

Aunt Diana

The Sunshine
of the Family

CHAPTER XXIV.—(Continued.)

It was pleasant to Alison to see her brother's quiet, respectful manners, so full of reverence for that wise and dignified old age, and the evident gratification with which Mr. Moore listened to him. She might almost have believed herself forgotten, but that every now and then the thin hand passed lightly over her hair with a caressing touch which told how he loved to feel Sunny near him again. Greville kept a little aloof from them, but not a movement escaped his notice. Once Alison glanced in his direction and met a grave, touched look in his eyes, as though something moved him.

Miss Carrington presently came in to see after her charge, for such she evidently considered the old man, and dispersed the little group. Mr. Moore must have his noonday rest, and then he would be well enough to play to them in the evening, but he had talked to them sufficiently for the present.

The rest of the morning was spent in tennis, and in the afternoon Miss Carrington joined them, and Greville and Roger rowed them to the Long Island, that Alison might revisit her old haunts, and the evening was spent at Fernleigh.

This was Greville's only idle morning; for the future he adhered steadily to his determination to work until luncheon, and as Alison resumed her old habits of painting under Aunt Diana's supervision, or playing to Mr. Moore or reading to him, Roger found himself left to his own devices.

He took Miss Carrington's advice and lived in the open air, either lying on the lawn with a book or paddling himself lazily in a canoe, till his face was brown and ruddy with health, and he grew as light hearted as a boy.

In the afternoons and evenings the three young people were always together. Tennis and boating or drives in Greville's dog cart filled up the afternoon. When Mr. Moore was pretty well the evenings were always spent in his room; sometimes he played on his violin while Alison accompanied him, or one of the young men read aloud while the ladies worked.

The old man always retired early, and then sometimes Greville would tempt them to a moonlight row or stroll, or if Miss Carrington refused this for herself and Alison, Roger and he would pace the garden in animated conversation.

The young men had become great friends. Greville, who was a few months older than Roger, always acted as though he were younger. Roger was full of quaint drollery, and loved fun in his own way, but Greville's spirits were liable to carry him away; he had plenty of character, but Roger's grave solidity and greater thoughtfulness were uncommon at his age; nevertheless Greville's gaiety and natural exuberance covered a depth of feeling that would have astonished people. "A man is a man for a' that," he would have said if any one had accused him of too much love of play; that he played well in his youth was no argument against his working well by and by.

"Young growing things must stretch themselves," Miss Carrington used to say in loving extenuation of her favorite. When a good woman thinks well of a man there can not be much amiss with him. Miss Carrington always said Greville was a fine creature, and she had tolerably shrewd judgment of her own.

Aunt Diana had resolved that Roger and Alison should have as much play as possible, so she not only revived her Wednesdays, but she gave a boating party and a large picnic. Roger was a great favorite with the ladies, old and young, though he could not compare in good looks with Greville, but his honest face and courteous manners—the manners bred of a perfectly kind heart—won golden opinions, but Miss Carrington, who had reasons of her own for watching him, could not fail to notice that though he was pleasant to all the young ladies, he did not single out one as an object for any special attention, while on the contrary, Greville was always beside Alison.

She drew her own conclusions, but made no remark. She always said: "It was like brushing the golden dust off a butterfly's wing to speak of such things to young people before their time." But her heart was very full sometimes when she looked at Alison. "I will not speak to her; when the time comes, she will seek me of her own accord," she thought; "there are some things I can not teach her, that every woman must learn for herself."

That time came sooner than she expected. One evening she was sitting alone in the studio, writing a letter to her brother-in-law, when she caught a glimpse of Alison's white gown flashing between the shrubs, and in another moment the girl came swiftly through the conservatory, and stood beside her.

"Aunt Di, I want to speak to you."

"One moment, Allie; I have just finished my letter to your father. Have you any message for him?"

"Yes—no—oh! I can not think of one just now," she said, in such a trembling voice that Miss Carrington looked up quickly, and what she saw in Alison's face made her drop her pen.

"Come and sit here, darling, and tell me all about it," and as Alison hid her burning face, drawing down Aunt Diana's hands, as though they would shield her effectually, she continued, tenderly, "Don't be shy over it, Allie. Of course

I know what it is; Greville has been speaking to you?"

"Yes, Aunt Di."

"Well, I will scold him presently for not speaking to me first." But there was no anger in Aunt Diana's eyes. "I dare say his grandfather encouraged him; he is so set upon this. Well, Allie, and what did our boy say to you?"

"Oh, Aunt Di, don't ask me," returned Alison, desperately, "he thinks too highly of me. I am not as good as that; I don't deserve it all."

"We must allow for a little exaggeration under the circumstances," returned Miss Carrington, smiling, and managing to free her hands, and so get a glimpse of the hidden happy face.

"But, Aunt Di," almost whispering, "are we not too young? Greville will have to be at Oxford another year, and—"

"Too young to marry just yet, Allie, but I think, under Greville's peculiar circumstances—his grandfather's great age and precarious health, and his loneliness, having no parents or brothers and sisters belonging to him—that an engagement might be allowed. It will make him happier, and give him heart for his work. In general, Allie, I do not approve of long engagements for young people, they are so unsettling; but you know Greville's circumstances as well as I do. He is his grandfather's heir; in two years he might well marry."

"Then you approve?" raising her eyes at last to her aunt's face.

"Don't you know Greville is my own boy? He is even dearer to me than you; you must not be sorry to hear that. One day I will tell a sad little story about myself, how a girl's self-will and temper lost her the noblest lover a woman could have."

"I guess who it was; I always knew," murmured Alison.

"Greville is dear to me for his father's sake," returned Miss Carrington, almost solemnly. "No more of this just now, Allie. If you love me, dear child, you little know how happy it makes me to know my two darlings are to be united."

"Really and truly happy, Aunt Di?"

"Yes, surely, dearest; and this has been the wish of Mr. Moore's heart. Ah, here comes Greville; he looks almost as shy over it as you do, Allie."

But, shy or not, there was no mistaking the expression of proud happiness on the young man's face. A look passed between him and Miss Carrington, and then she held out her hand.

"Well, Greville, have you come to be scolded?" she asked, playfully.

"Yes, but you would not have the heart to do it," was his reply. "Cara," with a pause on the old name, "how could I help it?" And his glance was sufficiently eloquent.

"Well, Greville, I think you are worthy even of her." And now something like the glimmer of unshed tears softened the keen gray eyes. "God bless you, my boy! you have fulfilled the great wish of my heart."

There was a little more talk after this, and then Greville said, "Alison, I think we ought to go to my grandfather; this will make his very happy." And then Alison obediently rose.

There was a touching scene with the old man. "When the messenger comes, my boy will not be left desolate, he will have Sunny to comfort him," he said. And again his hands were placed on her bright hair to invoke a blessing.

Roger's turn came next. He had been out all day on a fishing excursion, and on his return Greville had waylaid him, and told him the news. Alison, who was sitting at her window, trying to compose her fluttered spirits, saw them coming up the garden walk together, and a few minutes afterward there was a hasty step at her door, and Roger burst into her room.

She knew how glad he was by the way he took her in his arms and kissed her, even before he had uttered a word.

But it came at last.

"Allie, I never was so pleased in my life. Of course I knew it was coming. He is a fine fellow; you are giving me just the sort of brother I wanted, and I am greatly obliged to you."

"He told you then?" a little bashfully.

"Yes, he had been waiting ever so long by the river bank. It is my belief that, like King Midas, he had been whispering his secret to the rushes. I wish you could have heard what he said about you. He has thoroughly convinced me that he fully appreciates you."

"I am so glad you will be friends," returned Alison, simply, quite ignoring the latter part of Roger's speech; in her modest opinion of herself, she never ceased wondering at Greville's lover-like speeches; it was dear and kind of him to say such things, she thought, but she did not deserve them.

She said as much to him one day, when their engagement was but a week old, but he turned decidedly wilful.

"I shall think of you just as I like," he said, quietly, "and I know I shall never alter my opinions. I don't care what your faults are; you are perfect in my eyes, just because you are Alison." And after this she gave up the point.

But on the evening before she left Moss-side she and Aunt Diana had one of their long talks. Greville had just left them, grumbling, in spite of an invitation to breakfast the next morning, and though he knew that he was expected at The Holms in six weeks' time, to make acquaintance with Alison's home, and to introduce himself to Mr. Merle. But Miss Carrington paid no attention to his boyish discontent; this hour belonged to her, she said, in a decided manner; Greville might talk to Roger, but she wanted Allie to herself.

So while the two young men paced up and down by the river, Alison and Miss Carrington sat in the dim studio, looking out into the moonlight. There was so much that they had to say to each other on this last night.

"You do not think me too hard-hearted to insist on a two years' engagement, Allie?" Miss Carrington said presently.

"Mr. Moore has begged me over and over again to reconsider my decision, but, indeed, I think Greville is too young for such a responsibility. In two years he will be five-and-twenty."

"I would not have it otherwise, Aunt Di," returned Alison, quietly. "In two years' time, papa will be well and strong—at least, Dr. Greenwood tells us so—and Missie will be older; I can be spared then, and can leave home far more happily."

"Is Greville content with this?"

"I have talked to him, and made him see that we are both right. Of course we shall both feel the separation a little hard, but now I have promised to spend at least two months next summer at Moss-side, and he is to pay flying visits to The Holms, I think we ought to be content, and then there are the letters—letters are such a pleasure."

"And in two years Alison Merle is to be Alison Moore."

"I hope so, Aunt Di."

"Darling! that day will be a happy one for me. I love you both so much, and then I shall have you near me. Think of Fernleigh being your home."

"A beautiful home," she returned.

"Roger will miss you the most, dear."

"I hope not by that time, Aunt Di. Perhaps I ought not to speak of it; he has never given me the right to do so, but I think—I hope—Anna—may be able to comfort him for my absence."

"What makes you think so, dear?" she asked, very quietly; and yet the same thought had occurred to her.

"It is Roger's manner; it has changed so much of late. Once he used to be as friendly with Anna, but now he never mentions her name if he can help it, but when any one talks of her I can see the way he listens, and the look that comes into his eyes; he is always so pleased when I tell him she is coming to The Holms, and he is so nice with her, speaking so gently to her, and anticipating all her wishes; you could not doubt what it meant if you saw them together. And she is just as sweet to him as one could wish—very shy, but so simple and child-like."

"She is a dear little thing, and I dare say she has improved."

"Yes, indeed, even Missie owns she is almost pretty sometimes; not that that matters, when she always looks so sweet and good. Oh, Aunt Di, I have grown to love her so."

"Roger is a wise man," observed Miss Carrington, thoughtfully; "if he chooses Anna for his wife he will find her certainly 'above rubies.' There is the law of kindness in her lips; I never knew any one so perfectly gentle."

"Missie is actually growing fond of her; they will be nice companions for each other when I leave home. Oh, Aunt Di, how beautifully everything has turned out. Papa is better, and Missie is growing more amiable every day; Rudel is not so rough, and Poppie is the dearest little soul, and Miss Leigh is so much more cheerful."

"Heaven has accepted our sacrifice, Allie," returned Aunt Diana, solemnly; "a blessing has come down on your efforts in a way we never expected."

"Give and it shall be given to you again," is the law of love."

"Darling, I never loved you so much as when I sent you from me to do your duty."

(The End.)

Badly Confused.

Lord Bramwell, says the biographer of that jurist, used to tell a story illustrating the complete paralysis which may affect the human mind at trying moments.

One day when he was on board a Rhine steamboat he noticed a lady, evidently in great distress, trying by signs to explain to the officials some matter of importance. Fancying that she was a countrywoman of his own, he asked: "Do you speak English?"

The poor lady had really lost her head, and she could only stammer out, "Un peu"—that is, a little.

Then Lord Bramwell continued the conversation in French, but it became evident that the lady understood scarcely a word. German and Italian gave equally bad results. Finally she muttered audibly to herself:

"How I wish I were safe at home!"

"But surely you do speak English!" exclaimed the baron.

"I can't speak anything else," she sobbed. "That's what makes me so helpless among these foreigners."

Strictly Fresh Eggs.

There are summer resorts, remote from any agricultural communities, where fresh farm products are even harder to obtain than in the city. It was at such a place that the new boarder, who had eaten four or five breakfasts there, began to wonder why the eggs were invariably served fried.

"See here," he inquired one morning of the genial colored woman who waited upon him, "why do you always fry eggs here? Don't you ever boil them?" "Oh-oh, yes, sah!" responded the waiter, pleasantly. "Of co'se yo' kin have 'em boiled, if yo' wants 'em. But yo' know, sah, yo' takes de risk!"—New York Times.

Consoling Thought.

"I'm glad my children are all boys," said the mother of seven young hopefuls.

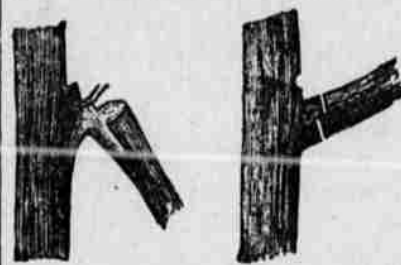
"Because why?" queried the privileged friend.

"Because none of them is doomed to grow up and marry a man like the dad," she answered, with a sigh.

FARM AND GARDEN

Pruning Large Limbs.

To ensure rapid healing in the plant after pruning it is necessary that all wounds should be left smooth. If it is necessary to use a saw in removing a large limb the cut surface should be left smooth and clean, particularly around the edges. The sharper the saw the cleaner will the cut be and this should in turn be made smoother by the use of a pruning knife or a sharp chisel, as the healing process starts quicker and progresses more rapidly when this precaution is observed. It frequently happens that in order to obtain the best results in removing large branches, two cuts should be made. The limb may be sawed off 18 inches or 2 feet above the point of its origin in order to prevent splitting down and tearing off a considerable part of the bark. After the weight of the limb has been lessened by cutting away the



HINT ON PRUNING.

main part a second cut can be made and the stub held in position until the cut is completed. The evil results of splitting can frequently be overcome by cutting first on the under side of the limb and then on the upper side as shown in the illustration.

Oleomargarine Versus Butter.

Oleomargarine is a perfectly legitimate product, and when made of good material and under sanitary conditions, greatly to be preferred to poor butter. The only "kick" coming here from the consumer is when oleomargarine, be it ever so good, masquerades under the guise of butter and is sold at the same price. In Illinois most drastic laws have recently been passed relating to the sanitary condition of butterine and ice cream factories.

The Worcester (Mass.) Board of Trade goes still further in its crusade for sanitary surroundings for the manufacture of ice cream, when it says: "All establishments in which ice cream is manufactured shall be equipped with facilities for the proper cleansing of the hands of the operatives, and all persons immediately before engaging in the mixing of the ingredients entering into the composition of ice cream or its subsequent freezing and handling shall thoroughly wash his or her hands and keep them cleanly during such manufacture and handling. All such persons shall be dressed in clean outer garments while engaged in such manufacture and handling." Here is surely a move in the right direction which every woman will indorse.

Bee Culture.

Although there is no fortune to be expected in bee culture, the business is one of profit. The raising of bees is one of the most interesting of pastimes and also one that pays well for the investment. Honey is, perhaps, the purest and richest of all sweets and should be found on every farm. Of course, farmers cannot be expected to maintain large apiaries, though they should always have a few hives. What is not consumed on the farm can always be sold.

Half a dozen or so colonies of bees in well-arranged hives is sufficient to begin the bee business. In fact, they are about what the average farmer should keep. Before embarking in the business, however, it is advisable to become posted as much as possible. This can be done by studying books and papers on bee culture and by visiting some apiary conducted by a man who knows the business.

Atiring the Eggs.

Many beginners do not understand why the eggs in the incubator should not be turned or aired after the eighteenth day. The reason is that at this time the chicks are getting ready to "pip" the shells, and they shape themselves around so as to pip on the upper side of the shell first. Should the eggs be moved when the chicks are about to hatch the bill may be torn. The fluid will naturally flow to the opening and dry them there, holding the chick's head tight. It does not take long to shut off life in this condition.

Butter from Whey

At Rodman Village, Jefferson County, New York, the St. Lawrence Dairy Products Company has erected a plant for the manufacture of butter from

whey, and about twenty-five factories are supplying it with separator cream taken from whey. The butter made is said to be equal to best creamery butter. The loss of butter-fat in cheese-making has long troubled factorymen, it being found impossible to incorporate all the fat in the cheese. The new system appears to have solved the question, and patrons are getting about 2½c additional per 100 pounds from this source. The whey is said to be worth as much for feeding as before, and does not sour as soon, being run through the separator at a higher temperature than under the old method, retarding the action of lactic acid. About four pounds of butter is obtained from 1,000 pounds of whey.

The Hen's Health.

Dr. Salmon of the Bureau of Animal Industry lays down this rule for telling the health of the bird by its droppings: The condition of the droppings furnishes a good indication of the hen's health. They should be of sufficient consistency to hold their shape, but should not be too solid. In color they should be dark, tapering off into grayish white. If the droppings are soft or pasty, and of a yellowish or brownish color, it indicates too much carbohydrates or a lack of meat. If, on the other hand, the droppings are watery and dark, with red splashes of mucus in them, it indicates too much meat. A greenish, watery diarrhea usually indicates unsanitary conditions either in the surroundings, the feed or the water.

Transplanting Trees.

In transplanting old trees it is desirable to save all possible roots and to have these disturbed as little as possible. In the case of young fruit trees, however, good growth may be secured if the roots are well cut back. One may not fear then to cut away all broken, mangled, dried or dead parts of the root system in setting young trees. In fact, a tree is better off without such dead parts. If the trees have been so handled that all main roots and small fibrous ones are fresh, if they show no signs of having dried out and especially if the cuts show healing or if new rootlets are beginning to start there will be little need of pruning the roots at the time of setting.

Cement Hog Wallow.

A recent introduction in several up-to-date farm yards are cement hog wallows. They are supplied periodically with fresh water and the approaches are made by pounding cobble stones into the earth to prevent mud mixing in with the water. Sometimes lice remedies of an oily nature are poured in the wallow with the water. Being lighter, of course, the antiseptic stuff floats and the hogs can't go in without getting an oily coating all over them. This is objectionable, unless the remedy is harmless to the hog, inside as well as out, because hogs will sometimes drink from the wallow; but even this is taken advantage of by using lice killers.—Journal of Agriculture.

Make the Horse Eat Slowly.

If your horse has the habit of bolting his feed you can easily remedy it by making a self-feeder on his feed box.



HOLDS ONE FEED.

The accompanying drawing shows how a feeder may be made similar to a poultry feed hopper. The contrivance may be made of 1 inch boards large enough to hold one feed. The horse can get the grain only in small quantities and so cannot eat it more rapidly than he should. The bottom must be made with enough slant to insure all of the feed coming out in the trough.—Farm and Home.

Census of Fowls.

According to the last census, there are 233,598,005 chickens of laying age in the United States. These are valued at \$70,000,000, and the eggs they lay would, if divided, allow 203 eggs annually to every person—man, woman and child—in the United States. The value of all the fowls, \$58,800,000, would entitle every person in the country to \$1.12 if they were sold and the proceeds divided. All the weight of the animal products exported—the pork, beef, tallow, ham, bacon and sausage—weigh 846,860 tons, while the weight of eggs laid yearly tips the scales at 970,363 tons.

Poultry Pickings.

Fat hens and lots of eggs are not apt to go together.

Cooked beans are rich feed for hens. Have some for use by and by.

All grain is not a perfect ration, so feed shells and other mineral-bearing matter.

Boiled potatoes mixed with milk are splendid for growing chicks. Good for laying hens, too.

I would not give a cent a bushel for condition powders. Give your hens good feed and they will not need the dope.

A singing hen is always a busy hen. And have you ever noticed that it is the busy hens that bring you in the eggs?