

# Meadow Brook

MARY J. HOLMES

(Sunny Bank Farm)

## CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)

At last his mind was fully made up to talk with her upon the subject, when an unexpected arrival blasted his hopes at once, and darkened the glimmering sunlight which was dawning upon his horizon. It was a dark rainy night, toward the last of April that I sat with the family in the pleasant little sitting room. As usual, Mr. Delafield was with us, and this evening he was reading aloud from Longfellow's wonderful poem. He was just in the midst of Hiawatha's wooing when a heavy tread upon the piazza and a loud ringing of the bell startled us, for it was not often that we were favored with visitors on such a night as this. Zillah, the colored girl, hastened to the door, where she found a stranger, who, stepping into the hall, asked if Miss Rosa Lee lived there.

"Starting from my chair, I turned very white, for I recognized the voice of Dr. Clayton, who the next moment stood before me. I forgot the past—forgot that he had been my lover, forgot that Richard Delafield's eyes were upon me, forgot everything except that he had come from our New England, had breathed the air of my native hills, had heard the sound of my mother's voice, and had brought me undoubtedly tidings of that mother's welfare. Springing forward with a cry of joy, I took his extended hand, nor shrank away when, with unvoiced tenderness, he stooped to kiss my lips, whispering low as he did so, "Dear Rosa."

"Then, indeed, I blushed, for I knew his hand no right to call me thus; but the next moment it was forgotten, and with something of pride in my manner, I presented him to Mrs. Lansing and Mr. Delafield, the latter of whom greeted him rather coldly and after a few words of common courtesy, bade us good-night, but not until he had learned what until that moment was news to me, viz., that Dell Clayton had been dead nearly six months. As he passed me on his way out, he said so low that no one else could hear him.

"Fare thee well, oh, Laughing Water," referring to the line he had last read. There was a deep scowl upon his dark face, and as I gazed upon him, I could not help wondering if it were thus the old man looked when from his lonely wigwam door he watched the departing footsteps of his daughter.

"Come again to-morrow, Uncle Dick," said little Jessie, following him into the hall; but he made her no answer save his accustomed good-bye kiss, and I soon heard his heavy tread as he strode down the winding walk and out into the open field.

Yes, Mr. Delafield was jealous, terribly jealous of Dr. Clayton, the nature of whose business he readily divined, though I did not, and nothing was further from my mind than the thought that he intended honoring me with a chance of becoming Mrs. Clayton second. And yet it was this alone which had brought him to Georgia, he taking the precaution to send on in advance a letter, in which he had made known his wishes, and asked for a return of the affection which, for five long years, he said, had never known one moment of abatement, even though another had slept upon his bosom as his wife. But she was gone, and in her place, he would see blooming, he said, the Rosa he had loved so long. Owing to some detention this letter had failed to reach me, hence I was wholly unprepared for the scene which followed when at last we were left alone. I was talking to him of Anna, and from speaking of her and poor Herbert's death, it was an easy transition to Dell, of whom he spoke kindly, nay, even affectionately, as he told me of her last days; how much she suffered, and how gentle she became, never chiding him in the least for a thing unskillfully done, but seeming satisfied with everything, and loving him at last with a love which had been earlier born, would have shed happiness over his comparatively cheerless life. Then he told me of the little child, not yet three years old, whom he had called "Rosa Lee," and gently pushing back my curls, and gazing down into my face, he said, "It is a fancy of mine, perhaps, but I love to think she looks like you, who should have been her mother."

With all my stupidity, I understood him then, and blushing crimson, I moved away to the end of the sofa, while he continued, "What did you think of my letter? You received it, I suppose?"

"I had received no letter, and so I said; whereupon he proceeded to tell me its contents, a part of which the reader already knows. Utterly confounded and powerless to move, I sat motionless, while with his arm round me, he went over the past, recalling to my mind the time when first he had found me weeping in the squalid old school room, away to the northward; the night when, with the soft moonbeams falling around us, we sat together beneath the tall oak tree, while I laid before him my childish griefs; and, lastly, the many pleasant hours we had walked away together, listening to the sound of the running brook, which ran past the twining grape vine, whose broad leaves had rustled above our heads.

"On these occasions, Rosa," said he, "did nothing ever tell you how much you were beloved?"

"Yes," I answered, bitterly, my woman's nature rousing up as I remembered the times to which he referred. "Yes, and what did it avail me even though I was beloved? Ambition proved the stronger attraction of the two, and you wedded another. You, who, now that other was gone, would talk again to me of love; but Rosa Lee is no longer a child to be deceived, and you mistake her strangely if you fancy you can cast her off and take her up again at will."

And then again he told me how much I had been loved; how he had striven in vain to cast me from his heart, when I was wedded another. You, who, now that other was gone, would talk again to me of love; but Rosa Lee is no longer a child to be deceived, and you mistake her strangely if you fancy you can cast her off and take her up again at will."

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useless, even were you his equal. I trust that what I have told you will be kept secret, for Richard does not wish to have the matter discussed."

I nodded assent, and the next moment I was alone with my sorrow, which was far easier to bear now that uncertainty was made sure. So long as there remained a lingering hope that my love for Mr. Delafield might possibly be reciprocated, I shrank in horror from marrying another. But now that hope was swept away—for I never thought of doubting Mrs. Lansing's words—and a kind of torpor crept over me, suspending for a time both my judgment and my will.

"I will marry Dr. Clayton," I said; and with that decision came a feeling of gratified pride as I thought I should thus prove to Richard how little I cared for him!

Al! I knew not then that the heart I coveted enshrined no image save that of Rosa Lee, for whom Richard Delafield would almost have laid down his life, so great was the love he bore her. He had readily divined the object of the stranger's visit, and the thought that it might be successful was terrible. All the night long he, too, had been sleepless, pacing the length and breadth of his spacious halls and murmuring occasionally, as peering out into the darkness, he saw the glimmering light from the windows of Cedar Grove. "Oh, Rosa, Rosa, how can I give you up?"

With the coming of morn Mr. Delafield grew calm, for he had resolved upon an interview with Rosa Lee, who, if it were not too late, should know how much he loved her, and perhaps—his heart thrilled with joy as he thought it—perhaps she might yet be won from that fancy of her childhood. But first he would, if possible, learn from his sister how far matters had progressed.

She was seated at her work in her own room when he entered, and with a feeling of alarm at his pale, haggard face, she started up, asking if he were ill. Motioning her aside, he said, abruptly, "It's no use, Angelina, to deceive you longer. I love Rosa Lee, and if it were not for this accursed doctor, I should tell her so at once. Do you know aught of his intentions? Has he come to seek her for his wife?"

Mrs. Lansing had now a double part to perform. The falsehood she had told to Rosa made it necessary that she should tell another to her brother, which he did more readily, for her proud nature revolted at the thought of receiving her governess as her sister-in-law. So, thinking any means excusable which would prevent so disgraceful a catastrophe, she answered with well-feigned surprise, "I am astonished at you, brother—astonished that a Delafield should stoop so low as to think of wedding a girl like Rosa Lee. You cannot, I think, be in earnest; but if you are, I am rejoiced that I have it in my power to tell you there is no hope. I have just left Miss Lee, who has made me her confidant, asking if I thought it would be contrary to all rules of propriety for her to marry Dr. Clayton so soon after the death of his wife. It seems he has always preferred her; and could you have heard her tell how much she loved him, I am sure you would have no hope of winning her, even were she your equal."

Not again that day was Cedar Grove gladdened by his presence, and when next morning he came as was his wont, I was the betrothed of Dr. Clayton, who, with joy beaming in every look, sat by my side, talking to me of the pleasure we should experience in our projected European tour, for we were to visit the old world, and he wished our marriage to be consummated at once, so we could sail the last of June. In a measure I had dealt candidly with him, frankly acknowledging that the love I had felt for him in childhood was gone, but saying, as was true, that I respected him—yes, I liked him, and if he was satisfied with that, I would be unto him a faithful wife, hoping that the affection of former years might ere long awake again in my heart.

Involuntarily I shrank from him, for I knew I was undeserving of such devotion, and my conscience smote me for withholding from him the knowledge of my love for Richard Delafield. But that was a secret I could not reveal, so I kept it to myself, and with a kind of apathetic indifference listened while he depleted in glowing colors the joyous future which he saw before him when I should indeed be his wife. He was going to New Orleans on business, which would detain him for three or four weeks, and on his return he asked that the ceremony might be performed, and I go with him to Sunny Bank as his bride.

"No, not so soon," I exclaimed. "Leave me my freedom a little longer," but he only smiled as he waived aside every objection and won from me a promise that if Mrs. Lansing were willing, we would be married there as soon as he should return.

Either by design or accident, Mrs. Lansing at that moment entered the room. She playfully remarked upon the happy expression of his face, saying she should judge his suit was progressing, and adding that he had her good wishes for his success. Emboldened by her familiarity, Dr. Clayton at once preferred to her his wish that we might be made one under the shadow of her roof; we would make no trouble, he said, as we wished for no display, simply a quiet ceremony at which no one should be present save herself, her children and her brother.

At the mention of him I started as if smitten by a heavy blow, and I used all the arguments of which I was mistress to induce Dr. Clayton to defer our marriage until we reached Sunny Bank. But to this neither he nor Mrs. Lansing would listen. Glad that I was thus out of her way, the latter seemed unusually kind, offering to give me a bridal party as a "testimony of her respect." Thus was I silenced, while they arranged the matter as they pleased, it being finally decided that the wedding was to take place immediately after the doctor's return, as he had first proposed.

It was quite natural that I should in the morning meet Dr. Clayton with more cordiality of manner than I had yet evinced toward him. Quickly perceiving the change, he said, as he kissed my brow, "My Rosa is learning to love me, I see."

And for a brief moment I, too, fancied that he was right—that I should love him—nay, that I was beginning to love him, when suddenly in the doorway appeared the form of one, the very sight of whom curdled my blood for an instant and sent it bounding through my veins. It was Mr. Delafield. He had nerve himself to see me, to stand face to face with his rival, and bravely did he meet the trial, bowing courteously to Dr. Clay-

ton and smiling kindly down upon me. I glanced at him once and saw that his eyes were riveted upon the plain band of gold which encircled my fourth finger, confirming the truth of what he had just heard from his sister. At last, as if he would test his strength to the utmost, he placed my hand in that of Dr. Clayton and said: "As a brother commits a dear sister to the care of another, so commit I to your care my Northern Rose, charging you to watch tenderly over her, for 'tis not every one who winneth such a treasure."

This was all he said; the next moment he was gone, and when Dr. Clayton, drawing me to his side, told me how he would treasure up the words of my friend, I involuntarily shrank away, for the shadow was again around me, and turn which way I would it whispered to me of another love, another heart, which I fain would have called my own.

(To be continued.)

### LAZY "MR. HOPPERGRASS."

#### Industrious Miss Ant Rebuffed Him when He Asked for Food.

"You see, honey," said Mandy to her little plectanuy, "dat one col' wintah day Mistah Hoppergrass get hungry an' he remember him o' de pantry o' de Ant family, an' off he go to Miss Ant. An' when Mistah Hoppergrass come to Miss Ant's doah he knock, and den he say to Miss Ant: 'Please, Miss Ant, won't ye gib me some'in' to eat?'"

"Now, honey, dat Miss Ant was a mighty particular, workin' ant, an' she was washin' up de cabin just scrumptious like, for Miss Ant was goin' to have a quilting' bee dat afternoon, Miss Ant was, an' when Mistah Hoppergrass knock, up she get from de doah by the bucket o' suds an' she say: 'Who's dat?' 'Pears like dat's you, Mistah Hoppergrass. Now, what you want?'"

"'Please, Miss Ant,' say Mistah Hoppergrass, makin' his speakin' kind o' 'thin, 'Miss Ant, won't ye gib me some'in' to eat?'"

"'Go way, now,' called Miss Ant, just openin' de doah a trifle to see whedder Mistah Hoppergrass' coat's as thin as his speakin'.' 'Go way bodderin' roun' heah, Mistah Hoppergrass. What was you doin' all summah long? What was you doin', eh?' say Miss Ant."

"'Oh, I've singin', say Mistah Hoppergrass, kind o' hoppin' like and winkin' one eye at Miss Ant: 'I've singin'.'"

"'Yes, you're singin'. Sittin' on a high stalk o' grass bendin' in de wind, spittin' tobacco juice an' playin' jews-harp all summer long—dat's what you're doin', say Miss Ant. 'Go 'long now, Mistah Hoppergrass; go 'long now. I see not workin' all summah long, workin' all day all summah long, to lay up victuals for such lazy hoppers as you. Jess you keep on playin', Mistah Hoppergrass, jess you keep on playin' you harp till summah time come again.'"

"'So den, honey,' continued Mandy, according to the New York Times, "Miss Ant shut de doah o' her cabin and go on gettin' ready foah de quilting' bee dat afternoon, and lazy Mistah Hoppergrass he go bery hungry, and he cuddle himself in de big gum tree in your papa's swamp till summah time come again. But he couldn't play his harp, Mistah Hoppergrass couldn't, for de pain dat was under his apron.'"

#### Her Pride Was Crushed.

A little girl about six years old stood pensively in front of her home on N street the other afternoon, looking up and down the street. After a while she saw a group of three or four of her playmates advancing toward her. When they were still forty feet away from her she yelled to them:

"Don't come near me!"

The young ones stopped suddenly and gazed at the six-year-old with astonishment. Then one of them found her voice.

"Why not?" she inquired.

"'Cause," replied the six-year-old, with a distinct air of pride, "I've got the chicken-pox."

All of the tots except one scampered off in the direction whence they had come. The little girl who was not stampeded walked up to the six-year-old—she was about the same age herself—and said:

"Aw, I don't care, I had chickenpox years ago."

Whereupon the little girl who had announced her ailment with the air of pride looked properly crushed.

#### Modern Education.

The old-fashioned uncle was holding Ethel on his knee and asking about her kindergarten.

"And I suppose," said he, with the interest of one who had "spelled down" many a line of competitors, "that you study your spelling-book faithfully?"

"I have no spelling-book," said Ethel, loftily. "We're taught by the pathetic system."

"Phonetic," corrected mamma.

But when uncle got Ethel's first little letter, he decided that she was nearer right than mamma.

#### They Have the Better Way.

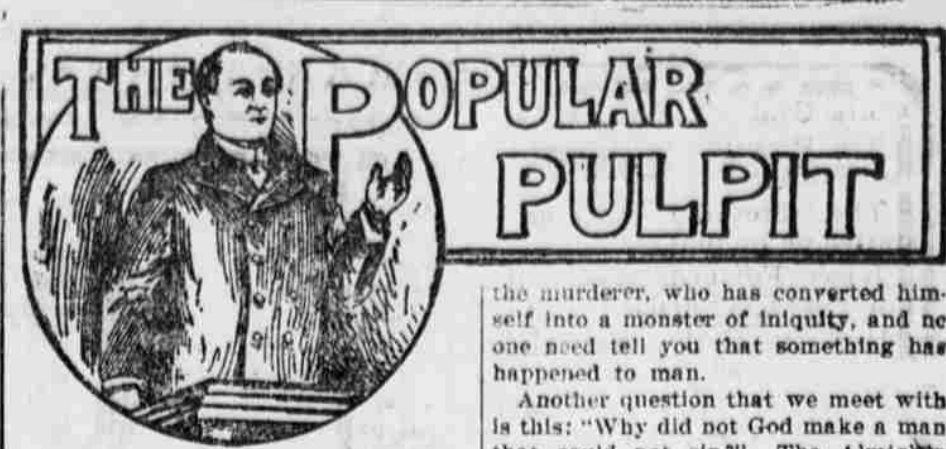
The Japanese back their horses into their stalls, and the door, to which a conveniently constructed grain and hayrack is fixed, closes at the head. No one needs to go in beside or back of the animal. There is no danger of being kicked, no refuse matter is visible and it seems a sensible way to arrange a place for any horse.

#### England's African Possessions.

Excluding Egypt and the Sudan, Great Britain owns 2,585,000 square miles of Africa, an area equal to more than fifty England's, and inhabited by about 45,000,000 people.

#### Growth of the Hair.

The hair of the head grows faster in summer than in winter.



## MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY.

By Alfred Singer, LL. D.

"And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand; so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."—I. Samuel xvi., 23.

God has again and again in his mercy shown us by bitter experience that the slight and study of the beautiful is of no avail against the insidious workings of the unconverted heart. The emotion that wakens us up from our lethargy, that for the time being stills in us the troubled waters of human strife, and the madness of ill-governed passion, is but for the moment, if it is not sustained by inspiration from a more permanent and abiding source of good. We need awakening, we need the stilling of the waters, we need the inspiration of the moment, but we need afterwards to live by the regulative virtue of a faith that stays on from day to day.

Yes, we are not to neglect, still less despise, the stimulus of the moment. We need it alike in our moods of turbulence and in our moods of lethargy. We need it to calm and also to inspire. Our error and our danger lie in imagining that we can trust alone to these moments that they will do for us what they were never meant to do. Their place in our education is that of witnesses and reminders rather than that of permanent forces and guides. The harp of David brought all heaven "before the eyes" of Saul, but when the music passed into silence the evil spirit came back. Yet he (Saul), we are sure, was responsible for these moments, for he should have been the better for them.

We, too, are responsible for such moments, for they are witnessed to a world of beauty, goodness and harmony lying above and around us; so near, did we but know it, to every one of us. But, O, so easily lost sight of, so easily forgotten! Such awakenings, such pleadings, as those which the young David brought to the stubborn and malignant king, are vouchsafed to us through a million channels of God's universe.

Beauty of nature, beauty of art, beauty of pathos in human character and vicissitudes of human life are all witnesses and forestays of the things which God has prepared for those who love him. We dare not trust to them. God is a jealous God, and for the love of us will not brook that his witnesses are accepted as his equivalents. If we trust to them for that which they cannot achieve we shall reap only disappointment and disillusion, if not shipwreck.

Such is the moral of the story, whether as applied to the individual life or that of the community. Let us thank God always for the times and seasons when some special visitation of his mercy, or some special realization of our brotherhood, has lifted us, if but for a season, above our common level of indifference. But let us also remember that we dare not trust to the thing lasting, for besides that reaction is inevitable, there can be no permanent healing but in the Spirit of God, and in the daily bread of his grace, in the gradual strengthening of character, and the daily repentance of the daily failure.

The tumult and the shouting dies,  
The captains and the kings depart;  
Still stands thine ancient sacrifice,  
An humble and a contrite heart.

There is one thought that will be constantly arising in the mind of the true lover of music, and it will resolve itself into the question, What can I do, what can I give to lessen the discord of the world and so make human life more musical? And pray believe me that the only way in which this can be brought about is by each one living unselfishly, living a real and blessed life of self-denial. At all times give generously, and constantly guard against the perilous resource of "excuse." Take fresh courage and make a new effort on behalf of those whose needs are so sore, and you will know of a truth that "Music, when sweet voices die, vibrates in the memory," and whispers most blessed incentives to new conquests over self in the days that may lie before you.

### "MAN TEMPTED IN EDEN."

By Rev. O. K. Jenks.

The first picture the Bible gives of man is where he is innocent in paradise and at peace with God. The next picture is where he is driven out of Eden and is a sinner and a wanderer on earth. The other day I saw a building with the chimney knocked down, the windows broken and the sides and the roof smashed in. I knew without being told that something had happened to that building.

Look at man. In paradise you see him made in the image and likeness of God. Look at him now, with his impotence, licentiousness and cruelty. There are whole districts steeped in blood and wholesale massacres until in many places earth is no longer a paradise, but a kingdom of the devil.

Look at the sensualist with his swollen look, the puppet with his powdered and painted face, the drunkard with his seedy clothing and bloodshot eyes,

the murderer, who has converted himself into a monster of iniquity, and no one need tell you that something has happened to man.

Another question that we meet with is this: "Why did not God make a man that could not sin?" The Almighty has made some creatures that cannot sin. The dog cannot sin. The monkey cannot sin. If a tiger gets loose and devours your child you shoot the tiger, but you do not brand him as a sinner. He does not sin because he ate up your child, for he was made that way. Let God make a man who could not sin and he would no longer be a man. He would be but a beast of the earth. In order to do right man must have the power of choice.

Let me illustrate this. Suppose that I say to my child: "Daughter, I am going away for a few hours. Be a good little girl; do not go to the park, but stay at home and help mamma." I start to leave, but fearing that my child will disobey I return to the house, take my child and strap her to the bedpost and lock her up in the bedroom. When I return in a few hours I find my child where I left her and say: "You darling girl, you have been good. Here is a new hat for your obedience."

You will at once say to me: "Man, you are demented. Your child was compelled to be good. She could not have done wrong had she wanted to." That is my answer to the foolish one who asks God to make a man who cannot sin. When you do that you are asking God to chain Adam to the post of foreordination and lock him up in the room of fatalism and with almighty power compel him to do right and then go through the farce of rewarding him for his obedience and goodness. We rejoice that the Lord does not work in that way. When he made man he created him with the power to do right, but also with the privilege of choosing the wrong. And this power of choice is one of the crowning glories of man.

### CHURCH FOLK COWARDS.

By Rev. R. A. Torrey.

Most of the people in Chicago are cowards. The majority of persons in this church and in every church in the city are cowards. Why? Because they are afraid to confess to the world that they believe in Jesus Christ.

The true hero is he who expresses his beliefs without fear of the consequences, he who declares his faith in Christ without stopping to think whether it will hurt him in society, politics or the business world.

Every man and woman admires a hero and despises a coward. Acts of bravery have been applauded in all countries and in all times and acts of cowardice have been hissed. This, however, applies to physical courage, and not to that high moral strength that makes a man do right for right's sake, that makes him speak the truth at whatever cost.

It is not easy for a man to stand on the firing line all day long, unflinchingly facing shot and shell, enduring hunger and thirst and the pain of wounds, but it is easier to do that than to stand the fire of public opinion and suffer the scorn of his fellow men in living the life his religion teaches and in following the dictates of his conscience.

Most of the people in Chicago to-day are cowards—moral cowards. Most of you in this congregation are in the same class. Doubtless in your hearts you believe in Christ, but how many of you have the courage to confess your faith to the world?

The Apostle Paul was the kind of hero I wish you to be. He was abused, scourged and stoned, and still he was outspoken for Jesus. Nothing could daunt his courage.

What this politic world of to-day needs is a Paulian spirit to offset the influence of society's frivolity, business schemes and political intrigues—influences that make cowards out of heroes.

### SUMMER COOLS RELIGION.

By Rev. Dr. George F. Hall.

Many people warm up religiously in the winter and cool off in the summer. The great apostle to the gentiles once urged the disciples to "Hold fast to that which is good." And Jesus said, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." At this season of the year it is well to caution Christians against backsliding. It seems a little strange, but it's true, that many warm up religiously in the winter and cool off in the summer. There are no heavenly promises to the unfaithful.

There are four things that every church member should do and to enable the memory to retain them easily I have often suggested them in the following blunt verse:

Read the Bible,  
And pray,  
Go to church,  
And pay.

That's the whole thing in a nutshell. The Bible is to the soul what food is to the body. It should be read daily. Prayer is the strongest thing in the world. Then it takes money to keep the heart in tune with the Infinite. Not that God needs our petty gifts, but he needs our affection and our faithfulness, and where our treasures go the rest goes.



REV. DR. HALL.