a back seat shot up into the air.
"Well?"
"It's pants."—New York Times.

Ernie—They say that college man "carried everything before him."
Mabel—Yes, I understand he was "waller" in a steam-hotel last year.
There are a great many promising young men who never reach the paying stage.

DOINGS OF WOMEN

Mother Wisdom.

Perhaps a bit of personal experience may be interesting to some one. I am one of the many busy mothers and housekeepers whose work is never done, and finding awhile ago that the monotony of my life was causing me to grow morbid, I tried to think of some way in which I could vary my work, and thus get the change which was so evidently needed.

Before the children came I had taken great enjoyment in music and English literature, but both had been sadly neglected of recent years, owing to other demands upon my time and strength. I therefore decided that every morning after the chambers were put airing, the dishes washed, and the children started for school, I would sit down at the piano and practice for fifteen minutes on some of the pieces which I had played years before, as new pieces would be discouraging.

Then, after dinner, I cleared the table, and before attacking the army of dishes which always awaits the housekeeper's unwilling hands at that hour, I lay down on the couch, and instead of reading the daily paper, whose records of murders, suicides and defalcations is so depressing, I selected one of the poets whose works had given me much pleasure in my school days, and spent half an hour in his society. The result after a few days was noticeable. While at work on the dishes before mentioned, strains of music from the practice of the morning, or a thought from the poem read at noon, would float through my mind, affecting me so pleasantly that I have decided to continue the custom indefinitely.

If we wish to train our children aright, we must have beautiful thoughts, but as the springs in the mountains would fall to supply the brooks were it not for the rains, so our springs of thought will become exhausted unless they are occasionally replenished.

Bible reading with the children for five minutes every morning smooths things for the day wonderfully, and they grow so accustomed to it as to ask for it themselves if it should by chance be forgotten.

Better by far omit some of the endless dusting and putting to rights that starve our minds by neglecting to use some of the beautiful things God has given us to nourish them. All may not care for poetry and music, but we all can appreciate a half-hour's rest, and most of us like reading of some kind. A complete change of thoughts is what is necessary if we are to rest. I hope some tired mother will try the plan mentioned, and reap the benefit which will surely come from it if she is persistent.—Mrs. Marian L. Ward in Home Science Magazine.

Housework Good Exercise.

There are plenty of women who scorn housework but are devoted to gymnastics. Now the best of all-round, indoor exercise is to be found in the manifold duties of housekeeping. Bedmaking, sweeping, dusting, even cooking, bring more than one set of muscles into play, and none of them is more destructive to the beauty of the hands than gymnasium work and outdoor games. We are not advocating the performing of all the home duties, without assistance of any kind, but of parts of them. Of course if you have a liking for the work, and the strength, do it all if you want to, but this is not advisable unless lack of money is the inducement. There are so many ways in which time can be profitably spent.

Woman Gets Good Appointment.

The United States War Department has announced that Miss Floy Gilmore has been appointed Assistant Attorney-General for the government in the Philippine Islands. Miss Gilmore is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Gilmore of Elwood, Ind., and is 24 years of age. She was graduated from the law school of the University of Michigan and admitted to the bar of Indiana two years ago. She went to the Philippines as stenographer, and by good work has won a distinction never before attained by a woman.

For Those Tiresome Moments.

While you are arranging the parlor just have a thought for the visitors who might sometimes wait to see you, and carefully refrain from putting every object of interest beyond their reach. Of course, as a careful hostess, you never mean to keep callers waiting; but if they come when the baby is on the eve of dropping to sleep or you are in the midst of planning dinner with the cook, you must delay a little, while they are reduced to staring out of the window or to an involuntary effort to penetrate some magnificent household secret.

The family photograph album is usually regarded as a sufficient resource in moments like these; but is there not something akin to "Indelicacy" in allowing strangers and ordinary ac-

quaintances to turn over the likenesses of our nearest and dearest—perhaps to criticize them with the freedom of unfamiliarity or the indifference natural to a lack of personal appreciation?

The late magazines, a book of good engravings, a household volume of poetry, photographs of foreign scenes, and a dozen other things are all good aids to the occupation of stray minutes. Moreover, they often suggest to the visitor and the host topics of conversation more profitable and interesting than the state of the weather or the history of the kitchen.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

The Saving Women.

If we are to believe the old proverb which says that "saving's good earning," then the earning capacity of women always has been greater than that of men.

Oh, the saving women of this world! The women who sit up late making over last season's clothes to save buying new ones; the women who scantly tip-toe across the floor to turn down the gas when papa dozes over his newspaper; the women who darn huge holes in basketfuls of stockings; the women who have a cracked teapot or old pocket book into which they drop stray dimes and quarters, taking the accumulation to the savings bank with guilty secrecy; the women who wash out pieces of carpet to make them appear fresh and new, who turn the trimmings on their hats and clean their gloves with gasoline, and cut down the clothes of Willie, aged 14, to fit Jumble, aged 10. Bless them, every one!

There is another sort of saving which might properly be termed hoarding. It consists in laying down rugs to prevent the nap of the carpet from wearing, in putting paper covers on prettily bound books, in locking up the little girl's French doll. We read the other day of a woman who made a plush cover for the rosewood piano, and a linen cover for the push, and a newspaper mat for the linen. We hope there are not many women like her. In this sort of saving there is often an admixture of folly. There is yet another kind. Saving care (at the cost of an exhausted body, saving lunch money and "skipping" the table, just as if you could cheat nature without incurring retribution; saving the price of eyeglasses at the cost of impaired or perhaps destroyed eyesight; saving money earned by the severe overstraining of mental and physical powers. Woman is not always wise in her economies, we fear, but the verb "to save" is certainly feminine.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Must Marry a German.

Mary Schmidt, of Peoria, Ill., whose father left her a fortune on condition that she marry a German, has already received a score of offers from eligible young men of the Kaiser's domain, but she has not made a choice. One of her most ardent admirers is a young Frenchman, and it is whispered that Mary may yet conclude that wealth is not really necessary to happiness after all.

When to Accept.

Discussing the all-important subject of proposals, the author of "How to Choose a Husband" remarks: "The first thing in choosing the husband is to realize what sort of man you ought not to choose. My advice to all girls is, first, to refuse at all hazards the man who proposes at a dance, because there is a glamour about a ballroom, and men often say at a dance what they wish unsaid the following morning. At picnics, what with washing up, carrying baskets and opening bottles, girls cannot only judge of a man's character, but it will be quite safe to accept a proposal made at one, especially if it is made before luncheon."

Easily Done.

When an aggravating little hole suddenly appears in an agate or porcelain-lined stew pan, do not throw it away as part redemption. Take one of the round-headed paper fasteners, such as lawyers or teachers are in the habit of using to keep the sheets of a manuscript together, push the two level flap-clips through the hole from the inside, bend back on the outside, then laying the basin on a hard surface, hammer the round head down flat on the inside. It requires but a moment's work and your dish is as good as new.

A Wedding Breakfast.

A wedding repast served any time before 1 o'clock would be called a wedding breakfast. The usual menu for a simple wedding breakfast is any cold sliced fowl, with creamed oysters or a salad on the same plate; a variety of thin sandwiches, and then tea or frozen pudding with small cakes and coffee.

No Chance to Talk.

Mrs. Gummus—Does your husband ever talk of his mother's cooking?
Mrs. Gubaug—Not a word. His father died of dyspepsia.—Brooklyn Life.



MARY SCHMIDT.



MISS GILMORE.