

AIKENSIDE

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CHAPTER XIII.

In the course of time Uncle Joseph came as was arranged, and on the day following Maddy and Guy rode down to see him, finding him a tall, powerfully built man, retaining many vestiges of manly beauty, and fully warranting all Mrs. Markham had said in his praise. He seemed perfectly gentle and harmless, though when Guy was announced as Mr. Remington, Maddy noticed that in his keen black eyes there was for an instant a fiery gleam, but it quickly passed away, as he muttered:

"Much too young; he was older than I and I am over forty. It's all right."

And the fiery eye grew soft and almost sleepy in its expression, as the poor lunatic turned next to Maddy, telling her how pretty she was, asking her if she were engaged, and bidding her to be careful that her fiancé was not more than a dozen years older than herself.

Uncle Joseph seemed to take to her from the very first, following her from room to room, touching her fair soft cheeks, smoothing her silken hair, telling her Sarah's used to curl, asking if she knew where Sarah was, and finally crying for her as a child cries for its mother, when at last she went away. Much of this Maddy had repeated to Jessie, as in the twilight they sat together in the parlor at Aikenside; and Jessie was not the only listener, for with her face resting on her hand, and her head bent eagerly forward, Agnes sat, so as not to lose a word of what Maddy was saying of Uncle Joseph.

The intelligence that he was coming to the red cottage had been followed with a series of headaches, so severe and protracted that Dr. Holbrook had pronounced her really sick, and had been unusually attentive. Anxiously she had waited for the result of Maddy's visit to the poor lunatic, and her face was colorless as marble as she heard him described, while a faint sigh escaped her when Maddy told her what he had said of Sarah.

Agnes was changed somewhat of late. She had grown more thoughtful and quiet, while her manner toward Maddy was not as haughty as formerly. Guy thought her improved, and thus was not so delighted as he would otherwise have been, when one day about two weeks after Uncle Joseph's arrival at Honedale, she startled him by saying she thought it nearly time for her to return to Boston if she meant to spend the winter there, and asked what she should do with Jessie.

Guy was not quite willing for Agnes to leave him there alone, but when he saw that she was determined, he consented to her going, with the understanding that Jessie was to remain—a plan which Agnes did not oppose, as a child so large as Jessie might stand in the way of her being as gay as she meant to be in Boston. Jessie, too, when consulted, said she would far rather stay at Aikenside; and so one November morning, Agnes was wrapped in velvet and furs, kissed her little daughter, and bidding good-by to Maddy and the servants, left a neighborhood which, since Uncle Joseph was so near, had become so intolerable that not even the hope of winning the doctor could avail to keep her in it.

Guy accompanied her to the city, wondering why, when he used to like it so much, it now seemed dull and tiresome, or why the society he had formerly enjoyed failed to bring back the old pleasure he had experienced when a resident of Boston. After seeing Agnes settled in one of the most fashionable boarding houses, he started for Aikenside.

It was dark when he reached home, and as the evening had closed in with a heavy rain, the house presented rather a cheerless appearance, particularly as, in consequence of Mrs. Noah's not expecting him that day, no fires had been kindled in the parlors, or in any room except the library. There a bright coal fire was blazing in the grate, and Luther Guy repaired, finding, as he had expected, Jessie and her teacher. Not liking to intrude on Mr. Guy, of whom she still stood somewhat in awe, Maddy soon arose to leave, but Guy bade her stay; he should be lonely without her, he said; and so bringing her work she sat down to sew, while Jessie looked over a book of prints, and Guy upon the lounge studied the face which, it seemed to him, grew each day more and more beautiful. Then he talked with her of books, and the lessons which were to be resumed on the morrow, watching Maddy as her bright face sparkled and glowed with excitement. Then he questioned her of her father's family, feeling a strange sense of satisfaction in knowing that the Clydes were not a race of whose blood anyone need be ashamed; and Maddy was more like them, he was sure, than like the Markhams, and Guy shivered a little as he recalled the peculiar dialect of Mr. and Mrs. Markham, and remembered that they were Maddy's grandparents. Not that it was anything to him. Oh, no! Only as an inmate of his family he felt interested in her, more so perhaps than young men were apt to be interested in their sister's governess.

Had Guy then been asked the question, he would, in all probability, have acknowledged that in his heart there was a feeling of superiority to Maddy Clyde; that she was not quite the equal of Aikenside's heir, nor yet of Lucy Atherton. It was natural; he had been educated to feel the difference, but any haughty arrogance of which he might have been guilty was kept down by his extreme good sense and generous, impulsive nature. He liked Maddy; he liked to look at her as, in the becoming crimson merino which he really and Jessie nominally had given her, she sat before him, with the firelight falling on her hair and making shadows on her sunny face.

It did not take long for the people of Somerville to hear that Guy Remington had actually turned schoolmaster, having in his library for two hours or more each day Jessie's little girl-governess—people wondering, as people will, where it would end, and if it could be possible that the haughty Guy had forgotten his

English Lucy and gone to educating a wife.

The doctor, to whom these remarks were sometimes made, silently gnashed his teeth, then said savagely that "if Guy chose to teach Maddy Clyde, he did not see whose business it was," and then rode over to Aikenside to see the teacher and pupil, half hoping that Guy would soon tire of his project and give it up. But Guy grew more and more pleased with his employment, until, at last, from giving Maddy two hours of his time, he came to give her four, esteeming them the pleasantest of the whole twenty-four. Guy was proud of Maddy's improvement, praising her often to the doctor, who also marveled at the rapid development of her mind and the progress she made, grasping a knotty point almost before it was explained, and retaining with wonderful exactness what she learned.

It mattered nothing to Guy that neighbors gossiped; there were none familiar enough to tell him what was said, except the doctor or Mrs. Noah; and so he heard few of the remarks made so frequently. As in Honedale, so in Somerville, Maddy was a favorite, and those who interested themselves most in the matter said Mr. Guy might perhaps be educating his own wife, and insinuating that it would be a great "come up" for Grandfather Markham's child. But Maddy never dreamed of such a thing, and kept on her pleasant way, reciting every day to Guy and going every Wednesday to the red cottage, whither, after the first visit to Uncle Joseph, Guy never accompanied her. Jessie, on the contrary, went often to Honedale, where one at least always greeted her coming, stealing up closely to her, whispering softly: "Daisy is come again!"

From the first Uncle Joseph had taken to Jessie, calling her Sarah for a while, and then changing the name to "Daisy." "Daisy Mortimer, his little girl," he persisted in calling her, watching from his window for her coming, and crying whenever Maddy appeared without her. At first Agnes, from her city home, forbade Jessie's going so often to see a lunatic; but when Jessie described the poor, crazy man's delight at sight of her, telling how quiet and happy he seemed if he could but lay his hand on her head, or touch her hair, she withdrew her restrictions, and, as if moved to an unwonted burst of tenderness, wrote to her daughter: "Comfort that crazy man all you can; he needs it so much."

A few weeks after there came another letter from Agnes, but this time it was to Guy, and its contents darkened his handsome face with anger and vexation. Incidentally Agnes had heard the gossip, and written it to Guy, adding in conclusion: "Of course I know it is not true, for even if there were no Lucy Atherton, you, of all men, would not stoop to Maddy Clyde. I do not presume to advise, but I will say this, that now she is growing a young lady, folks will keep on talking so long as you keep her there in the house; and it's hardly fair toward Lucy."

This was what knotted up Guy's forehead and made him, as Jessie said, "real cross for once." Somehow, he fancied, latterly, that the doctor did not like Maddy's being there, while even Mrs. Noah managed to keep her out of his way as soon as the lessons were ended. What did they mean? why did they presume to interfere with him? He'd know, at all events; and summoning Mrs. Noah to his presence, he read that part of Agnes' letter pertaining to Maddy, and then asked what it meant.

"It means this, that folks are in a constant worry for fear you'll fall in love with Maddy."

"I fall in love with that child!" Guy repeated, laughing at the idea, and forgetting that he had long since accused the doctor of that very thing.

"Yes, you," returned Mrs. Noah, "and 'tain't strange they do. Maddy is not a child, she's nearer sixteen than fifteen, is almost a young lady; and if you'll excuse my boldness, I must say I ain't any too well pleased with the goin's on myself; not that I don't like the girl, for I do, and I don't blame her an atom. She's as innocent as a new-born babe, and I hope she'll always stay so; but you, Mr. Guy, you—now tell me honest—do you think as much of Lucy Atherton as you used to, before you took up school keepin'?"

Guy did not like to be interfered with, and naturally high-spirited, he at first flew into a passion, declaring that he would not have folks meddling with him, that he thought of Lucy Atherton all the time, and he did not know what more he could do; that 'twas a pity if a man could not enjoy himself in his own way, providing that way were harmless, that he'd never spent so happy a winter as the last; that—

Here Mrs. Noah interrupted him with: "That's it, the very it; you want nothing better than to have that girl sit close to you when she recites, as she does; and once when she was workin' out some of them pluses and minuses, and thins, her slate rested on your knee; it did, I saw it with my own eyes; and then, let me ask, when Jessie is drummin' on the piano, why don't you bend over her, and turn the leaves, and count the time, as you do when Maddy plays; and how does it happen that lately Jessie is one too many, when you hear Maddy's lessons? She has no suspicions, but I know she ain't sent off for nothin'; I know you'd rather be alone with Maddy Clyde than to have anybody present; isn't it so?"

Guy began to wince. There was much truth in what Mrs. Noah had said. He did devise various methods of getting rid of Jessie, when Maddy was in his library, but it had never looked to him in his light that it did when presented by Mrs. Noah, and he doggedly asked what Mrs. Noah would have him do.

"First and foremost, then, I'd have you tell Maddy yourself that you are engaged to Lucy Atherton; second, I'd have you write to Lucy all about it, and if you honestly can, tell her that you only care

for Maddy as a friend; third, I'd have you send the girl—"

"Not away from Aikenside! I never will!" and Guy sprang to his feet.

The mine had exploded, and for an instant the young man reeled, as he caught a glimpse of where he stood; still he would not believe it, or confess to himself how strong a place in his affections was held by the beautiful girl now no longer a child. It was almost a year since that April afternoon when he first met Maddy Clyde, and from a timid, bashful child, of fourteen and a half, she had grown to the rather tall and rather self-possessed maiden of fifteen and a half, almost sixteen, as Mrs. Noah said, "almost a woman;" and as if to verify the latter fact, she herself appeared at that very moment, asking permission to come in and find a book, which had been misplaced, and which she needed in hearing Jessie's lessons.

"Certainly, come in," Guy said, and folding his arms he leaned against the mantel, watching her as she hunted for the missing book.

There was no pretense about Maddy Clyde, nothing put on for effect, and yet in every movement she showed marks of great improvement, both in manner and style. Of one hundred people who might glance at her, ninety-nine would look a second time, asking who she was. Not the remotest suspicion had Maddy of what was occupying the thoughts of her companions, though, as she left the room and glanced brightly up at Guy, it struck her that his face was dark and moody, and a painful sensation flitted through her mind that in some way she had intruded.

"Well," was Mrs. Noah's first comment, as the door closed on Maddy, but as Guy made no response to it, she continued: "She is pretty. That you won't deny."

"Yes, more than pretty. She'll make a most beautiful woman."

Guy seemed to talk more to himself than to Mrs. Noah, while his foot kicked the fender, and he mentally compared Lucy and Maddy with each other, and tried to think that it was not the result of that comparison, but rather Mrs. Noah's next remark, which affected him unpleasantly. The remark or remarks were as follows:

"Of course she'll make a splendid woman. Everybody notices her now for her beauty, and that's why you've no business to keep her here where you see her every day. It's a wrong to her, lettin' yourself alone."

Guy looked up, and Mrs. Noah continued:

"I've been a girl myself, and I know that Maddy can't be treated as you treat her without its having an effect. I've no idea that it's entered her head yet, but it will bimeby, and then good-by to her happiness."

"For pity's sake, what do you mean! What have I done to Maddy, or what am I going to do?"

Coming nearer to him, and lowering her voice, Mrs. Noah replied:

"You are going to teach her to love you, Guy Remington."

"And is that anything so very bad, I'd like to know? Most girls do not find love distasteful, and Guy walked hastily to the window, where he stood for a moment gazing out upon the soft April snow which was falling, and feeling anything but satisfied either with the weather or himself; then walking back, and taking a seat before the fire, he said: "I understand you now. You would have Maddy Clyde from sorrow, and you are right. You know more of girls than I do. She might in time get to—think of me as she ought not. I never looked upon it in this light before. I've been so happy with her"—here Guy's voice faltered a little, but he recovered himself and went on: "I will tell her about Lucy to-night, but the sending her away, I can't do that. Neither will she be happy to go back where I took her from, for though the best of people, they are not like Maddy, and you know it."

Yes, Mrs. Noah did know it, and pleased that her boy, as she called Guy, had shown some signs of penitence and amendment, she said she did not think it necessary to send Maddy home; she did not advise it, either. She liked the girl, and what she advised was this, that Guy should send Maddy and Jessie both to boarding school. Agnes, she knew, would be willing, and it was the best thing he could do. Maddy would thus learn what was expected of a teacher, and as soon as she graduated, she could procure some eligible situation."

(To be continued.)

Without the Sneaks of War.

Mr. Bodfish is quite sure that woman's certificate of capacity should not include the right to cast a vote. Mrs. Bodfish is equally certain that her sex is amply qualified to invade the councils, and share, if not actually control the action of men.

"I won't say that we are fitted for every kind of a position," she modestly conceded, in a recent discussion. "I'm sure I would never undertake to build bridges and things like that. I should simply get dizzy and tumble in or fall off. But there are lots and lots of real jobs that I would undertake. There's street-cleaning. That's one thing a woman could boss to perfection."

"Yes," Mr. Bodfish observed, indulgently. "How would you go to work to clean up if you were street-committee member?"

"How?" repeated his wife. "Why, with brooms and hoes and shovels and things instead?" she paused—"instead of just an appropriation!" she finished triumphantly.

Easily Satisfied.

"I want," said the woman of fashion to the haughty department clerk, "to be surrounded with more 'pomp' than any other woman of my acquaintance. Can you help me do it?"

"Rats!" he answered and immediately directed her to the counter where they were sold.—Baltimore American

Exception to the Rule.

"Knowledge is power, you know," quoted Shortleigh.

"I'm not so sure of that," replied Long. "I know you borrowed \$10 of me six months ago, but I don't seem to have the power to get it back."



The winds had ceased their carol,
The waters calmly slept,
And o'er their flock's repose,
A watch the shepherds kept;
When from the sudden sky,
On pinions white and fair,
An angel host descended,
With music filled the air.

CHORUS.
Glory to God in the highest,
Good will and peace on earth—
This was the song of the angels
through
That hailed our Savior's birth.

Oh morn of radiant splendor!
Oh blessed day of days,
That banished gloom and sadness
And filled the world with praise!
The shepherds sought the manger
That held the new-born King,
Whose bright and joyful advent
Eternal years shall sing.

We come to join the chorus
Of angel choirs above,
And shout aloud hosannas
For our Redeemer's love;
We gather now rejoicing,
Our grateful songs to raise,
We crowd his gates with gladness
And fill his courts with praise.
—FANNY J. CROSSBY.

JOHN RAYNOR'S CHRISTMAS REVOLT. ELIZABETH AYRES

WHEN John Raynor began to see the holiday advertisements in the papers and to feel the Christmas flurry in the air, he announced to his family with an air of finality, tinged with defiance, "you needn't expect anything in the way of Christmas presents from me this year."

"Why, John!" his wife exclaimed, "we are not going to do very much. Just a few gifts in the family to mark the day, and then the children think so much of it."

"The children!" John returned with fine scorn. "They're grown now, and it's time for them to get over such nonsense. I positively refuse to have anything to do with Christmas."

John Raynor persisted in making himself miserable and in bringing to bear all the arguments he could think of against the prevailing manner of observing Christmas. Figuratively speaking, he pounded the table and grew purple in the face in his endeavors to hammer in his remonstrances against holiday customs.

In spite of himself he could not help enjoying the sights and sounds, heralding the approach of the holiday season. The gala dress of the shop windows appealed to his color-loving eye, and when the Christmas greens began to soften the grim, winter streets with their verdure, they took him back to the days when as a boy he roamed the woods in search of ground pine for holiday decorations and the cedar or evergreen tree on which his mother would hang their Christmas presents. He felt a little of the old thrill of delightful expectation when these things came back to his mind, but his reverse mood was the stronger and he persisted in keeping to his decision.

He was firm until the night before Christmas. Then his wife and children broke bondage and discussed openly the coming holiday. In an unguarded moment his son inquired if a set of books they had purchased had been delivered. Without being told, his father knew those books were designed for him. They were something he had secretly longed for, but had denied himself, because the needs, real or imaginary, of his family were his paramount consideration. And now they were to be his in spite of his declaration there was nothing he wanted.

He began to wish that he had something with which to give his family a happy surprise. "They will give me things, and they will give things to one another and there will be nothing from me," he thought.

Sitting alone with his paper, he heard surreptitious rustlings as of packages being handled, and the low murmur of voices from his wife and daughter, interrupted with little bursts of gay laughter that showed something joyous was going on. He had nothing for anyone, and to-morrow when they gave him tokens of their thought and attention, he should feel like an exile from home. A sudden resolve took him in possession.

"Alice," he called to his wife, "I'm going out for awhile. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Nothing, thank you," she returned, "unless you want to bring home some candy for to-morrow. Oh, I forgot," she said in the next breath, "you won't want to trouble about it. Never mind, we'll manage some way."

It is astonishing how quickly one's mind can be changed. John Raynor's underwent a lightning transformation. He boarded a car and rode to the shopping district with his mind filled with nothing but Christmas presents. He felt like a boy turned loose with money to spend and none to restrict his fancy. He pushed and jostled and wrestled with the crowd, and exhilarated by the contact with people bent on holiday shopping. His past mood slipped away like a cast-off garment. He had caught the Christmas spirit and his revision of feeling amounted almost to intoxication.

"There you are, sonny," he told a news-boy, bestowing a dime in exchange for a paper he did not want.

He helped to "keep the kettles boiling" for the Salvation Army Christmas dinner, and he thought he had never heard a gayer sound than the jangling of the bells the Salvation soldiers kept in motion to call attention to their needs.

He carried his merry mood home with him and the moment he entered the door his family felt the difference.

He could not keep his secret until morning, though he told it only to his wife.

"Here are some little things for you and the children, Alice," he said when they were alone, dropping the packages carefully on the table. She looked up with eyes aghast, and with an expression which told him he had done well, but she, being a woman of wisdom, made no comment to remind him of past evils.

When John Raynor fell asleep that Christmas eve, through his mind was jingling and jingling the merry old refrain: "Christmas comes but once a year, let us all be of good cheer."
—Toledo Blade.

Christmas Cards.

The Christmas card as we know it has an origin easily traceable, and it is doubtless at least sixty years since the first was designed. The artist who claimed to be its originator and who was, at any rate, the first to see its possibilities was W. C. T. Dobson, R. A., who, when quite a young man, in 1844, was prompted at Christmas to make a little sketch symbolic of the season's joys and festivities and to send it to a friend. It seemed to give great pleasure, and the next year Mr. Dobson determined to follow up the idea on a larger scale, and by having his card photographed was enabled to send copies to twenty-five or thirty friends. The delight with which they were received was so great that Mr. Dobson was quick to perceive that he had found out a new pleasure for Christmas.—New York Mail and Express.

Christmas and Motherhood.

On that Christmas night God honored motherhood. The angels on their wings might have brought an infant Saviour to Bethlehem without Mary's being there at all. But, no; motherhood for all time was to be consecrated, and one of the tenderest relations was to be the maternal relation, and one of the sweetest words, "mother." In all ages God has honored good motherhood. In a great audience, most of whom were Christians, I asked that all those who had been blessed with Christian mothers arise, and almost the entire assembly stood up. Don't you see how important it is that all motherhood be consecrated?—Talmage.

The Spirit of Giving.

Don't give only where you expect a return or wonder whether you will be supposed to buy something for A. B. or C. The spirit of Christmas lies in the loving and the giving—never in the receiving.

The Origin of Christmas Greens.

At the Saturnalia, the heathen prototype of Christmas, it was the Roman custom to decorate the house with evergreens. This was done to give the woodland spirits a refuge from the cold.

CHRISTMAS LONG AGO.

Come sing a hale high-go
For the Christmas long ago,
When the old log cabin homed us,
From the night of blinding snow,
And the rarest joy held reign,
And the chimney roared amain,
With the frolic light like a beacon
Through the frosty window pane.

Ah! the revel and the din
From without and from within,
The blend of distant sleigh bells
With the tinkling violin;
The muffled shrieks and cries—
Then the glowing cheeks and eyes—
The driving storms of greetings,
Gusts of kisses and surprise.

Sing in again the mirth
Of the circle 'round the hearth,
With the rustic Sinbad telling us
The strangest tales on earth!
And the minstrel bard we knew,
With his "Love-lie so true,"
Likewise his "Young House-karpenter,"
And "Love-d Henry," too!

And forgetting ne'er a thing,
Lift a gladder voice and sing
Of the dancers in the kitchen—
Clean from start to "pigeon wing!"
Sing the glory and the glee
And the joy and jubilee—
The twirling form—the quickness
breath—
The sigh of ecstasy.

But eyes that smile alone
Back into our happy own—
The leaping pulse—the laughing blood—
The trembling undertone!
Ho! paid us off once more,
From our feet upon the floor,
But our heads and hearts in heaven,
As they were in days of yore.
—James Whitcomb Riley, in the Interloc

At the Spanish Court.

Christmas in Spain begins with the midnight mass, when the king and queen mother, accompanied by the grandees of the court, magnificently attired, go in state procession to the chapel royal of the palace in Madrid. On Christmas morning the king and court again attend mass in state, after which the day is spent in merry-making. In the afternoon the adoration of the manger takes place, when a representation of the scene in Bethlehem is unveiled in the great hall of the palace. There is also a Christmas tree, from which Alfonso distributes gifts. Throughout the ensuing twelve days the court is all benevolence and gaiety, and every great institution in Madrid shares in the royal merrymaking. The festival closes Jan. 6.

Her Christmas Costume.



Adam—How would you like some nice, new fig leaves for a gown for Christmas?
Eve—Fig leaves for Christmas. That's just like a man! Don't you know that Christmas is a holy-day?

Christmas Every Day.

Christianity should make every day in the year a sort of Christmas day. This time of love and gladness and good will was never meant to be confined to one brief festival. This burying of old grudges and reconciling of estranged friends, this comforting of the sad and gladdening the hearts of the poor, and sharing our plenty with those in need, are some of Christianity's every-day duties. Do not lower the standard when the twenty-fifth of December is over. Do not go back to the old selfish, narrow, unsatisfactory way of living. Let this Christmas be a prophecy of what the New Year is to be, a time of gladness and good will.

His Christmas Schedule.

"You know what dey gwine give you for Christmas?"
"No; I ain't studied 'bout it yet!"
"Beaver-hat."
"My, my!"
"Long tail coat."
"Tell de truth!"
"Standin' collar."
"Lard bless us!"
"Biled shirt, kid gloves, en a gold-head walkin' stick!"
"De Lard save us!" exclaimed the prospective heir to all the above gifts, "Has I got ter go ter preachin' de gospill in my ole age?"—Atlanta Constitution.

GETTING READY FOR SANTA.

