

The Minister's Wife

By MRS. HENRY WOOD

CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)

The guests departed at the sober hour of 11, and Lady Grace immediately prepared to go to her dressing room. The dean had been making up his mind to tell her all.

"Grace, don't go up just yet. Good night, Gertrude; run on, my dear," he said.

"Ryle!" uttered Lady Grace, as the door closed; "you are not well. I am sure of it. Something must be wrong. What were you doing when you were out of the room so long to-night?"

"Yes, Grace, something is wrong. It seems," he added, with a ghastly face, "as if I should almost die in telling you of it. Oh, my wife, how shall I tell you that I have been an embarrassed man for years, and that now the blow has fallen."

"What is the blow?"

"I am arrested. I must go to prison to-morrow morning."

So little was Lady Grace familiar with "arrests" and "prisons," that she could not at once comprehend him; and when she did so, the popular belief seemed to be in her mind that a dean, so enshrined in divinity and dignity, could never be made an inmate of a prison. The first emotion passed, they sat down close together on the sofa, and Grace poured forth question upon question.

"Ryle!" she suddenly exclaimed, "you had an advance from the bankers a day or two ago. I saw you draw a check for two hundred and twenty pounds—don't you remember? I came in as you were writing it. Is that all gone?"

"It was the last check they cashed—the last they would cash. The money was not for myself."

"For whom, then?"

"Well, I had to give that check to Cyrus to get rid of a little trouble. It was not much, Grace; as a drop of water to the ocean."

Whether as a drop, or a bucket, it seemed to freeze Lady Grace. "Cyrus!" she ejaculated, scornfully. "What right have you to help him when you cannot afford to do it? I shall tell Cyrus what I think of his despicable conduct."

"Don't do that, Grace. The trouble was not Cyrus'. He has not had a shilling from me. He got the check to extricate another."

"Another?" echoed Lady Grace, looking at him. "It was not—Oh, Ryle! it surely was not Charles?"

"Yes, it was," said the dean, in a low, sad tone. "He got into debt, and Cyrus took my check to Oxford to release him. No one can be more repentant than Charles is; I do not think it will ever happen again. It was not his fault; he was drawn into it by others. I had the nicest possible letter from him this morning; he says it will be a life's lesson to him. I believe it will. There—let us leave Charles' affairs for mine. Grace, this blow will kill me."

"If you went to prison it would be quite enough to kill you; but that cannot be thought of. As a last resource, money, I say, must be raised on my property."

"My dear, I thought you knew better than that. It is yours for life only, and then it descends to your children. The lord chancellor himself could not raise a shilling on it."

Lady Grace started up.

"Why, where are you going?" he exclaimed.

"To my brother. A cab will take me there in safety. He must manage this. Now, don't attempt to stop me, Ryle; what harm could I come to? If you are afraid it might do so, come with me."

"I wish I could. I am a prisoner."

"A prisoner!" she ejaculated. "Here, in your own house?"

"I may not quit it, except to exchange it for a prison. But, my dear, listen to reason. You are not likely to find your brother at this hour of the night; perhaps he is not even back from the races."

"I shall go and find him now," she persisted. "Ryle, how much are you arrested for?"

"The sum that I am arrested for is about four hundred pounds. But now that this crisis has come, I shall not escape without making arrangements to pay all I owe," added the dean.

"Close upon five thousand pounds?"

Grace looked upon him; he was sitting back in the large chair, as it seemed to her, gasping for breath. She saw how much the confession had shaken him. Running across the room, she kissed him fondly.

"Don't distress yourself, my husband. Henry will see that all comes right. I'll make him do so."

So Lady Grace went alone to the earl's residence in Piccadilly. He was not at home. His valet thought he might be at the club. Away to the club went Lady Grace. The earl was there. Lady Grace sent a message, which the porter took in and delivered.

"Why, Grace, what's up now?" cried Lord Avon, as he approached the cab. "Is Berkeley Square on fire? Or is Baumgarten made primate of all England?"

"Come inside, Henry, for a minute; I want to speak to you. The dean's arrested for five thousand pounds."

"Where's he taken to?"

"He is at home. They have gone out of their usual way," she said, "and allowed him to be at home to-night; a man is there, and will take him away in the morning. Henry, it must not be; you must come to his aid. Will you go home with me now, and talk things over with him?"

"No," said the earl; "I can't to-night."

What with the day's racing and the dinner after it, I am tired to death; fit for nothing. I'll be in Berkeley Square the first thing in the morning, and I'll get Baumgarten out of the mess if I can, for I like him. Good-night."

Lady Grace returned home. She was entering the drawing room when the butler, Moore, came suddenly out of it to meet her, and closed the door in her face. His usually florid complexion had turned yellow, and he spoke in a flurry. "Oh, my lady—not in there, please. The dean is taken ill, that's the truth. I thought your ladyship had best not see him."

She waved him aside in her willful manner. But at that moment Cyrus came out. He had just got back from Oxford, and it was his arrival which had brought about the discovery that something was amiss with the dean.

"I am going for a doctor, mamma," said Cyrus, and leaped away. Lady Grace went in, and Moore followed her.

Leaning back in a low easy chair, almost at full length, his head resting on the back of it, lay the dean. His face was white, his mouth was open, but his eyes were closed, as if in a calm sleep. Nevertheless, there was that in his face which struck terror to the heart of his wife. She touched the faithful old servant on the arm and cried aloud.

"Yes, my lady," he whispered, believing that she saw as well as he, "I fear it is death."

Lady Grace knelt down, and clasped her hands round her husband. In that moment of distress, what cared she who was present? She called him by endearing names, she kissed his face, she besought him to speak to her. But there was no answering response, and conviction told her that there never would be again.

Never in this world. Cyrus came back with a doctor; curiously enough, it was Sir William Chant. A small mercy this, for Sir William was able to testify to the cause of death, thereby avoiding an inquest.

The dean had died from disease of the heart, brought on by the evening's excitement. And the world, next day, was busy with the news that the Very Rev. Ryle Baumgarten had been gathered to his fathers, and that the rich deanery of Denham, richer in those days than in these, was in the clerical market.

CHAPTER XV.

It was not an ordinary match; it was something quite out of the common way; but Mary Dynevor was a girl out of the common way also. Not, however, as regarded beauty; in that respect she could not compete with her sister, Grace, or with her brilliant friend, Gertrude Baumgarten. She was a ladylike girl, with a pale, serene face, very much like that of her sister, Cyrilla, whose love had been blighted; her hair was of a rich brown, her eyes were violet blue; she was quiet in manner and calm in speech. That was the best that could be said of her, and yet it was certain that some unusual charm did attach itself to Mary Dynevor.

In the past year, when abroad with Lady Grace Baumgarten, Mary had made the acquaintance of Everard Wilmot, an attaché to one of the Continental embassies, and the son of Sir John Wilmot. Exceedingly to her own surprise, he had asked her to become his wife. On the impulse of the moment she went, letter in hand—for he had made the offer in writing—to Lady Grace.

"What am I to do?" she asked.

"One word, Mary. Do you dislike Mr. Wilmot?"

"I like him very much, and I esteem him greatly."

"And yet you come to me and demurely say, 'What am I to do?' Go away with you, you shy, foolish girl!"

So Mary accepted Mr. Wilmot. Nevertheless, she felt half-conscious that if she had had the courage to search out the hidden secrets of her heart it might have told her that her love was given to Charles Baumgarten.

Some few years had elapsed since the sudden death of the Dean of Denham. It was a terrible shock, that, to his wife and children. His affairs were arranged by the help of Lord Avon, Cyrus and Charles both doing also something toward it. A small sum of money, left to the boys by a relative, but of which the dean had enjoyed a life interest, they had at once sacrificed. Cyrus had returned to New Zealand. He was still in the same shipping house there, Brice & Jansen's, and held a good position in it now. He had not visited England a second time, but wrote occasionally. Sometimes his letters would contain a pretty-looking little check for Charles or for Gertrude.

Charles had done well at Oxford; had taken honors and gained his fellowship. He was called to the bar, and lived at his chambers in Plump Court for economy's sake; now and then staying for a few days with his mother in Berkeley Square, Lady Grace's residence.

It was February by the calendar. Judging by the wind, one might have called it March, for dust whirled in the streets and windows rattled. But Miss Dynevor's drawing room in Eaton Place was cheerful with its fire and wax lights. Dr. Dynevor was rather in the habit of calling it "my town house" when speaking of it, but it was his sister's and not his. His name was really Maude-Dynevor, though he was rarely called by it. Some people dropped the one name and some dropped the other. His wife's family name was Maude, and when he married her he had had to take it in addition to his own.

When Dr. Baumgarten was made dean

of Denham Dr. Maude-Dynevor was one of the prebendaries of the same cathedral. The word "prebend," or "prebendary," was then almost universally used for the higher cathedral dignitaries, "canon" rarely. Two or three years later Dr. Dynevor was made prebendary of Oldchurch, and quitted Denham.

When Lady Grace Baumgarten returned from her visit to the Continent and resigned his daughter Mary into Dr. Dynevor's charge and laid before him Mr. Wilmot's very handsome proposals, the subdean was intensely gratified, and was anxious to see his future son-in-law.

Dinner was over and all were in the drawing room except the subdean. On one of the large old-fashioned sofas sat Miss Dynevor in her flaxen wig; her head had drooped on to the sofa pillow and she was fast asleep. On another sofa sat the three girls in a half-circle; and, perched on one of its arms was their brother Richard; on the other arm sat the young man who had dined with them.

This was Charles Baumgarten. Nearly six-and-twenty years of age, not very tall, but stately and handsome, he was the very image of what his father had been as a young man. Richard Dynevor was little and insignificant.

"Isn't it a shame!" suddenly exclaimed Regina Dynevor in the subdued tone they had adopted for their conversation. "She says her limbs are getting bad again, and that she can't chaperon us to-morrow night!"

"Regina," interposed Grace, in a tone of sharp reproof; although Regina was the eldest, and she was the youngest.

"I declare that she said it," returned Regina, the whole party having imperceptibly glanced at the opposite sofa. "We were in her dressing room just before dinner. 'My limbs are getting bad again,' those were the very words she used."

"Very possibly; but there was no necessity for you to repeat them. We are not alone."

"We are," said Regina. "Who's Charles Baumgarten? Nobody."

"Nobody, as you say," interposed Charles.

"Regina's tongue will be the bane of her life," cried Grace. "Of course we are used to Charles, but it would have been all the same had there been a roomful of strangers present. She says anything that comes uppermost in her mind."

"Like papa," carelessly spoke Regina.

"Yes, but what is proper for papa is unadvisable for you," returned Grace, who liked to set the world to rights.

"Go on, Gracie," laughed Richard; "keep them in order. What else did Aunt Ann say?"

"Nothing. I hope it's not true, though, that she is going to be ill. We shall be kept prisoners, as we were last season."

"I'd rather run away then put up with it," protested Regina, fiercely. "It's not rheumatism but temper from which she is suffering."

Charles Baumgarten laughed.

"It is quite true, Charles; even you don't know her yet. I protest that it was half and half last year; a little rheumatism, and a great deal of cross-grained fractiousness. If she does have this attack, mind, I shall have brought it on. Little Archdeacon Duck called this morning."

"Archdeacon Duck—who is he?" interrupted Charles Baumgarten.

"It's the girls' name for him; she means Archdeacon Drake," explained Richard. "Let her go on, Charles."

"Well," said Regina, "you all know how Aunt Ann has been setting her cap at him, thinking, perhaps, he might convert her into Mrs. Duck the second. The little archdeacon was beginning with his foolishly complimentary speeches, and brought in something about aunt's 'locks, of which the weather, windy or wet, never disturbed the beauty.' 'Or if it does,' I put in, 'Aunt Esther can send them to the hairdresser's to be renewed; she is more fortunate than we poor damsels.'"

"Regina! You never said it!"

"Indeed I did. She looked daggers, and the archdeacon looked foolish. There's nothing she hates so much, either, as being called Aunt Esther. I was determined to pay her off," vowed Regina. "She had driven me wild all the morning with her aggravations. And now I expect she intends to pay us off by having an attack of rheumatism."

"A blessed thing for you girls if you were married and away," said Richard, cynically; "but you'll never find another Aunt Ann. I don't know where I should be for pocket money without her. I say, girls, I think Wilmot has landed."

"Then, if so, he'll be here to-night," said Regina, "and Mary is as cool over it as a cucumber! One would think—"

The subdean entered. Regina cut short her speech, and Charles Baumgarten slipped off his perch on the sofa and took his seat decently in a chair. In the presence of Mr. Dynevor his family put on their best behavior.

Whether they felt who it might be cannot be told. The silence of expectation was on all, and their eyes turned to the door as it was thrown open.

"Sir Everard Wilmot."

Dr. Dynevor and his buckles bustled forward with his right hand stretched out. A warm greeting to the subdean, a quiet greeting to Mary, holding her hand for a moment only, an introduction to the rest of the party, including Charles Baumgarten, and then Sir Everard sat down.

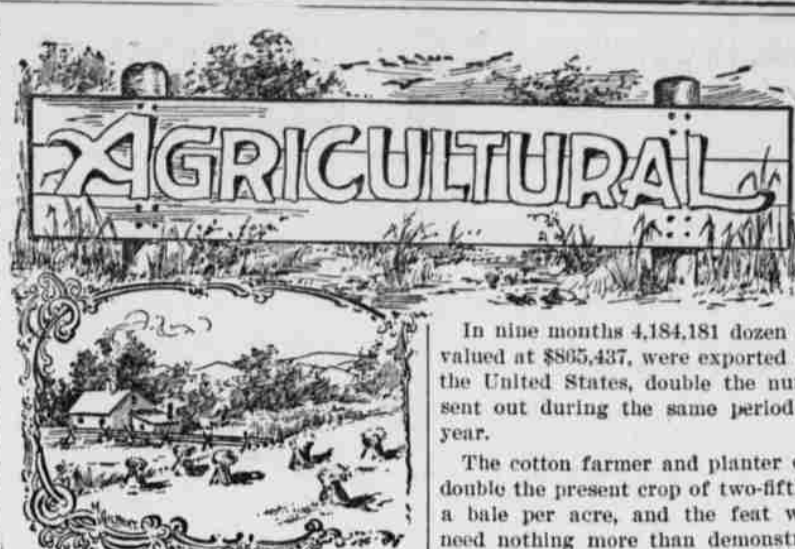
"Look at Mary," whispered Richard to his sister Regina. "Is she fainting?"

Regina started up and turned to her. Mary's whole frame was shivering, and her face had turned of a death-like whiteness. But she was not fainting.

"It will be over in a moment," she murmured to Regina. "Don't notice me, for the love of heaven! Talk to them—do anything—stand before me—draw attention from me." And soon the color came back into her face again.

(To be continued.)

Rhubarb should not be eaten by 'gouty' or rheumatic people.



Annual Losses Due to Insects.

If the power of the mosquito had not been proved to us beyond a doubt, we would be inclined to regard the estimate of \$700,000,000 annual loss to our farming interests caused by insects, which has been made by the Department of Agriculture as too startling to be true. The following table shows the basis of the calculation:

Products.	Annual Value.	P. C.	Amount of Loss.
Cereals	\$2,000,000,000	10	\$200,000,000
Hay	530,000,000	10	53,000,000
Cotton	600,000,000	10	60,000,000
Tobacco	53,000,000	10	5,300,000
Truck crops	265,000,000	20	53,000,000
Sugars	55,000,000	10	5,500,000
Fruits	135,000,000	20	27,000,000
Farm forests	110,000,000	10	11,000,000
Miscellaneous crops	58,000,000	10	5,800,000
Animal products	1,750,000,000	10	175,000,000
Total	\$5,551,000,000		\$595,100,000
Natural forests and forest products			100,000,000
Products in storage			100,000,000
Grand total			\$795,100,000

Such an immense sum being well worth the saving, the department has in its employ a large staff of men who are studying the life history of the pernicious insects to find out where they are vulnerable.

The work has been going on for some years and much progress has already been made. The cotton worm which formerly levied an annual tax of \$30,000,000 on the cotton crop, is now controlled by sprays; it has been proven that the ravages of the Russian fly which sometimes have reduced the wheat acreage in Ohio 40 per cent and in Indiana 60 per cent besides greatly impairing the yield of the remaining acreage, can be considerably checked by planting wheat at seasons when the fly is not so rapacious; the codling moth is controlled by arsenical sprays and \$20,000,000 worth of apples saved as a result.

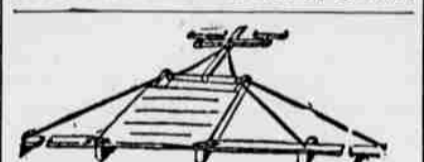
The orange and lemon orchards of California have been relieved of the white scale which threatened to destroy them, by the importation from Australia of the ladybird, a natural enemy of the scale. Many other instances could be given of the wisdom of watching the insects.

Milk Fat.

Of 319 samples of whole milk analyzed by a Canadian station, forty-five were pronounced adulterated and eighty-five doubtful. This was more unfavorable than the results obtained in previous years. Twenty-nine samples of cream examined showed percentages of fat ranging from 12.63 to 33.51. The author believes that the following standard should be established in Canada: Whipping cream not less than 25 per cent fat, and table cream not less than 17.5 per cent.

Four-Row Corn Marker.

The following suggestion, which seems a good one, comes from a farmer who has built and used one. He says: "This will make four marks at a time on ridges or in furrows. To turn at the end of rows, pull gang pole out of hole, lay it back, fold up outside runners, and you have just two runners to turn, the same as an ordinary sled. The sketch will clearly show the construction of the marker. On stumpy ground,



FOUR-ROW MARKER.

raise the outside runners as when turning, and go right along.

Farm Notes.

There is no sensible reason why half as much wheat again may not be had from an acre within less than a generation of time.

One-fourth of the dairy cows of the country do not pay for their feed, and more than half of them do not return any profit.

The Agricultural Department's annual report says the corn crop can be increased by one-half within a quarter of a century, and without any pretense that the limit has been reached.

Equally feasible is a 50 per cent increase in the crops per acre of oats, barley, rye, buckwheat. Potatoes, instead of growing less than 100 bushels per acre, should double their production.

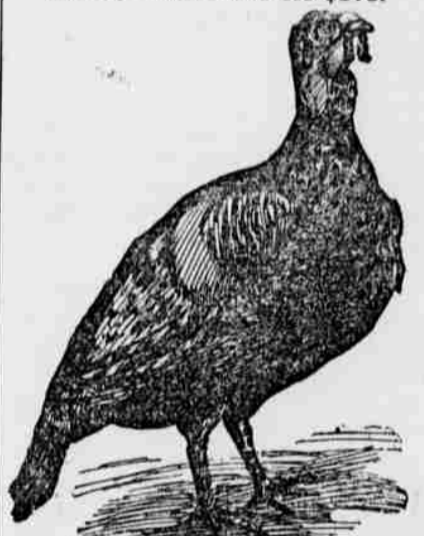
In nine months 4,184,181 dozen eggs, valued at \$865,437, were exported from the United States, double the number sent out during the same period last year.

The cotton farmer and planter could double the present crop of two-fifths of a bale per acre, and the feat would need nothing more than demonstrated and well-understood principles of farm management.

Alfalfa as a Weed Killer.

Probably no other crop, without a single exception, presents so many characteristics of value. As it is studied more and more, and as new experiments are made with it in different capacities, its wonderful capacities become more and more manifest. A very eminent authority has discovered that it is a weed eradicator of unflinching power. This will seem like contradiction to readers who have been cautioned about weeds, and which will prove more destructive to alfalfa than any combatable influence. Nevertheless it is strictly true that the plant is the greatest destroyer of weeds known. This comes not so much from any quality contained in the alfalfa plant, but from the inability of the weeds to endure having their heads cut off so many times in summer close to their feet. The most strenuous weed soon will succumb to this harsh treatment, while the alfalfa plant will thrive all the better the more it is cut. If weeds can be kept back from choking the young alfalfa plants until they, the alfalfa plants, are tall enough to be mowed, the question of weeds in the particular parcel of ground is settled. Therefore, it is wise to select a weedy piece of ground for the alfalfa field, but before sowing the seed every precaution should be taken to kill as many weeds as possible. This can best be done by simply following the oft-repeated injunction to thoroughly prepare the seed bed before sowing the seed. If this be done, and the tract harrowed and rolled after plowing at a time when the tiny weeds begin to show green over the field, and again just before time to sow, there will be the cleanest field on the farm before the year is out. There are many weed-infested farms and many farmers who have despaired of ever getting rid of the weeds. Alfalfa suggests the means of riddance.—C. M. Gluther in Agricultural Epitomist.

Turkey Which Sold for \$175.



Here is a fine specimen of a Bronze Tom Turkey, bred in Massachusetts. He is 3 years old, and sold for \$175.

Testing Individual Cows.

A circular by the Illinois Station emphasizing the importance of studying the production of individual cows contains records for one year of eighteen dairy herds in Illinois, including 221 cows. The average production was 5,616.99 pounds of milk and 226.63 pounds of butter fat. The best herd averaged 350.17 pounds of butter fat and the poorest 142.05 pounds. The best ten cows averaged 388.75 pounds of butter fat and the poorest 10,109.42 pounds. It is believed that at least one-third of the cows in the ordinary herds are practically unprofitable. A marked improvement was observed in herds where grading had been practiced. It was found possible to remove five cows from a herd of ten and thereby increase the profit \$7.62 per head.

Dissolved Bone Black.

When bone black is treated with sulphuric acid the insoluble phosphate which it contains is converted into soluble phosphate, says a Virginia bulletin. Dissolved bone black contains from 15 to 25 per cent of available phosphoric acid. In this form it is one of the most valuable phosphatic fertilizers. The question is often asked, is available phosphate from dissolved bone better than that from dissolved rock? It would be well, therefore, to state in this connection that available phosphoric acid has the same value regardless of its source.