

The Minister's Wife

By MRS. HENRY WOOD

CHAPTER IV.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

her by return of post, and ran as follows:

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

"HENRY."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CHAPTER V.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Walking for a wager?" cried he. "That's it; your lordship has just hit it," replied the surgeon, grasping warmly the ready hand held out to him. "I and Time often have a match together, and sometimes he wins and sometimes I do." (To be continued.)

Even at Last.

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

"You don't say?"

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

"Gracious!"

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

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

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

An Eye to the Future.

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

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

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

Does What Other Stoves Fail to Do

In almost every house there is a room that the heat from the other stoves or furnace fails to reach. It may be a room on the "weather" side, or one having no heat connection. It may be a cold hallway. No matter in what part of the house—whether room or hallway—it can soon be made snug and cozy with a

PERFECTION Oil Heater

(Equipped with Smokeless Device)

Unlike ordinary oil heaters the **Perfection** gives satisfaction always. First and foremost it is absolutely safe—you cannot turn the wick too high or too low. Gives intense heat without smoke or smell because equipped with smokeless device. Can be easily carried from room to room. As easy to operate as a lamp. Ornamental as well as useful. Made in two finishes—nickel and japan. Brass oil font beautifully embossed. Holds 4 quarts of oil and burns 9 hours. There's real satisfaction in a **Perfection Oil Heater**. Every heater warranted. If not at your dealer's write our nearest agency for descriptive circular.

The Rayo Lamp makes the home bright. Is the safest and best lamp for all-round household use. Gives a clear, steady light. Fitted with latest improved burner. Made of brass throughout and nickel plated. Every lamp warranted. Suitable for library, dining room, parlor or bedroom. If not at your dealer's write to nearest agency.

STANDARD OIL COMPANY

Many a True Word.

When, a few years ago, someone in an idle jest wrote an advertisement for a housemaid saying that the advertiser would and could give "references" we all laughed and thought it too funny to be true. But it was prophetic. Recently in the newspaper of a suburban city an advertisement appeared for a cook and a housemaid, and the one in want of the servants added in a manner unmistakably meant to be persuasive "first change in ten years." But who among us feels like laughing now? Rather it is sobering in its effect upon us, since it tells in one more way a story that is vexing and perplexing thousands of housekeepers in the State.—Houston Transcript.

Beware of Ointments for Catarrh that Contain Mercury

Mercury will surely destroy the sense of smell and completely derange the whole system when entering it through the mucous surfaces. Such articles should never be used except on prescriptions from reputable physicians, as the damage they will do is ten fold to the good you can possibly derive from them. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, O., contains no mercury, and is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. In buying Hall's Catarrh Cure be sure you get the genuine. It is taken internally, and made in Toledo, Ohio, by F. J. Cheney & Co. Testimonials free.

Sold by Druggists, price 75c. per bottle. Hall's Family Pills are the best.

Confirming the Popular Impression.

"Minnie," said the young man, whose heart was thumping violently, "do you know that everybody—or—says—says—that we—we are engaged?"

"I suppose, Harold," she answered, "everybody thinks that—that we ought to be by this time."

After that it wasn't long until everybody knew it.

In Ireland there are 211,000 widows, as compared with only 88,000 widowers.

His Own Manufacture.

Sir William Bailey "played this off," as he expressed it, at a dinner at which the late Cardinal Vaughan sat near to him. "Where did you get that bit of history from?" the cardinal asked. "I didn't get it from anywhere," Sir William answered. "I make history as I go on."—Manchester Guardian.

Worth Knowing.

That Alcock's Plasters are the highest result of medical science and skill and in ingredients and method have never been equaled. That they are the original and genuine porous plasters upon whose reputation all imitators trade.

That they never fail to perform their remedial work quickly and effectually. That for Weak Back, Rheumatism, Colds, Lung Trouble, Strains and all Local Pains they are invaluable.

That when you buy Alcock's Plasters you obtain the best plasters made.

You Have Seen Them.

First Flat Dweller—Those people over there are always kicking on the meals.

Second Ditto—Then why don't they move?

First Flat Dweller—They're the kind that would rather kick than eat.—Detroit Free Press.

Banqued.

Church—A man recently paid \$60,000 for a seat in the New York Stock Exchange.

Gotham—And did he get it?

"O, yes, he got it."

"That's all right, then. I'll bet I've paid more than that in my lifetime for seats in the street cars that I never got."

—Yonkers Statesman.

It is officially reported that the growing of cotton in West Africa has been very successful.

SKIN DISEASES

HUMORS IN THE BLOOD

When the blood is pure, fresh and healthy, the skin will be soft, smooth and free from blemishes, but when some acid humor takes root in the circulation its presence is manifested by a skin eruption or disease. These humors get into the blood, generally because of an inactive or sluggish condition of the members of the body whose duty it is to collect and carry off the waste and refuse matter of the system. This unhealthy matter is left to sour and ferment and soon the circulation becomes charged with the acid poison. The blood begins to throw off the humors and acids through the pores and glands of the skin, producing Eczema, Acne, Tetter, Psoriasis, Salt Rheum and skin eruptions of various kinds. Eczema appears, usually with a slight redness of the skin followed by pustules from which there flows a sticky fluid that dries and forms a crust, and the itching is intense. It is generally on the back, breast, face, arms and legs, though other parts of the body may be affected. In Tetter the skin dries, cracks and bleeds; the acid in the blood dries up the natural oils of the skin, which are intended to keep it soft and pliant, causing a dry, feverish condition and giving it a hard, leathery appearance. Acne makes its appearance on the face in the form of pimples and black heads, while Psoriasis comes in scaly patches on different parts of the body. One of the worst forms of skin trouble is Salt Rheum; its favorite point of attack is the scalp, sometimes causing baldness. Poison Oak and Ivy are also disagreeable types of skin disease. The humor producing the trouble lies dormant in the blood through the winter to break out and torment the sufferer with the return of Spring. The best treatment for all skin diseases is S. S. S. It neutralizes the acids and removes the humors so that the skin instead of being irritated and diseased, is nourished by a supply of fresh, healthy blood. External applications of salves, washes, lotions, etc., while they soothe the itching caused by skin affections, can never cure the trouble

I suffered with Eczema for forty years and could find nothing to cure me until I tried S. S. S. I suffered intensely with the itching and burning; pustules would form from which there flowed a sticky fluid; crusts would come on the skin and when scratched off the skin was left as raw as a piece of beef. I suffered agony in the long years I was afflicted, but when I used S. S. S. I found a perfect cure. There has never been any return of the trouble.

C. H. EVANS, Stockman, Neb.

S. S. S.

PURELY VEGETABLE

because they do not reach the blood. S. S. S. goes down into the circulation and forces out every particle of foreign matter and restores the blood to its normal, pure condition, thereby permanently curing every form of skin affection. Book on Skin Diseases and any medical advice desired sent free to all who write. S. S. S. is for sale at all first class drug stores.

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