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CHAPTER V.

HE public wagonette in which Marjorie was to journey home ran daily between Dumfries and Annanmouth, a small seaside village much frequented in summer for its sea-bathing, and passed within half a mile of Mr. Lorraine's abode, which was just six Scotch miles away from Dumfries itself.

The wagonette was about to start, and Marjorie hastened to take her place. The vehicle was drawn by two powerful horses, and could accommodate a dozen passengers inside and one more on the seat of the driver; but today there were only a few going—three farmers and their wives, a sailor on his way home from sea, and a couple of female farm servants who had come in to the spring "hiring."

At last the vehicle reached the cross-roads where John and Marjorie were to alight. They leapt out, and pursued their way on foot, the young man carrying a small hand-bag, Marjorie still holding her school books underneath her arm.

Presently they came to a two-arched bridge which spanned the Annan. They paused just above the keystone. The young man rested his valise on the mossy wall, and both looked thoughtfully down at the flowing stream.

"It's many a long year, Marjorie, since we first stood here. I was a bare-footed callant, you were a wean scarce able to run; and now I'm a man, and you're almost a woman. Yet here's the Annan beneath us, the same as ever, and it will be the same when we're both old—always the same."

Marjorie turned her head away, and her eyes were dim with tears.

"Come away," she said; "I cannot bear to look at it! Whenever I watch the Annan I seem to see my mother's drowned face looking up at me out of the quiet water."

The young man drew closer to her, and gently touched her hand.

"Don't grieve, Marjorie!" he murmured softly; "your poor mother's at peace with God."

"Yes, Johnnie, I ken that," answered the girl in a broken voice; "but it's sad, sad, to have neither kith nor kin, and to remember the way my mother died—ay, and not even to be able to guess her name! Whiles I feel very lonesome, when I think it all o'er."

"And no wonder! But you have those that love you dearly, for all that. There's not a lady in the country more thought of than yourself, and wherover your bonny face has come it has brought comfort."

As he spoke he took her hand in his own, and looked at her very fondly; but her own gaze was far away, following her wistful thoughts.

"You're all very good to me," she said presently, "Mr. Lorraine, and Solomon, and all my friends; but, for all that, I miss my own kith and kin."

He bent his face close to hers, as he returned: "Some day, Marjorie, you'll have a house and kin of your own, and then—"

He paused, blushing, for her clear, steadfast eyes were suddenly turned full upon his face.

"What do you mean, Johnnie?" "I mean that you'll marry, and—"

Brightness broke through the cloud, and Marjorie smiled.

"Marry? Is it me? It's early in the day to think of that, at seventeen!" "Other young lasses think of it, Marjorie, and so must you. Our Agnes married last Martinmas, and she was only a year older than yourself."

Marjorie shook her head, then her face grew sad again as her eyes fell upon Annan water.

"I'm naebody's bairn," she cried, "and shall be naebody's wife, Johnnie."

"Don't say that, Marjorie," answered Sutherland, still holding her hand and pressing it fondly. "There's one that loves you dearer than anything else in all the world."

I've striven hard and hoped to become a painter, it has all been for love of you. I know my folk are poor, and that in other respects I'm not a match for you, who have been brought up as a lady, but there will be neither peace nor happiness for me in this world unless you consent to become my wife."

As he continued to speak she had become more and more surprised and more surprised and startled. The sudden revelation of what so many people knew, but which she herself had never suspected, came upon her as a shock of sharp pain; so that when he ceased, trembling and confused by the vehemence of his own confession, she was quite pale, and all the light seemed to have gone out of her beautiful eyes as she replied:

"Don't talk like that! You're not serious! Your wife! I shall be naebody's wife, as I said, but surely, surely not yours."

"Why not mine, Marjorie?" he cried, growing pale in turn. "I'll work day and night; I'll neither rest nor sleep until I have a home fit for you! I shall be a lady—O! Marjorie, tell me you care for me, and will make me happy!"

"I do care for you, Johnnie; I care for you so much that I can't bear to hear you talk as you have done. You have been like my own brother, and now—"

"And now I want to be something nearer and dearer. Marjorie, speak to me; at least tell me you're not angry!"

"Angry with you, Johnnie?" she replied, smiling again, and giving him both hands. "As if I could be! But you must be very good, and not speak of it again."

She disengaged herself and moved slowly across the bridge. He lifted his valise and followed her anxiously.

"I know what it is," he said sadly, as they went on side by side together. "You think I'm too poor, and you would be ashamed of my folk."

She turned her head and gazed at him in mild reproach.

"Oh, how can you think so hardly of me? I love your mother and father as if they were my own; and as for your being poor, I shouldn't like you at all if you were rich. But," she added gently, "I like you as my brother best."

"If I could be always even that I should not mind; but no, Marjorie, you're too bonny to bide alone, and if any other man came and took you from me, it would break my heart."

"What nonsense you talk!" she exclaimed, smiling again. "As if any other man would care. If I were twenty, it would be time enough to talk like that; but at seventeen—oh, Johnnie, you almost make me laugh!"

"Tell me one thing," he persisted; "tell me you don't like any one better than you like me."

"I don't like any one half so well, except—Mr. Lorraine."

"You are sure, Marjorie?" "Quite sure."

"Then I'll bide my time and wait."

By this time the village was in sight, and they were soon walking along the main street, which was as sleepy and deserted as usual. Even at the tavern door not a soul was to be seen; but the landlord's face looked out from behind the window-pane with a grim nod of greeting. A few houses beyond the inn, Sutherland paused close to a small, one-storied cottage, in front of which was a tiny garden laid out in pansy beds.

"Will you come in, Marjorie?" he asked doubtfully.

Marjorie nodded and smiled, and without another word he opened the garden gate, crossed the walk, and led the way into the cottage.

CHAPTER VI. AS they entered the door a loud humming sound came upon their ears, mingled with the sound of voices.

Turning to the right, they found themselves on the threshold of a room, half parlor, half kitchen, at one end of which was a large loom, where an elderly man, of grave and somewhat careworn aspect, was busily weaving. Seated on a chair close to him was a girl of about fourteen, dressed in the ordinary petticoat and short gown, and reading aloud from a book. At the other end of the room, where there was an open ingle and a fire, an elderly matron was cooking.

Suddenly there was an exclamation from the latter, who was the first to perceive the entrance of the newcomers.

"Johnnie!" she cried, holding out her arms; and in another moment she had folded her son in her embrace, and was kissing him fondly.

The young girl rose, smiling, book in hand; the man ceased his weaving, but remained quite still in his chair.

"Yes, here I am, mother; and I've brought company, as you see!" "Hoo's a' wi' ye, Marjorie?" cried the matron, holding out her hand. "It's a treat to see your bonny face. Sit ye down by the fire!" "Is that my son?" said the weaver,

in a deep, musical voice, but without turning his head. His infirmity was now apparent—he was stone blind.

John Sutherland walked across the room, gave his sister a passing kiss, and placed his hand affectionately on the old man's shoulder.

"It's yourself, my lad! I ken you noo. I feel your breath about me! What way did ye no write to tell us you were on the road home?"

"I was not sure until the last moment that I could start so soon, but I jumped into the train last night, and down I came."

"Who's ailing wi' you?" asked the weaver, smiling. "I'll wager it's Marjorie Annan!"

"Yes, Mr. Sutherland," answered Marjorie, crossing the room and joining the little group. "I met Johnnie in Dumfries, and we came home together."

The weaver nodded his head gently, and the smile on his face lightened into loving sweetness.

"Stand close, side by side," he said, "while I tak' a long look at baith o' ye."

"While you look at us!" echoed Marjorie in surprise.

"Ay, and what for no? Dinna think, because my bodily een are blind, that I canna see weel wi' the een o' my soul! Ay, there you stand, lass and lad—my boy John and Marjorie Annan; baith fair, baith wi' blue een; John proud and glad, and Marjorie blushing by his side; and I see what you canna see—a light all round and abune ye, coming oot o' the golden gates o' Heaven! Stand still a wee and hark! Do ye hear nothing? Ay, but I can hear! A sound like kirk-bells ringing far awa'."

As he spoke he sat with shining face, as if he indeed gazed on the sweet vision he was describing. Marjorie grieved as she saw only too conscious of the old man's meaning, and, remembering what had taken place that day, she felt constrained and almost annoyed.

John Sutherland shared her uneasiness, and to divert the conversation into another channel, he spoke to his young sister, who stood smiling close by.

Marjorie, uneasy lest the old man's dreamy talk should again take an awkward turn, was determined to make her escape.

"Good-bye now, Mr. Sutherland," she said, taking his hand in hers, "I must run home; Mr. Lorraine will be expecting me."

And before any one could say a word to detain her, she was crossing the threshold of the cottage. Young Sutherland followed her as far as the garden gate.

"Marjorie," he said, "I hope you're not angry?"

"No, no," she replied; "but I wish your father would not talk as if we were courting, Johnnie. It makes me feel so awkward, and you know it is not true."

"Old folk will talk," said John Sutherland, "and father only speaks out of the fullness of his heart. He is very fond of you, Marjorie!"

"I know that, and I of him—that is why it troubles me to hear him talk like that."

There was a moment's pause; then Sutherland sadly held out his hand.

"Well, good-bye, just now, I'll be looking ye up at the manse!" "Good-bye!" she answered. "Come soon! Mr. Lorraine will be so glad to see you."

So she hastened away, while Sutherland, with a sigh, stood looking after her. He had loved her so long and so silently, and now for the first time in his life he began to dread that she might not love him in return. To him, just then, it seemed as if all the world was darkened, the blue sky clouded, all the sweet spring weather touched with a wintry sense of fear.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

ORANGES WITH HORNS.

Some Strange Varieties of the Fruit Grown by the Chinese.

The Chinese are very fond of monstrous forms of fruit and flowers, and any departure from the normal form is usually cherished and highly valued. In their gardens they have numerous forms of monstrous oranges—some will produce fruit with points like fingers, and are known as the Hand Orange. Another form, says Meehan's Monthly, has a long horn projecting from the apex, and they are known as the Horn Orange. Another variety, which botanists have known by the name of Citrus aurantium distortum, bears a fruit in the resemblance of a cluster of sea shells. To one ignorant of the laws of vegetable morphology, these spells of wandering from the normal type are very mysterious, but when it is understood that all parts of the orange, as well as other fruits, are made up of what would have been leaves or branches changed so as to constitute the various parts of the seed and seed vessels, and that a very little difference in the degree of life energy will change them into various different parts that come to make up the fruit, the mystery in a great measure is solved. There are few branches of botany which give the lover of fruits and flowers so much pleasure as the study of morphology.

A Good Idea. "I see from the war news," remarked Mrs. Snaggs, "that several magazines have been captured."

"Yes," replied Mr. Snaggs. "I suppose the object is to prevent the editors from filling their pages with war articles for the next twenty-five years."

—Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

The countries relatively richest in horses and horned cattle are Argentina and Uruguay. Australia has the most sheep; Servia has the greatest number of pigs to the population.

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"RUSTICITY IN A PALACE" SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

Preached from the Text: Genesis, Chapter XLV., Verse 28, as follows: "I Will Go and See Him Before I Die,"—Jacob's Great Years.

JACOB had long since passed the hundred year milestone. In those times people were distinguished for longevity. In the centuries after, persons lived to great age. Galen, the most celebrated physician of his time, took so little of his own medicine, that he lived to one hundred and forty years. A man of undoubted veracity on the witness stand in England swore that he remembered an event one hundred and fifty years before. Lord Bacon speaks of a countess who had cut three sets of teeth, and died at one hundred and forty years. Joseph Crele, of Pennsylvania, lived one hundred and forty years. In 1857 a book was printed containing the names of thirty-seven persons who lived one hundred and forty years, and the names of eleven persons who lived one hundred and fifty years.

Among the grand old people of whom we have record was Jacob, the shepherd of the text. But he had a bad lot of boys. They were jealous and ambitious and every way unprincipled. Joseph, however, seemed to be an exception, but he had been gone many years, and the probability was that he was dead. As sometimes now in a house you will find kept at the table a vacant chair, a plate, a knife, a fork, for some deceased member of the family, so Jacob kept in his heart a place for his beloved Joseph. There sits the old man, the flock of one hundred and forty years in their flight having alighted long enough to leave the marks of their claw on forehead and cheek and temple. His long beard snows down over his chest. His eyes are somewhat dim, and he can see farther when they are closed than when they are open, for he can see clear back into the time when beautiful Rachel, his wife, was living, and his children shook the Oriental abode with their merriment.

The centenarian is sitting dreaming over the past when he hears a wagon rumbling to the front door. He gets up and goes to the door to see who has arrived, and his long absent sons from Egypt come in and announce to him that Joseph, instead of being dead, is living in an Egyptian palace, with all the investiture of prime minister, next to the king in the mightiest empire of the world! The news was too sudden and too good for the old man, and his cheeks whiten, and he has a dazed look, and his staff falls out of his hand, and he would have dropped had not the sons caught him and led him to a lounge and put cold water on his face, and fanned him a little.

In that half delirium the old man mumbles something about his son Joseph. He says: "You don't mean Joseph, do you? My dear son who has been dead so long? You don't mean Joseph, do you?" But after they had fully resuscitated him, and the news was confirmed, the tears began their winding way down the crossroads of the wrinkles, and the sunken lips of the old man quiver, and he brings his bent fingers together as he says: "Joseph is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die."

It did not take the old man a great while to get ready, I warrant you. He put on his best clothes that the shepherd's wardrobe could afford. He got into the wagon, and though the aged are cautious and like to ride slow, the wagon did not get along fast enough for this old man; and when the wagon with the old man met Joseph's chariot coming down to meet him, and Joseph got out of the chariot and got into the wagon and threw his arms around his father's neck, it was an antithesis of royalty and rusticity, of simplicity and pomp, of filial affection and paternal love, which leaves us so much in doubt whether we had better laugh or cry, that we do both. So Jacob kept the resolution of the text—"I will go and see him before I die."

What a strong and unfeeling thing is paternal attachment! Was it not almost time for Jacob to forget Joseph? The hot suns of many summers had blazed on the heath; the river Nile had overflowed and receded, overflowed and receded again; and the seed had been sown and the harvest reaped; stars rose and set; years of plenty and years of famine had passed on; but the love of Jacob for Joseph in my text is overwhelmingly dramatic. Oh, that is a cord that is not snapped, though pulled on by many decades. Though when the little child expired the parent may not have been more than twenty-five years of age, and now they are seventy-five, yet the vision of the cradle, and the childish face, and the first utterances of the infantile lips are fresh to-day, in spite of the passage of a half century. Joseph was as fresh in Jacob's memory as ever, though at seventeen years of age the boy had disappeared from the old homestead. I found in our family record the story of an infant that had died fifty years before, and I said to my parents: "What is this record, and what does it mean?" Their chief answer was a long, deep sigh. It was yet to them a very tender sorrow. What does that all mean? Why, it means our children departed are ours yet, and that cord of attachment reaching across the years will hold us until it brings us together in the palace, as Jacob and Joseph were

brought together. That is one thing that makes old people die happy. They realize it is reunion with those from whom they have long been separated.

I am often asked as pastor—and every pastor is asked the question—"Will my children be children in heaven and forever children?" Well, there was no doubt a great change in Joseph from the time Jacob lost him and the time when Jacob found him—between the boy of seventeen years of age and the man in mid-life, his forehead developed with the great business of state; but Jacob was glad to get back Joseph anyhow, and it did not make much difference to the old man whether the boy looked older or looked younger. And it will be enough joy for that parent if he can get back that son, that daughter, at the gate of heaven, whether the departed loved one shall come a cherub or in full-grown angelhood. There must be a change wrought by that celestial climate and by those supernal years, but it will only be from loveliness to more loveliness, and from health to more radiant health. O, parent, as you think of the darling panting and white in membranous croup, I want you to know it will be gloriously bettered in that land where there has never been a death and where all the inhabitants will live on in the great future as long as God! Joseph was Joseph notwithstanding the palace, and your child will be your child notwithstanding all the raining splendors of everlasting noon. What a thrilling visit was that of the old shepherd to the prime minister Joseph! I see the old countryman seated in the palace looking around at the mirrors and the fountains and the carved pillars, and oh! how he wishes that Rachel, his wife, was alive and she could have come with him to see their son in his great house. "Oh," says the old man within himself, "I do wish Rachel could be here to see all this!" I visited at the farm house of the father of Millard Fillmore when the son was president of the United States, and the octogenarian farmer entertained me until 11 o'clock at night telling me what great things he saw in his son's house at Washington, and what Daniel Webster said to him, and how grandly Millard treated his father in the White House. The old man's face was illumined with the story until almost midnight. He had just been visiting his son at the capitol. And I suppose it was something of the same joy that thrilled the heart of the old shepherd as he stood in the palace of the prime minister. It is a great day with you when your old parents come to visit you. Your little children stand around with great wide-open eyes, wondering how anybody could be so old. The parents cannot stay many days, for they are a little restless, and especially at nightfall, because they sleep better in their own bed; but while they tarry you somehow feel there is a benediction in every room in the house. They are a little feeble, and you make it as easy as you can for them, and you realize they will probably not visit you very often—perhaps never again. You go to their room after they have retired at night to see if the lights are properly put out, for the old people understand candle and lamp better than the modern apparatus of illumination. In the morning, with real interest in their health, you ask how they rested last night. Joseph, in the historical scene of the text, did not think any more of his father than you do of your parents. The probability is, before they leave your house they half spoil your children with kindnesses. Grandfather and grandmother are more lenient and indulgent to your children than they ever were with you. And what wonders of revelation in the bombazine pocket of the one and the sleeve of the other! Blessed is that home where Christian parents come to visit! Whatever may have been the style of the architecture when they came, it is a palace before they leave. If they visit you fifty times, the two most memorable visits will be the first and the last. Those two pictures will hang in the hall of your memory while memory lasts, and you will remember just how they looked, and where they sat, and what they said, and at what figure of the carpet, and at what door sill they parted with you, giving you the final good-bye. Do not be embarrassed if your father come to town and he have the manners of the shepherd, and if your mother come to town and there be in her hat no sign of costly millinery. The wife of the Emperor Theodosius said a wise thing when she said: "Husbands, remember what you lately were, and remember what you are, and be thankful."

By this time you all notice what kindly provision Joseph made for his father Jacob. Joseph did not say, "I can't have the old man around this place. How clumsy he would look climbing up these marble stairs, and walking over these mosaics! Then, he would be putting his hands upon some of these frescoes. People would wonder where that old greenhorn came from. He would shock all the Egyptian court with his manners at table. Besides that, he might get sick on my hands, and he might be querulous, and he might talk to me as though I were only a boy, when I am the second man in all the realm. Of course, he must not suffer, and if there is famine in his country—and I hear there is—I will send him some provisions; but I can't take a man from Padanaram and introduce him into this polite Egyptian court. What a nuisance it is to have poor relations!"

Joseph did not say that, but he rushed out to meet his father with perfect abandon of affection, and brought him up to the palace, and introduced him to the emperor, and provided for all the rest of his father's days, and nothing was too good for the old man while living; and when he was dead, Joseph, with military escort, took his

father's remains to the family cemetery. Would God all children were as kind to their parents.

If the father have large property, and he be wise enough to keep it in his own name, he will be respected by the heirs; but how often it is when the son finds his father in famine, as Joseph found Jacob in famine, the young people make it very hard for the old man. They are so surprised he eats with a knife instead of a fork. They are chagrined at his antediluvian habits. They are provoked because he cannot hear as well as he used to, and when he asks it over again, and the son has to repeat it, he bawls in the old man's ear, "I hope you hear that!" How long he must wear the old coat or the old hat before they get him a new one! How chagrined they are at his independence of the English grammar! How long he hangs on! Seventy years and not gone yet! Seventy-five years and not gone yet! Will he ever go? They think it of no use to have a doctor in his last sickness, and go up to the drug store and get something that makes him worse, and economize on a coffin, and beat the undertaker down to the last point, giving a note for the reduced amount which they never pay! I have officiated at obsequies of aged people where the family have been so inordinately resigned to Providence that I felt like taking my text from Proverbs, "The eye that mocketh at his father, and refuseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

In other words, such an ingrate ought to have a flock of crows for pall-bearers. I congratulate you if you have the honor of providing for aged parents. The blessing of the Lord God of Joseph and Jacob will be on you.

I rejoice to remember that though my father lived in a plain house the most of his days, he died in a mansion provided by the filial piety of a son who had achieved a fortune. There the octogenarian sat, and the servants waited on him, and there were plenty of horses and plenty of carriages to convey him, and a bower in which to sit on long summer afternoons, dreaming over the past; and there was not a room in the house where he was not welcome, and there were musical instruments of all sorts to regale him; and when life had passed, the neighbors came out and expressed all honor possible, and carried him to the village Machpelah, and put him down beside the Rachel with whom he had lived more than half a century. Share your successes with the old people. The probability is, that the principles they inculcated achieved your fortune. Give them a Christian percentage of kindly consideration. Let Joseph divide with Jacob the pasture fields of Goshen and the glories of the Egyptian court.

And here I would like to sing the praises of the sisterhood who remained unmarried that they might administer to aged parents. The brutal world calls these self-sacrificing ones peculiar or angular; but if you have had as many annoyances as they have had, Xantippe would have been an angel compared with you. It is easier to take care of five rollicking, romping children than of one childish old man. Among the best women of our land are those who allowed the bloom of life to pass away while they were caring for their parents. While other maidens were asleep, they were soaking the old man's feet, or tucking up the covers around the invalid mother. While other maidens were in the cotillion, they were dancing attendance upon rheumatism and spreading plasters for the lame back of the septenarian, and heating catnip tea for insomnia.

In almost every circle of our kindred there has been some queen of self-sacrifice to whom jeweled hand after jeweled hand was offered in marriage, but who stayed on the old place because of the sense of filial obligation, until the health was gone and the attractiveness of personal presence had vanished. Brutal society may call such a one by a nickname. God calls her daughter, and heaven calls her saint, and I call her domestic martyr. A half-dozen ordinary women have not as much nobility as could be found in the smallest joint of the little finger of her left hand. Although the world has stood six thousand years, this is the first apotheosis of maidenhood, although in the long line of those who have declined marriage that they might be qualified for some especial mission are the names of Anna Ross, and Margaret Breckinridge, and Mary Shelton, and Anna Etheridge, and Georgiana Willets, the angels of the battlefields of Fair Oaks and Lookout Mountain, and Chancellorsville, and Cooper Shop Hospital; and though single life has been honored by the fact that the three grandest men of the Bible—John and Paul and Christ—were celibates.

Let the ungrateful world sneer at the maiden aunt, but God has a throne burnished for her arrival, and on one side of that throne in heaven there is a vase containing two jewels, the one brighter than the Kohinoor of London Tower, and the other larger than any diamond ever found in the districts of Golconda—the one jewel by the lapidary of the palace cut with the words: "Inasmuch as ye did it to father;" the other jewel by the lapidary of the palace cut with the words: "Inasmuch as ye did it to mother."

"Over the Hills to the Poorhouse" is the exquisite ballad of Will Carleton, who found an old woman who had been turned off by her prosperous sons; but I thank God I may find in my text, "Over the hills to the palace."

A Big Job. Nell—I don't suppose the girl who married Jack Rappidde will ever have another idle moment as long as she lives. Belle—Why, dear? Nell—She says she married him to reform him.