

The Minister's Wife

By MRS. HENRY WOOD

CHAPTER IV.

One morning there was a startling announcement in the Times. As Lady Avon's eyes fell upon it, she truly thought they must be playing her false; that her sight was failing her.

The living of Great Whitton was bestowed upon the Hon. and Rev. Wilfred Elliottsen, a personal friend of the Earl of Avon.

Her ladyship called out for her daughter in commotion; she sent her maid, Charity, to hasten her. Grace feared her mother was worse, and flew to the room with rapid steps.

"What can be the meaning of this, Grace?" gasped the countess. "Henry has not given the living to Mr. Baumgarten after all; he has given it to young Elliottsen!"

"Oh, indeed," said Grace, carelessly. "Harry can do as he likes, I suppose."

"No, he can't, in such a case as this. At least he ought not. Once his promise was given to me, it should have been kept. I cannot understand his going from it. It is not like him."

"Well, mamma, I don't see that it matters to us, whichever way it may be."

"But it does matter. I don't want a simpering young fellow like Wilfred Elliottsen down here, and whose wife goes in for rank Puseyism besides. She has only been waiting for his appointment to a church, report says, to make him play all kinds of antics in it; she leads him by the nose."

Grace laughed.

"It is no laughing matter," reproved her mother, "for me or Mr. Baumgarten. I shall be ashamed to look him in the face. And he had begun to lay out plans for his marriage with Miss Dane and their life at Great Whitton!"

"How do you know that?" asked Grace, quickly.

"Mrs. Brice told me so when she was here yesterday," replied Lady Avon. "She knew from the Danes that Ryle Baumgarten was to have Great Whitton and to marry Edith. Why Henry should be so changeable I cannot imagine."

Lady Avon was evidently very much annoyed, and justly so; annoyed at the fact, and annoyed because she was unable to understand her son, who was neither capricious nor inconsiderate. She wrote a letter of complaint to him that day, and awaited his answer.

The ill news broke abruptly upon Mr. Baumgarten. The little hard-worked, inoffensive Mr. Brice, who had a kind heart and never failed to have a kind word for his patients, chanced to see in the Times the same paragraph that Lady Avon saw, and on the same morning.

"Bless my heart," he exclaimed, "what an unlucky thing! How could Baumgarten have made such a mistake? He said Lady Grace told him. Perhaps it was she who mistook the matter!"

Away he hastened to Whitton Cottage, the newspaper in his pocket, and into the clergyman's presence, who sat in his little study writing a sermon. And when he got there, he felt at fault how to open the ball. It seemed so cruel a thing to do. Mr. Baumgarten, who looked gay and unconscious, led up to it.

"Have you heard any particular news this morning?" began the surgeon, after a few words had passed.

"No," lightly replied Mr. Baumgarten; "I've not seen any one to tell me any; I have been busy since breakfast with my sermon for next Sunday. Nearly the last I shall preach at Little Whitton, I expect."

Mr. Brice coughed. "Have you heard from Lord Avon?" he asked.

"Not yet. I rather wonder at it. Every morning I look for a letter from him, but it does not come. He may be in France again for all I know myself; I don't like to call at Avon House until my appointment is confirmed. It would look pushing; as if I were impatient."

"Well, I—I saw a curious paragraph in the newspaper just now, about Great Whitton being given away; but it was another name that was mentioned, not yours," said Mr. Brice. "I thought I'd come here at once to see if you knew anything about it."

"Not anything; newspapers are always making mistakes," smiled Mr. Baumgarten.

Mr. Brice took the paper from his pocket. Finding the place, he laid it before the clergyman, who read it. Read it twice over, and began to feel somewhat less easy. He read it a third time, aloud.

"We are authorized to state that the valuable living of Great Whitton, Hampshire, has been bestowed by its patron, the Earl of Avon, upon the Honorable and Reverend Wilfred Elliottsen."

There ensued a pause. The two gentlemen were looking at one another, each questioningly.

"It must be a mistake," said Mr. Baumgarten. "Lord Avon would not give the living to me, and then give it to some one else."

"The question is—did he give it to you?" returned Mr. Brice. "Perhaps the mistake lies in your having thought so."

"I saw it in his own handwriting, in his letter to his mother. Lady Grace showed it to me; at least, a portion of it. He wrote in answer to an appeal Lady Avon had made to him to give me the living. His promise was a positive one. It is this newspaper that makes the mistake, Brice; it cannot be otherwise."

"Any way, we will hope so," briskly added the surgeon. But he spoke more confidently than he felt; and perhaps Mr. Baumgarten had done the same.

Lord Avon's reply to his mother's letter of complaint and inquiry came to

her by return of post, and ran as follows:

"My Dear Mother—I canceled my promise of giving the living to Baumgarten at Grace's request. She wrote to me posthaste some days ago, telling me there were reasons why Baumgarten would be utterly unfit to hold Great Whitton, and begging me to bestow it upon any one other than upon him. That is all I know; you must ask an explanation of Grace. Of course, I assumed she was writing for you. It is settled now, and too late to change back again. Elliottsen will do very well in the living, I dare say. As to his wife wanting to turn and twist him to attempt foolish things in the church, as you seem to fear, I think it hardly likely. If she does, he must put her down. Ever your loving son,

"HENRY."

"Yes, I did write to Henry, mamma; I did ask him not to give the living to Mr. Baumgarten," avowed Grace, with passionate emphasis, when questioned, her cheeks aflame, for the subject excited and tried her. "My reason was that I consider him an unfit man to hold it."

"Why, it was at your request that I asked Henry to give it to Mr. Baumgarten; you let me have no peace until I consented," retorted Lady Avon.

"But, after reflection, I came to the conclusion that I ought not to have pressed it; that he ought not to have it, and would not do it; and the shortest way to mend the matter was by writing to Harry. That's all."

Lady Avon glanced keenly at her daughter. She was mentally asking herself what it all meant—the burning face, the tone sharp as a knife and telling of pain, the capricious conduct in regard to the preferment. But she could not tell; she might have her suspicions, and very ridiculous suspicions, too, not at all to be entertained; but she could not tell.

"I am sorry that a daughter of mine should have condescended to behave so; you best know what motive prompted it, Grace. To bestow a living and then snatch it away again in caprice is sheer child's play. It will be a cruel blow to Ryle Baumgarten."

A cruel blow it was. Lady Avon turned to her desk after speaking these words to her daughter, and began a note to the young clergyman, feeling very much humbled in mind as she wrote it. In the most plausible way she could, a lame way at best, she apologized for the mistake which had been made, adding she hardly knew whether it might be attributed to her son, to herself, or to both, and pleaded for Mr. Baumgarten's forgiveness. This note she dispatched by her footman to Whitton cottage.

Mr. Baumgarten chanced to be standing in the house's little hall as the man approached. He received the note from him.

"Is there any answer to take back, sir? My lady did not say."

"I will see," replied Mr. Baumgarten. "Sit down, Robert."

Shutting himself into his study, he opened the note. For a few happy moments—if moments of suspense ever can be happy—he indulged in a vision that all might still be right; that the note was to tell him so. It was short, filling only one side of the paper, and he stood while he read it.

Before he had quite come to the end, before he had well gathered in its purport, a shock, singular in its effects, struck Mr. Baumgarten. Whether his breath stopped, or the circulation of his heart stopped, or the coursing of his pulses stopped, he could not have told, but he sank down in a chair powerless, the letter falling on the table from his nerveless hand. A strange, beating movement stirred him inwardly, his throat was gasping, his eyelids were fluttering, a sick faintness had seized upon him.

But that he struggled against it with desperate resolution, he believed he should have fainted. Once before he had felt something like this, when he was an undergraduate at Oxford, and he had been rowing against time to win a match. They said then, those around him, that he had over-exercised his strength. But he had not been exercising his strength now, and he was far worse this time than he had been then.

He sat perfectly still, his arms supported by the elbows of the chair, and recovered by degrees. After a bit, he took up Lady Avon's note to read it more fully, and then he knew and realized that all to which he had been so ardently looking forward, was at an end.

"Her ladyship's notice does not require an answer, Robert," he said with apparent coolness. "How is she to-day?"

"Middling, sir. She seemed much upset this morning, Charity told us, by a letter she got from his lordship in London," added Robert. "Good day, sir."

Mr. Baumgarten nodded in answer. He stood at the door looking out, apparently watching the man away. The sun was shining in Ryle Baumgarten's face, but the sun which had been latterly shining on his heart, illuminating it with colors of the brightest and sweetest fancy—that sun seemed to have set forever.

CHAPTER V.

The Hon. and Rev. Wilfred Elliottsen took possession of the living of Great Whitton, having been appointed to it by Lord Avon. And the Rev. Ryle Baumgarten remained, as before, at Little Whitton.

Changes took place. They take place everywhere. The most notable one was the marriage of Mr. Baumgarten.

That he had been grievously disappointed and annoyed at the appointment of another to the living, which he had been

led to suppose would be his, was a bitter fact. He set it down to the caprice of great men, and strove to live down the sting. The chief difficulty lay in his contemplated marriage; and he deliberated with himself whether he ought for the present to abandon it, or to carry it out. He decided upon the latter course. It is probable that he deemed he could not in honor withdraw now, and it is more than probable that, once having allowed himself to cherish his hopes and his love, he was not stoic enough to put them from him again.

Mrs. Dane gave permission readily. As long as she lived and was with them her small income would augment theirs. And within a month of Mr. Baumgarten's disappointment, he and Edith became man and wife.

"You do quite right," warm-hearted little Mr. Brice had assured them. "The cuttings and contrivings necessary to make a small income go as far as a large one render a young couple all the happier. I ought to know; mine was small enough for many a year of my married life; it's not much else now."

The autumn was advancing when Lord Avon came down to pay a visit to his mother. His lordship brought with him full intentions to have it out with her, and with Grace, about that matter in the summer. He began with his mother. She knew no more of it than he did, she protested resentfully, for she was still sore upon the point. All she could say was that he had written to promise the living for Mr. Baumgarten and then gave it to Wilfred Elliottsen.

Grace was more impervious still. She simply refused to discuss the subject at all, telling her brother to hold his tongue.

"I don't see why you should blame me, mother," remonstrated the young man. "It was certainly no fault of mine."

"It was your fault, Henry," retorted Lady Avon.

"I told you of Grace's peremptory letter."

"Who but you would heed the wild letter of a girl? You should have waited for me to confirm it. As I did not do so, you ought to have written to me before acting. I did not care for Mr. Baumgarten to have Great Whitton; it was Grace who worried me into asking it of you; but as you promised it to him, it should have been his. You cannot picture to yourself, Henry, half the annoyance it has cost me."

Lord Avon could picture it very well. All this arose from Grace's absurd caprice. She had been indulged all her life—and did just as she pleased.

"And for you to put so silly a young fellow as Elliottsen into it," went on Lady Avon, enlarging on her grievances. "I told you his wife would make him play all kinds of pranks in the church."

"What does he do?" asked Lord Avon.

"Very ridiculous things indeed. He has put a lot of brass candlesticks on the communion table, and he turns himself about and bows down at different parts of the service, and she sweeps her head forward in a fashion that sets the whole church staring. We are not used to these innovations, Henry."

Lady Avon was correct in saying so. The innovations were innovations in those days; now they are looked upon almost as matters of history, as if they had come in with William the Conqueror.

"And the parish is not pleased with them?" returned Lord Avon.

"Pleased with them," echoed his mother. "He began by wanting to make every soul in the parish, laborers and all, attend daily service in the church from 8 o'clock to 9, allowing them ten minutes for breakfast and fifty for prayers; and she has dressed the Sunday school in scarlet cloaks, with a large white linen cross sewed down the back. One thing is not liked at all; the inexperienced rustics cannot be made to understand which way he wants them to turn at the creeds; so he has planted some men behind the free benches every Sunday with long white wands, and the moment the Belief begins, down come the wands, rapping the heads of the doubtful ones. You have no idea of the commotion it causes."

Lord Avon burst into a laugh. "I'd have run down for a Sunday before this, had I known the fun that was going on," said he. "The girls must take care the bulls don't run at their scarlet cloaks."

"Ah, Henry, you young men regard these things but as matters for irreverent joking. Mr. Baumgarten would not have served us so."

Presently he walked out. In one of the pleasant green lanes with which the place abounded, he suddenly encountered Brice, the surgeon, who was coming along at a steaming pace.

"Walking for a wager?" cried he.

"That's it; your lordship has just hit it," replied the surgeon, grasping warmly the ready hand held out to him. "I and Time often have a match together, and sometimes he wins and sometimes I do."

(To be continued.)

Even at Last.

"In the dark, still hours some one shouted 'Burglar!'"

"You don't say?"

"Yes, and then we all rushed out of our apartments and down the steps. In the shadows of a corner we saw a crouching figure."

"Gracious!"

"And we pummeled him until he was black and blue. Then the lights were turned on and everybody gave a cheer that could be heard a block."

"How exciting! And it was really the burglar?"

"No, it was the janitor. We had made a mistake, but everybody got the chance to settle up an old grudge."

An Eye to the Future.

"Would you rather marry a lawyer's or a minister's daughter?"

"A lawyer's. A divorce costs more than a wedding."—Houston Post.

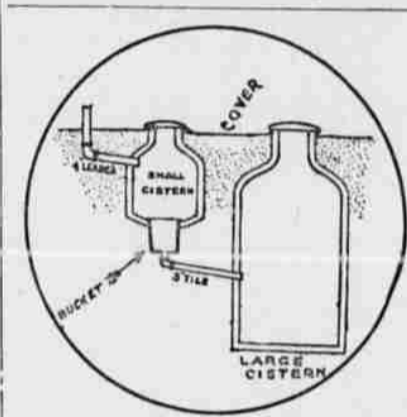
It takes mail at least seven days to go from Chicago to London.



Cistern for Drinking Water.

In digging a cistern, dig it deep and arch well under ground, closing in the arch to receive a 2-foot sewer tile to form the neck, which can easily be closed tight against toads and insects. By the side of the big cistern, dig a little filtering cistern, as shown in cut, that will hold from 10 to 15 barrels. Wall, arch and cement the same as large cistern, except that in the center of the bottom, which should be slightly basin shape, dig and cement a hole large enough and deep enough to receive a bucket that will hold 5 or 6 gallons.

Have bottom of bucket perforated



PLAN FOR LARGE AND SMALL CISTERNS.

with small holes and fasten a strong bale to bucket by which to lift it out. Have a strong flange turned close to the top of the bucket to rest tight on the bottom of filtering cistern round top of hole. You can make it watertight by resting flange on packing. If bucket is not good and strong, place a rest under the bottom, as there will be a heavy pressure when filtering cistern is full. From the bottom of the hole under bucket connect filter with cistern with a 3-inch sewer tile thoroughly cemented in.—Farm and Home.

Thrashes His Corn.

Years ago, says an Iowa man, I used to remove every other row of teeth from the cylinder, feed by hand, run the thrasher with a ten horse-power engine, and did fairly good work. But

Why Young Trees are Best.

These are the advantages of planting young trees: They can be trained to the desired form better than older trees. A two or three-year-old tree is branched and has had its head already formed by the nurseryman; a yearling tree of the apple, pear and sweet cherry is usually unbranched. Sometimes the nurseryman has headed the tree too high or has not been careful enough about starting out the scaffold limbs, and it is difficult to correct the form of the head after it has been started. There is an unmistakable preference for low-headed trees, due chiefly to the need of economy and efficiency in spraying and harvesting. The single disadvantage of low-heading is greater inconvenience in tillage. This is much more than offset by the advantages, in the judgment of most growers. Within ten years the height recommended for heading apple trees in East has been reduced at least two feet. The bearing of this on the matter of yearling trees is that the grower can head a yearling tree where he pleases.

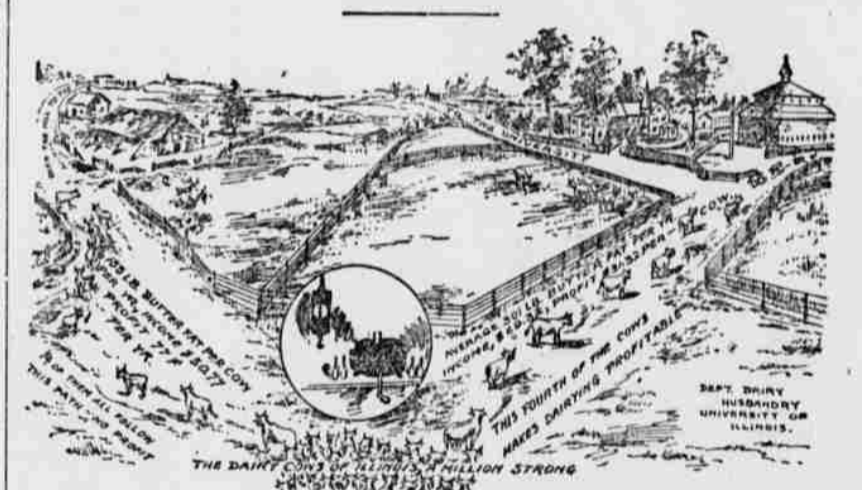
Aids the Farmers.

As showing still another service which the Department of Agriculture has rendered to the business interests of the country, we note in a recent bulletin that, solely due to the introduction of better methods of collecting turpentine, there has been an increase of 40 per cent in the output, amounting to \$7,000,000, while the long leaf pine forests of the Southern States, from which the American supply of turpentine is largely obtained, have at the same time been saved from annihilation. The cost to the department of the service rendered in this instance was \$14,000. This is one of many cases which go to prove that of all the money that is being expended by the federal government in any of its departments there is none which is fetching a larger return on the investment than that disbursed by the Department of Agriculture. For this reason pressure should be brought to bear on our Congressmen to make appropriations for this branch of the government work as generous as possible.

Seed Wheat.

In selecting seed wheat each and every one should be guided by his peculiar locality, but every true, enterprising farmer should experiment with some of the improved varieties—if only a bushel. A peck is better than nothing, for it can be compared with a like quantity of "old familiars," and the method and difference of growth, adaptability and yield noted. It is the farmer's duty to do this, and not

COW PATHS.



The department of dairy husbandry at the Illinois experiment station has been making investigations throughout the State as to the profit returned by the dairy cows. In the report which has been issued the state of affairs is represented very graphically in an illustration which is reproduced above. It is shown that half the cows are to be classed as medium, while the other half follow divergent paths. One out of every four cows produces not more than 133½ pounds of butter fat per year. This path is not the "milky way;" it does not tend upward and lacks the stary brightness—and the milk. Heading along the right hand path are the cows (one-fourth of the whole number) that mean profit, progress, plenty and an attractive home for the owner. They produce 301 pounds butter fat per year and leave a clear profit of \$31.32 each. The scales and the tester, as shown in the circle, are the instruments for the dairyman to use to distinguish between the profitable and the unprofitable animals.

recent years we let the cylinder remain as for grain thrashing. Use one concave with two rows of teeth, self-feeder, a sixteen horse-power engine, and do a better job, making the fodder much finer. It will crack some of corn, but makes it better for feeding. The fodder after being thrashed should be placed under cover, as it takes rain very readily and becomes spoiled for feed. I have fed a great deal of it and will say that when it is cut at the right time and well cared for I would rather have it, pound for pound, than timothy and clover hay for milk cows, but all stock eat it well.

Largest Poultry Ranch.

In central Pennsylvania a tract of 107 acres is to be used for a mammoth poultry farm, with a plant intended for ten thousand laying hens. It is claimed this farm will be the largest in the world. Perhaps the next largest is that of Mr. Hayward, of Hancock, N. H., who keeps six to eight thousand laying hens, in small colony houses. Mr. Hayward's farm, however, has been in actual and successful operation for many years, while the Pennsylvania project is as yet a mere outline.

leave it to seedsmen and originators. If all would try experiments there would soon be a great revolution in wheat culture.

Replanting.

Planting a tree where one has died often proves a failure, but we do not believe the failure is unavoidable. It is best to destroy the old tree and get as much of the root as possible, some time before the new tree is planted. Leave the hole just as the work left it until ready to plant the new tree; then fill it with good soil and plant the tree, tamping it well.

The Weaving Horse.

"Weaving" consists in a motion of the head, neck and body from side to side, like the shuttle of a weaver passing through the web, and hence the name given to this peculiar and incessant motion. It indicates an impatient, irritable temper and a dislike to confinement in the stable. A horse thus affected will seldom be in good flesh or be safe to ride or drive. It is not considered a disease, but merely an individual vice, and there is no cure for it that I am aware of.—Veterinary in Atlanta Constitution.