

The Minister's Wife

By MRS. HENRY WOOD

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

After tea they dispersed about the two rooms which opened to each other. One of the girls sat down to the piano, the others gathered round it. Sir Everard strolled toward the other room. Mary sat on a sofa, apparently lost in thought, and Charles Baumgarten stood underneath the chandelier, with an open book. Sir Everard sat down by Mary.

"It has been a long separation, Mary," he whispered. "Did you think I was never coming?"

"Yes, it has been long," she faintly said. Her hands were trembling, her heart was beating; she spoke—and looked—as if she were frightened.

"But from no fault of mine," he returned. "Had you permitted a regular correspondence, you would have known this."

A hasty glance had shown him that no one was looking. Charles Baumgarten, buried in his book, stood with his back toward them; the rest were round the piano, singing. He bent his face down to Mary's and his lips touched her cheek.

"Oh, don't! don't!" she shrinkingly uttered.

"Nay, my dearest, would you deny it to me? It is a reward long waited for."

She gasped for breath as she stood up and caught the corner of the mantelpiece. Her face had turned painfully white again.

The song over, the conversation became general, and presently Sir Everard rose to leave.

"Will you tell Lady Grace, with my kind regards, that I anticipate the pleasure of seeing her to-morrow?" said Sir Everard to Charles, as he held out his hand.

Charles did not choose to see the hand, and he replied, coldly and stiffly: "I do not reside with Lady Grace, and shall not be likely to meet her to-night or to-morrow."

"He has his mother's pride," thought Sir Everard. But Sir Everard was mistaken.

Mary slipped out of the room afterward, and she had not returned to it when Charles said good-night.

As he passed a small parlor, on his way out, usually devoted to the studies and pursuits of the young ladies, Charles' ear caught the sound of something very like a sob. He halted and looked in. There were no candles in the room, but the fire was blazing away, and in its light stood Mary. He went in and shut the door behind him. She smoothed the traces of tears from her face, but could not hide its ghastly look. Charles turned white also, and confronted her upon the old, worn hearthrug.

"The time for concealment has passed, Mary, as it seems to me," he began. "We have gone on, like two children, making believe to hide things from one another. This is the awakening! What is to be done? You cannot act a lie, and marry that man!"

"Oh, Charles, what are you saying?" she uttered, in a wailing tone. "I would rather die!"

"Yes, for you love me—nay, don't I tell you the time for concealment is over, and this night is the awakening? You love me—and oh, my darling! how I love you I cannot stay now to tell. Nor need I, for you have known it without my telling you."

"I am terrified," she whispered. "I am nearly terrified to death at the thought of what is before me. Think of the wrong I have done to him!"

"And I think of my position, my poverty," returned Charles Baumgarten. "If I spoke to your father he would turn me out of the house and keep me out of it. We have just gone on, living in a fool's paradise, Mary, shutting our eyes to the future."

"Not a word must be breathed to my father," she whispered eagerly.

"Would you marry Everard Wilnot?" sharply cried Charles Baumgarten. "But that I forced control upon myself with an iron will, I should have struck him when he kissed you to-night."

She cried out with pain. "You saw it, then?"

"Saw it? I felt it. Felt it as if it had been a sharp steel, piercing my heart. Oh, the curse of poverty! I seem to be helpless in the matter. Mary, I can only trust in you."

"A dim idea came over me, while I sat with him on the sofa, of speaking to him," she said, in a tone of abstraction. "But I don't know how I could do it. He is so good a man, so honorable, so kindly; one of those men you may trust. I wish he had never taken it in his head to ask me to marry him! I wish I had followed my own impulse at the time—and declined him."

"We have nearly our whole lives before us, Mary, and they must not be sacrificed to misery," he urged. "Mary, you must wait for me; I know I shall get on."

"Leave me to think it over for to-night," she answered. "I must try and see what ought to be done—and do it."

He put his arm around her to kiss her; but she started away. "Charles, at present, remember, I am engaged to him!"

It was of no use. "I must take away the one that he left," whispered Baumgarten.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mary Dynevor lay awake the whole night, thinking over what she ought to do. To her father she could not speak; his temper was too fiery, his authority abso-

lute, she was utterly in awe of him. She could only see one way out of the dilemma—to throw herself on the generosity of Sir Everard; but she shrank from the prospect of doing this, and when she rose in the morning she was as much perplexed as when she had gone to rest.

The subdean was engaged that evening to a clerical dinner, and Miss Dynevor departed with her nieces. They had scarcely gone when Sir Everard Wilnot entered. And now came Mary's task.

She did not know how to begin it. She was absent and agitated. Sir Everard could not fail to observe her strangeness of manner. "What is the matter?" he inquired.

A strange, wild rush of red illumined her cheek, and she clasped her hands tightly one over the other; so tightly as to cause pain, had her mind been at ease; then she got up and stood by the fire; all in the effort to nerve herself to her task; it must be done. Now, or never.

"I have a communication to make to you, Sir Everard—"

"Sir Everard!" he interrupted, standing near her.

"And I don't know how to do it," she continued, un mindful of the reproach. "Had you been any other than—than—what you are, I could not have made it. I have been very wicked; very wrong. I have let things go on, suffering you to believe that I would—that I was going to marry you; and I find I cannot do so."

A dead pause. Sir Everard thought that he had never seen any one so confused; so painfully agitated.

"I do not understand you," he said. "But I think you had better sit down," he added, gently leading her to the sofa, on which he took a place beside her.

"It is your coming home which has awakened me," she continued, scarcely knowing what she spoke. "Indeed, I did not mean to do wrong, or to act dishonorably; but when you came yesterday evening—then—I found—that I could not marry you. Let me tell you all," she resumed, gathering some courage now the ice is broken, as nervously sensitive people will do. "I found I did not love you; that it would be wrong to myself, and doubly, doubly wrong to you, if I fulfilled my engagement and married you; and I lay awake all night, thinking what ought to be my course. I did not dare tell papa; he is very severe; and I—decided—to tell you; to ask you to give me up. It is what I am now trying to ask you to do. Oh, Sir Everard," she added, bursting into tears, "I do like and esteem you very much; and it nearly breaks my heart to have to say this."

"You must forgive me if I repeat that I do not understand you," he said, in a low, kind tone, "and your last words less than all. You 'like and esteem me,' but you do not love me? I am quite content to take the esteem and the liking, Mary; to trust that the love will follow."

"It never will," she almost vehemently answered, lifting her eyes to his for a moment in her eagerness. "It cannot do so."

"You love another?"

"Oh, forgive me," she whispered. "It was not willingly done; it seems to have come on without my having been aware of it. He did not know it, either—until last night when you came. At least—at least—he had never spoken of it."

"You have betrayed yourself, I suspect, unwittingly. You speak of Mr. Baumgarten! Why did you accept me?"

"Why, indeed!" she murmured. "But I did not know that I was doing wrong. I liked you very much, I admired and respected you; you were so different, so superior to the frivolous men we mostly meet. It is true I did not love you, and even then I knew that I liked—only liked, mind—Charles Baumgarten; but I thought it would all come right in the future. I was acting in a species of dream or bewilderment, which was the effect your offer had upon me. I had taken a wrong view of your frequent visits to us. I fancied you came for the sake of Gertrude Baumgarten."

"Gertrude Baumgarten!" he repeated in a curious intonation. "Gertrude would not have cared for me. Nonsense, Mary! She was rapt in that Italian prince—who had more money than brains."

Mary shook her head. "She did not care for him; and when he asked her to be his wife she refused. After it was all over—I mean when I had accepted you and we were away, and on our return home again, an idea came over me that it was you Gertrude had really cared for. I was not sure; and I judged it better not to continue the train of thought; but this I know—Gertrude has never been quite the same girl since. I suppose I ought not to tell you this; I fear I am forgetting myself in more ways than one."

Everard Wilnot paused. "Do you know, Mary," he said, "that this communication in regard to yourself places me in a very painful position?"

"I can only throw myself upon your generosity; only plead for your forgiveness."

"You wish me to understand that you and Mr. Baumgarten are irrevocably attached to one another? Then will it not be better to tell the simple truth to Dr. Dynevor? I do not suggest this to avert unpleasantness to myself, but—"

"It is the very thing that must not be done," she interrupted, in agitation. "Charles Baumgarten is as yet too poor to ask for me, and papa would go wild at the bare idea of it. He, of course, considers it a most desirable thing—oh, pardon me for having to say all this—that I should—should—become Lady Wilnot, and I dare not tell him I object. I thought if you could do it—as if the ob-

jection came from you—you would not be afraid of him, for he could not be harsh and peremptory with you, as he would with me. I know it is a great boon to ask of you," she added, her eyes filling again, "but—if you knew how unhappy, how perplexed I am—perhaps you would not refuse to help me."

"You forget one thing," he returned, in a low tone, "that the odium of being refused had far better fall upon me than upon you. The world is not generous in these matters, but I can fight it better than you can."

"I forget all things," she answered, "but the bare fact before me—that I must not marry you, and dare not confess to papa the true cause. The world can only say that you repented of your engagement to me. Let it be so."

Sir Everard was silent. He knew that the world's ability to say it would not prove so pleasant as she thought. "I must have time to consider this," he said, rising. "I will see you again to-morrow morning."

She rose also and stood before him as a culprit. He took her hand.

"I hope you will forgive me. I hope you did not like me very much," she whispered, raising her repentant eyes to his.

Her words and manner almost amused him, they were so truthful and child-like. "I do like you very much," he answered, with a smile; "too much to part from you without a pang of regret and mortification."

"But you will get over it," she eagerly said, "very soon, I hope."

"It will be the second case of a similar nature I have had to get over," he returned, possibly surprised out of the confession, possibly making it with deliberate intention. "I was going to be married in my early youth, or what seems early youth to me now. I was four-and-twenty."

"And she refused you?" whispered Mary.

"No; she died. All the love I had to give died with her, and I had only liking left for any one else. I had none, even of that, for a long while, for years after she died. Do not be ungenerous, and fancy I retort this confession upon you in requital for the one you have given me; it was always my intention to make it before we were married, more fully than I have now done."

Mary Dynevor's face was raised, her lips were parted with eagerness. "Then—if I understand you rightly—you have not really loved me?"

"In the imaginative sense of the term—no. Only—I quote your favorite words—'I liked you very much.' But my wife should never have felt the want of that ideal love."

She looked almost beside herself with joy. A rosy flush suffused her cheeks, a light came to her eyes, and she positively clasped Sir Everard's hands in her own. "I am so thankful!" she burst forth, "I am so happy! If you do not love me, why no great harm has been done, and we can still be friends. Oh, Everard, let us be friends! There is no one in the world I would rather have for a friend than you; and you will be Charles' friend also, and let him be yours."

"Perhaps—after a little while."
(To be continued.)

HOW SHE HAD HELPED.

Mrs. Compton looked at her husband with the gentle, affectionate gaze which he had come to recognize as an invariable result of a call from the next-door neighbor, Mrs. Harlow.

"Poor thing!" said Mrs. Compton, with a sigh of content, although no name had been mentioned. "She's tied for life to one of these intensely practical men, Henry, with no imagination! I do pity her so, and yet she's fond of him, Henry, that's the strange part of it—really fond of him."

"What's he been doing lately?" asked Mr. Compton, with amused interest, for the shortcomings of Mr. Harlow as presented by his wife had beguiled many a half-hour.

"You see, Mrs. Harlow is—well, she's not apt to be ready at the exact moment Mr. Harlow expects her to be—if they are going out," said Mrs. Compton, her gaze still lingering tenderly on her husband's ingenuous countenance. "And he has talked to her a good deal about it, quite—quite firmly at times, I think. She says she always plans to be on time, but she has so many interruptions, and then she's a Southerner, you know, and they are so calm and leisurely."

"They are, if she's a sample," said Mr. Compton.

"Yes, of course. I knew you'd see the point," and his wife beamed on him with approval in her brown eyes. "Well, last Friday evening that man actually gave her a little book with a list of the things he had done and read while he was waiting for her to go to places."

"It was their seventh anniversary, and of course he gave her something else, but this book he called 'Waiting'—he'd had it stamped on in gold letters himself."

"She looked at it, and read three or four pages, and then, as she told me, she felt so proud (you know he is clever in some ways), she just said, 'And to think I've really been a help to you when I didn't know it! All these things you've accomplished because I happened to be made just as I am, and not a prompt New Englander like you! Wasn't that a sweet thought, Henry?—Youth's Companion.'

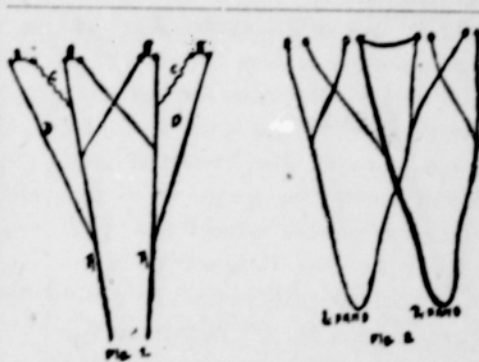
FARMS AND FARMERS



Driving Four Horses Abreast.

To drive four horses abreast, two full sets of lines are not absolutely necessary as an arrangement such as that shown in the accompanying illustration can be used.

B B B B are the bits. A A are ordinary driving lines on the middle horses. C C are straps from the inside ring of the outside horses' bits fastened to the hame ring of the inside horses. D D are straps or extra lines reaching across from the ordinary lines to the outside ring of the bits of the



FOR DRIVING FOUR HORSES.

outside horses. As a matter of convenience, one may attach these to the lines at the buckle, but that plan has this objection, if the outside horses are hard-mouthed it has a tendency to pull the lines out too far and worry the inside horses' mouths. This can be entirely overcome by making D D longer and attaching it further toward the hand of the driver. If one is driving unbroken or vicious horses it is a good plan to run D D out far enough that the driver can slip his hands through the loops thus made and use them as a pair of holders are used on a hard-mouthed driving horse.

In the second illustration the inside horses are shown with a tie strap fastening them together. In driving, tie the hand pieces of each off rein together, also those of the near horses, which, if of equal length, enables the driver to handle four horses with as much ease as two.

Halter Tie.

The necessity of making a knot in the end of the halter every time the horse is tied in the stall is done away



CANNOT SLIP.

with by the invention of a North Dakota ranchman. Where a hundred or more horses are employed the time involved in tying them in the stalls each day is considerable. The halter tie, as shown in the illustration, is made of one piece of metal, through which extend two slots. These slots are wider at one end than at the other. By placing a rope through one of the slots and pulling on the same the rope is sure to become wedged in the slot tighter and tighter. The halter tie is nailed at the head of the stall in advance of the horse, so that the latter in pulling on the rope will force it more tightly into the slot. Only a few seconds are required to slip the rope into the slot and over a small hook at the inner end. While in this position there is no danger of the horse working the halter loose and roaming in the stable.

Vitality of Alfalfa Seed.

Tests made at the Colorado station seem to indicate that "good, plump, mature, clean alfalfa seed does not lose its vitality rapidly when kept with ordinary precaution to prevent injury from moisture." The oldest sample had a germinating power of 93 per cent when 6 years old, of 72 when 10 years old, and of 63 when 16 years old. Prof. W. P. Headen believes that the limit for the vitality of good, mature alfalfa seed exceeds sixteen years.

Farm Brevities.

Never pasture the alfalfa the first year.

A healthy flock of sheep is a profitable flock.

Mutton eaters are increasing faster than mutton.

Weeds and poor seed cause many of the alfalfa failures.

You can't afford to have a clock watcher for a hired man.

There is such a thing as compelling success to come your way.

Alfalfa can be raised in Maine. How about its winter killing in Iowa?

Soil that has been well cultivated and fertilized seldom needs inoculating.

For permanent pasture, sow every kind of grass that is known to do well in your section.—Field and Farm.

Apple Seedlings.

We are asked the question if the seedling used in grafting apple exerts any influence on the tree as to hardiness and if so what are the best to use. The apple seedling is the foundation for the tree, as the scion depends on this at least the first two years for establishing itself and forming the nucleus of the future tree. In the past there has not been given the attention as there should have been to hardiness and adaptability of the stocks of our different fruit trees, and it has just commenced to be agitated by horticulturists the last few years. It has been the custom of many nurseries to import from France seedlings of French crab and domestic apples for grafting on. Many of these are known to be tender and hence many of the losses from trees dying out could be traced if we knew directly to the stocks on which the tree had been grafted. If we were to save seed from such varieties as Duchess of Oldenburg, wealthy, northwestern greening, etc., we would soon see a marked difference in the hardiness of our trees. Some of our painstaking nurserymen are very careful on this account and buy their apple seeds in Vermont or northern New York, where it is washed out of the pumice of the cider mills in sections where they have had for years large seedling orchards. While the fruit was inferior, yet the trees were hardy, and this is the only requirement in a stock, as the quality of the tree will always be influenced by the scion.—Twentieth Century Farmer.

An Anti-Kicking Device.

An arrangement which will cure the worst kicking cow that I have ever seen is shown in the sketch. Take a strong strap such as a heavy harness line and buckle it around the cow's body just in front of the udder. One must be very careful in placing it first on the kicking cow and not buckle STRAP IN PLACE. It too tight. She will probably object and jump around a little at first, but will soon become used to the arrangement and will not raise any more disturbance. A rope may be used instead of a leather strap if it is not tied too tight. Be gentle with the cow and treat her right and in a few weeks you can take off the strap and she will remain quiet. In case she begins to kick again, replace the strap and leave it on her for a while.—C. H. Parker, in Farm and Home.



Timothy and Clover Hay.

Timothy hay is the one most commonly grown on the farm and found in the market, according to a Pennsylvania bulletin. Timothy sells for a higher price in the market than other hay, and is regarded as being particularly adapted to horses. It is deficient in protein, and for that reason should be fed with a grain ration of a nitrogenous nature. For horses no better basis for a ration can be found than timothy hay and oats. It is less valuable for cattle and sheep. Clover hay is next to timothy in common use, and the two are more often found mixed than either is found alone. The nitrogenous nature of the clover aids in supplying the deficiency of protein in the timothy. Clover is more valuable than timothy for cattle and sheep, but is not considered so satisfactory for horses.

Cultivating Young Trees.

The soil will dry very rapidly and to a great depth if allowed to get hard and compact. There is but a small space left for air in solid soils, and from this fact they become hot and dry to a great depth in summer, while if air is present, as it is in loose soils (being such a poor conductor of heat), it will allow only a small portion of soil to become hot, which soon cools at night and is filled with a copious dew, not only retaining the moisture already in the soil, but also adding to it at a season when moisture is especially desirable. Newly set trees are always benefited by cultivation, because all their roots are surface roots and cannot thrive in a hot, dry, compact soil, hence the necessity of summer surface cultivation of newly set trees.

Let the farmer who wants good colts select the best grade mares and breed them annually to one good type of horse. Of course, the quality of the dam always has more or less influence upon the progeny, but no matter how good or how poor the mother, the best sire obtainable is none too good.

A Western report says that a Wyoming man has invented a machine to eradicate scab without the process of dipping. The dip is forced through hollow wires made in the form of brushes which fit over the sheen.