

ONLY A FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

By
MRS. FORRESTER.

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)
Within a few weeks of the close of the season a very beautiful Frenchwoman came to London, and was received at once into the best society. Her story was a strange one, and one that excited a great deal of interest. She had been married at fifteen to a Russian prince, many years older than herself, and of dissolute character. At first he had loved her passionately; then, as he found it impossible to overcome her coldness and indifference, he had come to dislike and treat her with harshness. He had taken her away to Russia very young, very friendly, and intensely unhappy. There he had neglected her. She had two children—boys; and all her love seemed bound up in them. Then they died; the cold of Russia killed them, and she almost died of the grief.

The physician at St. Petersburg insisted that she should return at once to Paris. "It is the only way to save her life," he said to her husband. So after three years' weary absence, she returned to her birthplace, and there, after a time, she recovered. At the French court she was greatly admired and sought for. A young man of high rank conceived a wild passion for her. He was so handsome, so distinguished, no one believed she could resist the devotion he constantly and so openly offered her. It could scarcely be affirmed that she was utterly unmoved by his passion, but all the world said that she never gave him any undue encouragement. Still, Prince Zelikoff became jealous. One evening the princess dropped her bouquet; Monsieur de Ligny picked it up, bowed over it, and returned it to her. Prince Zelikoff chose to imagine the accident was prearranged, and that de Ligny had taken the opportunity of concealing a note among the flowers. He snatched the bouquet violently from his wife's hands. In her surprise she made some resistance; he grasped her arm and pressed the sharp-pointed diamond bracelet unthinkingly into the flesh. A little jet of blood spurted forth. The enraged de Ligny beheld it, and in a moment Prince Zelikoff lay stunned and bleeding on the ground. A crowd closed round them at once; with some difficulty the angry men were separated, but, of course, only blood could wipe out such a stain. A meeting was arranged; the seconds made the customary formal attempts at a reconciliation without success.

Valerie de Zelikoff knew well enough what the end of such a quarrel must naturally be. She knew her husband's fierce, indomitable temper, and she guessed the rage that had filled de Ligny's heart at seeing her treated with violence and indignity. Her heart was torn—in very truth she cared more for the handsome accomplished man who loved her so desperately, than for her dissolute, gray-haired, indifferent husband. But her religion had taught her faithfully the duty of sacrificing everything to right.

The morning of the duel arrived, no one was on the ground but the seconds, a doctor and his assistant. The doctor stood near de Ligny. Prince Zelikoff was known as a deadly shot. One, two, three, two flashes, two reports, a wild shriek, and a fall. And yet neither of the duelists was harmed or scathed. At the moment of firing the doctor's assistant had flung himself in front of the prince, had turned up the hand which held his pistol, and received de Ligny's shot through his shoulder. de Ligny, the seconds, and the doctor rushed toward him; the prince had already raised his head, and recognized Valerie de Zelikoff, his wife. The doctor explained it. He was an old friend of the family; she had gone to him and besought him to allow her to be present at the duel, arguing that she believed herself able to prevent it, and after much hesitation he had yielded. The wound was not a serious one; many a woman would have been glad to purchase the reputation for heroism that came undesired to Valerie de Zelikoff at so small a price of pain.

The action was thoroughly French, and as such intensely appreciated by all Paris. It was a crown of glory to her husband, and flattered his vanity to a degree that made him love her again as in the olden days. Great as the triumph was to Zelikoff, was the defeat to de Ligny. His amour propre could not recover from such a terrible blow; he had been prepared to risk his life to a well-known deadly shot to avenge an insult on the woman he loved, and she had received his bullet in her own tender flesh to save the husband who had so grossly wronged her. He went away until the affair had blown over, and then returned to Paris with a very young, fair wife, who had been taken from a convent to marry him. She adored him; he was cold and indifferent to her; nay, he almost hated her, when, six months later, Prince Zelikoff died of a fever, and the beautiful Valerie was left a widow at twenty-two. She passed a year in seclusion, then she again went into society, and, as has been said, came to London a few weeks before the close of the season. She was staying in the house of Lady Dora Annesly, Mr. Hastings' cousin, and her greatest friend.

Mr. Hastings saw a great deal of the beautiful Frenchwoman, and admired her exceedingly. She was not like any Frenchwoman he had met before—she did not talk much, or gesticulate, or seem to desire admiration. She was pale, large-eyed, essentially spirituelle. The chief fascination she possessed for him was the low, musical tone of her voice.

"I wish you would come more often to us, Errol," his cousin said; "we see so little of you. I am so anxious that Madame Zelikoff's visit to us should be a pleasant one, and she always seems happier, brighter, when you are there."

"You do me too much honor," Mr. Hastings said, mockingly.

"It is no empty compliment, indeed, Errol," returned Lady Dora. "I am sure she likes you much better than any one else who comes here. You ought to feel

flattered; the Princess de Zelikoff's coldness and indifference to men's attention has almost become a proverb in Paris. I am surprised you do not prefer a high-bred, graceful woman of the world, to an unimformed, simple country girl like that Miss Eyre. You see I have discovered your secret."

"Some men are foolish enough to prefer innocence in women to a knowledge of the world, Dora," Mr. Hastings answered coldly.

"Some men are foolish enough for anything," retorted Lady Dora, pettishly.

CHAPTER XVI.

More than once Sir Howard Champion had met his granddaughter, Winifred Eyre, in society. He had spoken very little; and the result of his quiet scrutiny was that he felt unreservedly pleased with her. She was graceful, natural and ladylike, and possessed a certain frankness of manner which could not fail to win for her liking and admiration.

One day he called on Lady Grace Farquhar. She and Winifred were sitting alone together in the drawing room.

"My dear," he said to Winifred, "we must not be strangers any longer. My other granddaughters are coming to stay with me in Hurstshire after the season is over, and I want Lady Grace to spare you. You will not refuse?"

"I think you would like to go, dear, would you not?" Lady Grace said, quickly.

Winifred answered a little hesitatingly in the affirmative. She would rather not have gone; but she could not bear to seem stubborn, or as if she bore malice.

The London season was over, the park deserted, the handsome carriages gone from the streets. Winifred was staying at Hurst Manor with all her cousins—Flora and Reginald Champion, and Laura and Ada Fordyce, Lady Valanton's daughters. She had met the two latter constantly in town, and been on speaking terms with them; but nothing more. The elder was rather plain, but aristocratic looking, and very proud. Ada, the younger, was pretty, good-tempered and unaffected. She took to Winifred at once, and soon became very fond of her; but her sister joined with Flora in being disdainful and cold to the farmer's daughter. There were two or three young men, friends of Reginald's, staying in the house, and Mr. Maxwell, to whom Miss Champion was now formally engaged.

"I have news for you, Laura," said Reginald one day, entering the room in which were his sisters and cousins; "indeed, news for you all. Hastings is not going to Norway in his yacht, but is coming down to the Court, and has invited several people with him, so we shall all be enlivened a little, I hope, in this dull hole. Lady Dora Annesly is to play hostess, so there is sure to be plenty of fun."

Some days after Lady Dora Annesly arrived at the Court with her husband, a young, good-tempered man, very fond of her, and not in the least inclined to be jealous.

There had been a very decided flirtation between Mr. Hastings and Lady Dora some years ago, before she was married or engaged; they sometimes revived it even now. He let her have her own wayward will in the matter of coming to stay at the Court and inviting guests and turning the old house upside down for private theatricals, and in return she was very bright and kind to him and consulted his pleasure in every possible way.

Lady Dora made all her plans and Errol carried them out. He called on Mrs. Champion, gave her some hints about the tableaux and a desire for her co-operation. She responded immediately by calling on Lady Dora, and two days afterwards Dora appeared at Hurst Manor. The ladies, especially the young ones, were charmed with her, she was so bright, so fascinating.

There were a great many calls, conversations, hints, proposals and suggestions, and finally everything was arranged precisely as the mistress of the ceremonies had intended it should be. Then, of course, there were rehearsals at the Court; lunches, dinner parties, all manner of pretence for getting the young people together to perfect their parts. Scenery and dresses came down from London. Mr. Hastings spared neither trouble nor expense, and the Court ball-room was transformed into an elegant theatre. All the country round was invited; there were to be two hundred guests.

Winifred's heart beat fast for the first time she visited Hazell Court. She remembered how in the olden days that stately gray mansion into which she had never hoped to enter had been invested in her childlike dreams with all the romance which she had read of or fancied. Afterward it had been dearer still as the home of the man who had been to her a hero, a demigod. The time came to her when she had been the simple farmer's daughter, so proud, so happy to be noticed by the handsome master of Hazell Court. How her heart had sunk within her as she saw him paying court to the beautiful, aristocratic woman who seemed then so far above her; and how little she had dreamed of the advent of a time when she should be a more honored, more longed-for guest than they?

She said she could study her part best there."

Mr. Hastings left the room and turned his steps in the direction of the picture gallery. It was an intensely hot afternoon, and all the doors were thrown wide open. He looked into the long, uncarpeted room, and saw there a new picture in a new frame. He stood and gazed at it longer and with deeper feelings than he had ever gazed at any other picture there; it was the only one that was not his—it was the only one he cared for or desired ardently. Framed in the dark oak of the window, setting was a fair, graceful figure, half reclined, and a fair, upturned face. Errol half feared to break the spell that he stood watching. Presently impatience overcame the fascination. He went toward her, and the noise of his footsteps aroused her.

"Were you studying or thinking, Miss Eyre?" he asked.

"I hardly know, Mr. Hastings. Thinking, perhaps."

"It is too warm to study or think, either. Have you ever seen the Hazell portrait gallery?"

"Never."

"Should you like to see it?"

"Come with me and I will show it to you. Wait a moment, though; I must get the key; I always keep that room locked."

She waited, looking out of the window into the rose garden. In a minute he returned. She followed him and heard the echo as he turned the massive key in the lock. He stood aside a moment for her to pass, and then she heard the heavy door close behind her heart. She dared not turn; a dim consciousness of what was passing in his mind seemed to overshadow her. One by one she gazed at the portraits on the wall, at the beautiful, gracious-looking women and the stalwart men, to some of whom the present Mr. Hastings bore such a striking likeness. Presently she dropped her eyes from the wall and turned to him. She began a sentence and then paused abruptly blood-red with confusion at the intensity of his gaze. He put his hand on hers and essayed to draw her toward him, but she turned sharply away, trembling and frightened.

"My love, my darling," he cried, in a deep, strong voice, "do not let us misunderstand each other any longer. You loved me once; you do love me still, a little, I believe. Why should there be mistrust and constraint between us?"

His words were very sweet in her ears, but the false pride that had tormented her so long would not let her be happy even now, at the crisis of her life. She drew herself away.

"You have seen the wives that all the former Hastings have chosen—some noble, all fair. I swear before heaven none of them have been loved and revered as you shall be if you will be the last of the race! O, my darling! do not let a false pride make all our lives one long bitterness."

Tears came into her eyes—large tears that gathered and brimmed over, running down the fair face and making it sad.

"I loved you once," she half sobbed—"loved you with all my heart, as I could never love again. I was only a poor, little country girl then; you were a hero and a god to me, something different from any one I had seen before, and because I was simple and ignorant, and—loving, you despised me, and you treated Miss Champion with honor and courtesy because she was a fine lady, and—and you thought I was only a farmer's daughter."

GUESSES ON FUTURE.

HARD TO FORECAST COMING SKIRT FASHIONS.

Many Styles Are New Current and in Good Standing—Points the Economical Dresser Should Look Out for—Gotham Notes.

New York correspondence:

OST women would welcome a reliable forecast as to styles in skirts, but this is difficult to give. Many sorts are current, and all of them in good standing just now, and the showing is marked by much diversity. All that is well, but for women who want to choose now a skirt that will give stylish service in the fall or later, selection is largely a matter of guesswork. Dress-makers themselves are in the dark; at least, different ones suggest different make up very prettily in very full mod-



AS FIGURED STUFFS ARE TREATED.

els, and a lot of shirring, gathering and ruffling is used with excellent result, but when thicker materials are necessary this will be a difficult style to follow without giving to all but very slender women the outlines of a barrel, so many flatty refuse to entertain such patterns. Then there are the styles that have the front breadth plain, and the top of the skirt a yoke, but these require a deal of fullness in other parts, so take it all in all, it is a problem. Many thin wool goods are so pully and stretchy that they do not take kindly to pleatings and look all askew, so that style has fewer followers than was predicted for it. Then the present style of exceedingly wide insertions set in the skirts has the tendency to make the skirts look awry, so very wide insertions of the coarser laces often are put in as bands, instead of as insertions. This is a much safer plan to pursue, especially if the gown under consideration is of wash stuff.

Coarse, heavy cluny and Irish laces are fascinating, and it is easy for the shopper to forget all but the beauty of the weaves and patterns when purchasing, so it is well to consider all the outs of these coarse designs and have your mind fully made up as to just what it is wise to buy before venturing into the stores. Not only in coarse wash laces do ideas run wild, but many silk laces used on voiles,

herself, is whether it will not be wiser to buy one of the pattern suits of which there is such an abundance, rather than to attempt to put in medallions, insertions and patterns of lace. Some of the pattern gowns are very handsome, and it is possible to buy designs that are not at all common, so there will be no danger of coming upon a duplicate of your gown. Many linen colored wash pattern gowns combine two kinds of linen, and the way in which the two goods are employed is very ingenious. The embroidery will be very heavy, possibly wreaths of flowers, the center of the wreath having a piece inset of a coarser linen than that of the gown. The same coarser stuff often will form an insertion between two rows of embroidery put on in irregular pattern round the skirt at the knees. This trick is very pretty, and if it is desired, it is best to buy the gown ready to make up.

Some linen gowns in shades of dark blue are exceptionally dainty. They are serviceable, too, for the color does not allow them to show soil easily, and they have such a pretty surface as to escape altogether a rough and ready look. A handsome gown of dark blue linen had medallions of Mexican drawn work inset at odd places all over it, and wherever these medallions appeared they were surrounded with clusters of French knots. These knots were made of two threads twisted together, one black and one white, so that the black and white effect was carried out very daintily. A handsome red is being used a deal in linen suits, too, and it trims very finely with



AS FIGURED STUFFS ARE TREATED.

either black or white. Black and white ideas are as plentiful as ever, and many of them, without being flashy, are striking. Thin lawns, batistes and mulls are much seen in these combinations, and it is permissible to have the main part of the gown white and trim it with black, or to reverse this. The latter is rather on the order of novelty, and a black thin gown trimmed round the low cut neck with white insertions of lace is a very striking affair, and incidentally, an excellent medium for displaying a good neck. Then there is no prettier display of the arm than is made through thin black.

It is not detracting from the beauty of this summer dresses to point that they're unsatisfactory as forerunners of styles for cool weather. Both their beauty and their lack of value as sure guides for the future are suggested by the pictures the artist puts here. Seen from the rear is a figured French mull, freely shirred, topped by a collar of the mull made over white silk and finished with French knots. Together in the next picture are a figured mousseline de soie, white ground with pink figures, and a figured silk gauze lavender on white ground, with plain white silk gauze for trimming. From left to right in the concluding sketch are a white chiffon heavily trimmed with flower embroidery; a pale pink



A SHOWING OF APPLIED TRIMMINGS.

canvases and thin wool stuffs of fancy orders are so coarse as to be like spider's web, and while they are as dainty as can be, and will make up very prettily, they will be short lived, for the least pull of a thread will endanger their appearance. So it is the course of prudence to buy closer weaves if hard use is to be expected of the gown.

Another point to be considered if the purchaser intends making up the gown

Dragged-Down Feeling

In the loins.
Nervousness, unrefreshing sleep, despondency.
It is time you were doing something.
The kidneys were anciently called the reins—in your case they are holding the reins and driving you into serious trouble.

Hood's Sarsaparilla

Acts with the most direct, beneficial effect on the kidneys. It contains the best and safest substances for correcting and toning these organs.

Made a Difference.

Miss Mainchance—I suppose you've heard of my engagement to Mr. Jenks?
Her Friend—Yes, and I confess I was surprised. You told me once that you wouldn't marry him for ten thousand pounds.
Miss Mainchance—I know, dear, but I discovered later that he had fifty thousand.—Cassell's Journal.

The Water Supply.

"Not going to move away from that flat, are you?" inquired the friend.
"Why, when you moved in a few months ago you were in raptures over it—and it had hot and cold water all the time, and—"

"That's just it," replied the flat dweller. "I've been in hot water with the agent all the time because he threw cold water on all my suggestions as to repairs and improvements."

Equally Divided.

"You allow no beer in the house?"
"No; my wife and I never drink anything but wine and water."
"In what proportion do you take it?"
"I drink the wine and my wife drinks the water."—Lippincott's Magazine.

Thoughtful.

Doctor—I think you understand fully now the directions for these medicines and this is for your dyspepsia.
Patient—Why, I haven't dyspepsia, doctor.

Doctor—Oh, I know; but you will have it when you have taken those other medicines.—Tit-Bits.

\$100 REWARD \$100.

The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages, and that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers, that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of testimonials. Address
F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O.
Sold by Druggists.
Hall's Family Pills are the best.

Misplaced Affection.

She kissed him and caressed him,
But 'twas not what he desired;
He only looked at her and growled—
For she made the poor pug tired.

Human Nature.

Some people practice what they preach,
But it's a lead-pipe cinch
They preach to others by the yard
And practice by the inch.

Then and Now.

"When I was courting my wife,"
said the sad-faced man, "we were two souls with but a single thought."
"How about you at the present writing?" asked the inquisitive youth.
"We still have but a single thought,"
replied the proprietor of the sad visage.
"We both think we made fools of ourselves."

Contemporary.

May told a joke to Flo one day,
"Oh, my! that's old," said Flo.
"Oh, is it, really, dear?" said May,
"Of course, you ought to know."
—Philadelphia Press.

Very Stilt.

"Sketch you?" echoed the rambling artist. "What kind of a subject would you make?"
"Oh, I'll do as still life," grinned the tramp, who had not changed his position in the haystack for twenty-four hours.—Chicago News.

The Unexpected Happens.

"Why that look of surprise?" asked Blowell, who had just finished relating a remarkable story. "Didn't you believe it?"
"Yes; that's the peculiar part of it," replied his friend Naggeby. "I happen to know that it is true."

Hair Splits

"I have used Ayer's Hair Vigor for thirty years. It is elegant for a hair dressing and for keeping the hair from splitting at the ends."
—J. A. Gruenfelder, Granfork, Ill.

Hair-splitting splits friendships. If the hair-splitting is done on your own head, it loses friends for you, for every hair of your head is a friend.
Ayer's Hair Vigor in advance will prevent the splitting. If the splitting has begun, it will stop it.
\$1.00 a bottle. All druggists.

If your druggist cannot supply you, send us one dollar and we will express you a bottle. Be sure and give the name of your nearest express office. Address,
J. C. AYER CO., Lowell, Mass.