



ONLY A FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

By

MRS. FORRESTER.

CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

The party at Endon Vale was breaking up. Lady Marion Alton on being informed of her niece's engagement had come to Endon Vale and carried her off to London, and thence to pay a visit to Berkshire. Francis Clayton had left the day before for London. Miss Champlin had stayed on, in the hope of winning back Lord Harold to his allegiance; but now that she found each day attracting him more and more to her cousin, she could endure it no longer. The visit to Lady Grace, from which she had anticipated such great results, had been fraught with the most bitter mortification.

That same evening while Lady Grace was in her own little sanctum reading, Winifred knocked at her door and, in answer to her "come in," the girl went in and shut the door.

Lady Grace looked up and smiled kindly, and then she looked again. Winifred did not seem bright and beaming as was her wont—she was nervous, and there were tear stains on her face.

"What is it, my love? You have been crying!" There was such tender solicitude in the tone that it was too much for the girl's overstrung nerves, and the tears came thick and fast.

"O Lady Grace, I am so grieved!" "Grieved, my child? You have not had bad news from home?"

"Oh, no, not that; but I am so afraid you will be angry with me and never forgive me. It is about Lord Harold Erskine." Winifred said, nervously, and a sudden chill came into the heart of the elder lady, for she was very fond of her nephew.

"About Harold, my dear?" "Lord Harold asked—asked me to marry him this morning; and, oh, Lady Grace, I am so sorry!"

"Sorry that he asked you to marry him?" "Because—indeed, Lady Grace, I never dreamt of such a thing—I thought his position made him so far beyond me. I thought he was kind to me, just from generous-mindedness like you, that I might not feel strange at coming into society I was not used to."

"Then you do not love him?" "I do like him very much—I could not help it, he is so good—but, oh, dear Lady Grace, I could not marry him, and the tears rained down."

"Then you have refused him?" "I told him the truth—I could not deceive him."

And then all of a sudden it flashed on Lady Grace Farquhar's mind that there was something noble and high-minded in this girl's refusing such a position and such wealth because she did not love the man. A more worldly minded woman would have held such romantic folly in contempt, and thought the girl a fool for her pains; but not so Lady Grace. Still there was a momentary struggle in her heart before she rose from her seat and kissed Winifred.

"My love," she said sweetly, "I think you have done quite right, if you feel sure in your own mind that you cannot love him. But are you quite sure? Harold is kind and good; he is handsome, and is rich—ought you not to weigh everything in your mind thoroughly before you decide?"

"I like him, I respect him, but I do not love him—I cannot marry him!" concluded Winifred, piteously.

"Very well, my dear, I will say no more. I am sorry for my boy's sake, and I should have been well content to have you for a niece."

And then the kind-hearted woman took the sobbing girl in her arms and Winifred hid her head on the kind breast, and cried to her heart's content. There was a good deal more talk before the two parted, and it was settled that Winifred should go home the next day but one, and stay there a few weeks; and then she should pay Endon Vale another visit, when Lord Harold should have left. But Lord Harold left that very day, after seeing and confiding in his aunt. His parting-words were:

"Aunt, do you think there is any hope that she will ever come to care for me?" Lady Grace kissed his forehead and stroked his head very tenderly.

"I cannot tell, my boy, but I am afraid not."

CHAPTER X.

Seventeen months have elapsed since Errol Hastings had stood on the deck of the Enone, looking down into the woman he loved so deeply. She was not a woman, though, then—she was only a fresh, young girl; and in her sweet, simple purity lay the charm she had for the man of the world.

He was staying for a month in Paris on the way home, and the brilliant society he mixed with was very pleasant after his long isolation.

To-night, too, he was to meet an old friend at the opera—a woman whom he had always liked, but who had never seemed so charming to him as she did now, with her pretty assumption of matronhood. Her husband was detestable, certainly, and she knew it. Surely the continuance of an old friendship must be grateful to one who could not be very happy. And with a strong interest, very keenly awakened, Mr. Hastings walked that evening into Mrs. Clayton's opera box.

The husband and wife were together alone. The former was gazing intently through his glass at a very shoving looking supernumerary, the latter leant back indifferently, with a strong expression of discontent and weariness on her pretty face. She was prettier, perhaps, than when we last saw her as Fee Alton; but sadder, more pensive, and her beauty was enhanced by the magnificence of her jewelry.

"I am so glad you have come!" Mrs. Clayton said, smiling up in Errol's face, and yielding her hand to his gentle pressure—"I was so dull. None of my friends has been up to see me, and Mr. Clayton is so fascinated by some lovely creature on the stage that he has no eyes for anyone else. Francis," she continued, touching her husband—"Francis, Mr. Hastings is here."

Mr. Clayton looked savagely at her, and then he gave a surlly recognition to Mr. Hastings.

"I hardly expected to see you here this evening," he said.

"You know, Francis, I told you I asked Mr. Hastings to come," said Fee, maliciously. "Your memory is not usually so defective."

Madame was not in the best of temper—constant contact with a man like her husband had not tended to increase the amiability of her disposition.

Mr. Clayton turned away to the stage, and left his wife to an uninterrupted conversation with her friend. But all the same he was trying to hear every word that passed between them; he was far too small-minded to be free from jealousy and suspicion. Fee was perfectly aware that he was listening, so she dropped her voice to a whisper, and flirted away in a very animated manner with Mr. Hastings. Francis Clayton was gradually becoming furious. At the end of the third act he arose.

"It is time to put on your cloak," he said in a harsh and unpleasant voice.

"Why, dear?" asked Fee, looking up with languid innocence, "are you afraid I shall take cold? You are not usually so solicitous about me."

"I ordered the carriage early, and I do not choose my horses to be kept waiting," he replied, scarcely deigning to look at her.

Mr. Clayton moved toward the door, and his wife resumed her conversation with more animation than ever.

"Are you coming?" he exclaimed, turning impatiently.

"Me—coming?" returned Fee, nonchalantly, raising her eyebrows. "My dear Francis, what could put such an absurd idea into your head?"

To be treated with indifference, and, worse, ridicule, is naturally disagreeable to any man; but it made Mr. Clayton, sulky and ill-tempered as he already was, perfectly aflame with rage.

"Marion, are you coming?" "Certainly not."

"Then I shall go alone. Henry can get you a fag when you feel disposed to follow me." And the amiable husband left the box.

Mrs. Clayton was as bitter and angry as a high-spirited woman would be under the circumstances; but she went on talking to her companion very fast, to conceal her annoyance. "She was too proud to make any allusion to her husband's treatment of her; and Mr. Hastings appeared not to have noticed it. But he felt for her keenly. He did not quite justify her, or think she had behaved wisely, but he saw what the man was, and felt there must have been some strong undercurrent of bitterness to change the bright, good-tempered, sunny, little fairy he had known formerly to the indifferent, provoking woman of to-night. "Poor little girl!" he thought to himself. "I dare say she has found out by this time that money doesn't bring happiness."

Mrs. Clayton remained until the fifth act was half over; then she asked Errol to see if her servant was in the hall. He left the box, and returned almost immediately.

"My brougham is at your disposal, Mrs. Clayton, and your servant is just calling it up."

She thanked him; and he put her cloak carefully round her, and gave her his arm.

"Good-night," she said, when she was seated in the carriage. "Many thanks for your timely aid. Will you come and see us to-morrow at our hotel?"

He promised; and at parting he held her hand longer than is strictly necessary in wishing good-by.

The day after their meeting at the opera Mr. Hastings called on Mrs. Clayton; and Mr. Clayton, suspecting the visit, was purposely at home. Fee brightened up when Mr. Hastings was announced. She had always liked him; now in her loneliness and misery she ranked him as a dear old friend. Her manner was all the more cordial because she wanted to annoy her husband.

"Mr. Hastings, I am delighted to see you; I was just feeling so frightfully bored and dull. I hope you bring a whole budget of news."

"I must ask first after my old friend, Lady Marion," he answered. "I cannot forgive myself for my remissness in not doing so last night."

"Aunt is very well, thank you. I heard from her this morning. She says she is dreadfully dull without me, and is longing to see us back again."

"I often think how she must miss you."

I almost wonder she does not remain with you."

"So she would, gladly, but Mr. Clayton won't let her. Of course, if we have a difference of opinion she takes my part, and he says something rude to her, and she is offended. Is it not so, Francis?"

Mr. Clayton muttered something about a mother-in-law being bad enough, but an aunt-in-law was more than anybody bargained for.

"And as matrimony is altogether a commercial speculation," rejoined Fee, with a delightful smile, "you can't, of course, take more than you bargain for—can you, Mr. Hastings?"

Errol was by no means pleased at being made a third party to matrimonial differences, and made an effort to change the conversation.

"Have you seen anything of Lady Grace Farquhar lately, Mr. Clayton?" he asked.

"She was here not a month ago; and she has adopted such a sweet, charming girl. They are like mother and daughter; and even that selfish old bookworm, Sir Clayton, seems quite taken with her. I wish you had been here sooner. I know you would have been in love with her."

"I thought Mr. Hastings knew Miss Eyre," interposed Francis Clayton. "At all events, I recollect hearing their names connected in some story about meeting in a wood."

Errol started slightly, and it might have been fancy, but Fee certainly thought a deeper color came into his bronzed face. Mr. Clayton seemed to think the same, for he proceeded in his usual amiable manner:

"She and Erskine were awfully sweet on each other when we were staying at the vale. I dare say that will be a match. Lady Grace seems quite agreeable to it; but of course it's a shocking bad one for him."

"Francis," exclaimed his wife, "how you exaggerate! You know Winifred never cared for Lord Harold. She won't confess it, but I am quite sure he made her an offer, and that she refused him. He never will meet her if she can help it."

"Did you say that Lady Grace had adopted her, Mrs. Clayton?"

"Yes, more than a year ago; indeed, before I was married. She was in such sad trouble, poor girl. She was very fond of her father, and he was killed suddenly in a very shocking way. His horse ran away with him, and he was thrown out of the dogcart and killed on the spot. They thought she never would get over it, and Lady Grace took her home and nursed her as if she had been her own child. Old Sir Howard Champlin would have taken her, but she refused to go near them, because they would not acknowledge her father. She has promised to come and stay with me when we get back to town. You must come and meet her."

"I shall be—very—happy," stammered Errol.

CHAPTER XI.

Errol Hastings, riding toward the Bois de Boulogne, pondering much on what he had heard. He was surprised—he tried to believe he was pleased; but somehow or other his satisfaction was not very genuine. Miss Eyre had certainly made a fortunate step in life; true she had lost a father whom she had loved, but then she had gained a friend, in Lady Grace Farquhar. She would get introduced into good society, and perhaps, but that was not a train of thought he cared to follow. Had not Erskine already been at her feet?

Mr. Hastings' soliloquy was cut short by seeing Col. d'Aguiar walking leisurely along the Champs Elysees. He drew rein instantly.

"D'Aguiar!" he cried.

"Hastings!" exclaimed the other, and they shook hands warmly.

"I thought you were back with your regiment," said Errol.

"I have a month more leave, and my brother asked me to join him here, and so I came."

A great many questions came into Errol's head that he would have liked to ask Col. d'Aguiar at once; but conversation is neither easy nor agreeable when carried on with a pedestrian from the altitude of a horse's back, particularly when your steed is restive and impatient.

"Come up to my hotel to-night, d'Aguiar, will you?" Mr. Hastings said.

"Very well; I suppose you are going to the ball at the Embassy?"

"Yes; but not before twelve."

"Then I'll look in about ten."

And the two men parted just as Mrs. Clayton rolled past in her handsome carriage, drawn by high-stepping horses. She looked like a lovely little Esquimaux enveloped in her soft white furs, and she gave Mr. Hastings a bright smile, and the wave of a delicately gloved, little hand. She had not observed Col. d'Aguiar.

Sixteen months had passed since the day when they had ridden together down the avenue of broad-leaved chestnuts at Endon Vale. She was not altered—at all events, it did not seem so in the momentary glance he had caught of her smiling face. Was she then utterly heartless? Could she have lived all these months with such a hateful, contemptible wretch as Clayton, and still go on smiling and flirting, and give no sign? Col. d'Aguiar knew none of the particulars of the marriage; he had not even heard that she was happy; he had but met her once, and then she had left him at her husband's command, with a smile on her lips. He turned, and walked back unhappy and resentful.

Mr. Clayton, as well as his wife, was profoundly ignorant of Col. d'Aguiar's arrival in Paris, or he would as soon have trusted his wife alone in that fine city, as he would have walked willingly himself into the cage of the lion in the Jardin des Plantes.

(To be continued.)

God is on the side of virtue; for whoever dreads punishment suffers it, and whoever deserves it dreads it.—Colton.

HAPPENINGS HERE IN OREGON

YEAR OF SUCCESSFUL WORK.

University of Oregon Expects an Increased Attendance.

The year just closed has been one of the most successful in the history of the University of Oregon. A hearty spirit of co-operation has existed between the students and faculty, and the work accomplished during the year speaks for itself. The classroom work of the students has been above the average, and cases of discipline have been few.

The athletic and other interests of the students body have been conducted according to the ideal of the university, and have been enthusiastically supported.

President P. L. Campbell has made many friends during the first year of his regime, and his efforts to build up the university and to bring it into closer touch with people of the state have been appreciated by the regents and by the general public.

The prospects for a large increase in attendance next semester are flattering. Already nearly 100 applications have been received for freshman standing, most of them coming from graduates of the different high schools throughout the state. The scientific and engineering courses will be better equipped than ever before, and the facilities for instruction in these branches will be very efficient.

The dormitory is being improved and transformed into a comfortable home for the young men of the university. The dormitory will be managed in the future by the university and a fixed rate of \$3.50 per week will be charged for board and lodging.

It is very encouraging to note that 85 per cent of the students who were in the university during the past year were actual college students and that the preparatory department, which a few years ago contained more than one-half of the students body, is gradually disappearing.

PRUNE GROWERS' FUEL PROBLEM.

Marion Cordwood Has Increased in Price and is Scarce.

An enormous prune crop and an unusually short supply of wood will make the fuel question an important one to fruitgrowers this fall. The curing of the hop and prune crops takes thousands of cords of wood each year. In the last year or two the amount of fuel cut has decreased, and it is very evident that the supply will not equal the demand this fall. Every cord of wood that comes to Salem is quickly bought and much of that still corded up in the country is already sold. The best quality of large fir is selling at \$4 a cord, whereas it usually brings but \$2.75 to \$3. The price of small fir has not advanced so much, as this class of wood is in less demand and more plentiful supply. The price has gone up from \$2.25 and \$2.50 a cord to \$3. It is almost certain that as the season passes the prices will increase and that prune growers will find the item of fuel adding to the cost of preparing their fruit for market.

Four thousand cords of slabwood will be brought to Salem from Eugene this summer.

Big Timber Deal Made.

A deal involving several hundred thousand dollars has just been consummated by which H. L. Pitcock, F. W. Leadbetter, president of the Columbia River paper company, and W. P. Hawley, assistant general manager of the Crown paper company, have purchased approximately a half interest in the Charles K. Spaulding logging company, owned by Spaulding and B. C. Miles. The object of the deal is to enlarge the scope of operations of the company, which owns a mill at Newberg, several steamboats and thousands of acres of timber lands. The capacity of the Newberg mill is about 30,000 feet daily, and this will be at least doubled, as the company wishes to increase its lumber output.

Law for Plumbers.

Some of the larger towns in Oregon have overlooked the act of the last legislature which requires that every incorporated city of 4000 inhabitants shall have a board of examiners of plumbers within thirty days after the act becomes a law. According to the computation made by the secretary of state as to the time when acts of the legislature became laws, the 30 days expired last Sunday. The act also requires that in such towns every person desiring to engage in the occupation of a plumber shall first secure a license from the board of examiners of plumbers. Plumbers are required to pay a license fee of \$1 and each shop or establishment must pay a license fee of \$5.

Portland Real Estate Active.

An increase of nearly \$90,000 above the real estate transfers of the preceding week is the feature of the past week in Portland among the realty dealers. The building permits for the same period show a slight decrease, but nothing abnormal when the ordinary fluctuations of the construction business are considered.

Organize a Fair Club.

Mrs. Emma Galloway, state organizer of women's Lewis and Clark clubs, was in Monmouth last week, where she formed another club with a good charter membership.

LOANS FROM SCHOOL FUND.

Two Districts Have Borrowed Money, at 5 Per Cent.

Two school districts have made application to borrow money from the irreducible state school fund, under the act of the last legislature, and their applications have been accepted. A number of other districts are making preparations to borrow money from the same source, and it seems that the state land board will be able to put out a considerable sum in this way. The districts whose offers of bonds have been accepted are District No. 1, in Clatsop county, which will issue bonds to the amount of \$35,000, and District No. 2, in Wasco county, which will issue bonds to the amount of \$3500. The loans will be made at 5 per cent. interest. The usual rate for mortgage loans is 6 per cent., but the board does not find borrowers for the entire fund.

The act of the last legislature provided that whenever any school district desired to raise money by issuing bonds, it should be the duty of the district to offer the bonds to the state land board at not less than 5 per cent interest. The board has the option on the bonds at that rate, and if the bonds are found to be legally issued, may purchase them. If the state land board declines to purchase the bonds the district may then sell them in the market at the best terms that can be had.

The state land board is also preparing a form of bond which each district will be required to issue. Uniformity in this respect will make it easy to keep the records of bonds in the hands of the state land board. No school district can now issue bonds without giving the state land board an opportunity to buy them, so that practically all the interest paid by school districts upon bonds hereafter issued will go into the public school fund, thus saving this large amount of money to the public schools.

No Celebration at Portland.

The Fourth of July fund at Portland has been transferred to the Heppner relief committee, and no celebration will be held, except a sham battle at Irvington, for the benefit of Heppner. The amount paid in is \$2874.66, and about \$250 is outstanding. It is expected that all this balance will be paid. There are bills outstanding which must be paid, but the balance to be transferred to the Heppner fund will be at least \$2500.

Muddy Water for Twenty-five Miles.

Captain Howes, who has just returned to Astoria from service on the pilot schooner, says that, as a result of the present freshet in the Columbia, fresh and muddy water extends a distance of fully 25 miles off shore. This is undoubtedly what prevents the salmon from coming in in the expected large runs.

Light Plant at Fort Stevens.

Captain Goodale, constructing quarters at Astoria, has received authority from the department at Washington to advertise for bids for the construction of an electric light plant at Fort Stevens to light the grounds and barracks.

Old Pioneer Gone.

Captain Joseph Sloan, an Oregon pioneer of 1850, first superintendent of the Oregon penitentiary, and an early chief of police of Portland, died at the home of Dr. E. A. Pierce in Salem last Sunday.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Walla Walla, 70@74c; valley, 77c.

Barley—Feed, \$20.00 per ton; brewing, \$21.

Flour—Best grades, \$3.95 @ 4.30; graham, \$3.45 @ 3.85.

Millstuffs—Bran, \$23 per ton; middlings, \$27; shorts, \$23; chop, \$18.

Oats—No. 1 white, \$1.10 @ 1.15; gray, \$1.05 per cental.

Hay—Timothy, \$20@21; clover, nominal; cheat, \$15@16 per ton.

Potatoes—Best Burpinks, 50@65c per sack; ordinary, 35@45c per cental; growers' prices; Merced sweets, \$3 @ 3.50 per cental.

Poultry—Chickens, mixed, 10@11c; young, 13@14c; hens, 12c; turkeys, live, 16@17c; dressed, 20@22c; ducks, \$7.00@7.50 per dozen; geese, \$6.00 @ 6.50.

Cheese—Full cream, twins, 15½@16c; Young America, 15@15½c; factory prices, 1@1½c less.

Butter—Fancy creamery, 20@22½c per pound; extras, 22c; dairy, 20 @ 22½c; store, 16c@18.

Eggs—17@20c per dozen.

Hops—Choice, 18@20c per pound.

Wool—Valley, 12½@17c; Eastern Oregon, 8@14c; mohair, 35@37½c.

Beef—Gross, cows, 3½@4c, per pound; steers, 5@5½c; dressed, 8½c.

Veal—7½@8c.

Mutton—Gross, \$3.50 per pound; dressed, 6@6½c.

Lambs—Gross, 4c per pound; dressed, 7½c.

Hogs—Gross, 6@6½c per pound; dressed, 7@8c.