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Aunt Diana

The Sunshine of the Family

CHAPTER XXIV.—(Continued.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Aunt Diana, I want to speak to you." "One moment, Alice; I have just finished my letter to your father. Have you any message for him?"

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

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

I know what it is; Greville has been speaking to you?" "Yes, Aunt Diana." "Well, I will scold him presently for not speaking to me first." But there was no anger in Aunt Diana's eyes. "I dare say his grandfather encouraged him; he is so set upon this. Well, Alice, and what did our boy say to you?" "Oh, Aunt Diana, don't ask me," returned Alison, desperately, "he thinks too highly of me. I am not as good as that; I don't deserve it all."

"We must allow for a little exaggeration under the circumstances," returned Miss Carrington, smiling, and managing to free her hands, and so get a glimpse of the hidden happy face. "But, Aunt Diana, almost whispering, 'are we not too young?' Greville will have to be at Oxford another year, and—"

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

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

"I guess who it was; I always knew," murmured Alison. "Greville is dear to me for his father's sake," returned Miss Carrington, almost solemnly. "No more of this just now, Alice. If you love me, dear child, you will know how happy it makes me to know my two darlings are to be united."

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

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

"Well, Greville, have you come to be scolded?" she asked, playfully. "Yes, but you would not have the heart to do it," was his reply. "Care," with a pause on the old name, "how could I help it?" And his glance was sufficiently eloquent.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"You do not think me too hard-hearted to insist on a two years' engagement, Alice?" Miss Carrington said presently. "Mr. Moore has begged me over and over again to reconsider my decision, but, indeed, I think Greville is too young for such a responsibility. In two years he will be five-and-twenty."

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

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

"And in two years Alison Merle is to be Alison Moore?" "I hope so, Aunt Diana." "Darling! that day will be a happy one for me. I love you both so much, and then I shall have you near me. Think of Fernleigh being your home."

"A beautiful home," she returned. "Roger will miss you the most, dear." "I hope not by that time, Aunt Diana. Perhaps I ought not to speak of it; he has never given me the right to do so, but I think—I hope—Anna—may be able to comfort him for my absence."

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

"She is a dear little thing, and I dare say she has improved." "Yes, indeed, even Missie owns she is almost pretty sometimes; not that that matters, when she always looks so sweet and good. Oh, Aunt Diana, I have grown to love her so."

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

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

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

"Give and it shall be given to you again," is the law of love." "Darling, I never loved you so much as when I sent you from me to do your duty."

(The End.)

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

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

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

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

"How I wish I were safe at home!"

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

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

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

"See here," he inquired one morning of the genial colored woman who waited upon him, "why do you always fry eggs here? Don't you ever boil them?"

"Oh-oh, yes, sah!" responded the waiter, pleasantly. "Of co'se yo' kin have 'em boiled, if yo' wants 'em. But yo' know, sah, yo' takes de risk!"—New York Times.

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

"Because why?" queried the privileged friend.

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

EVENTS OF THE DAY

Newsy Items Gathered from All Parts of the World.

PREPARED FOR THE BUSY READER

Less Important but Not Less Interesting Happenings from Points Outside the State.

Burglars shot a patrolman at Pueblo when about to be caught.

French strikers insist on the dismissal of Simyan, and may win their point.

Castro has left Germany for Bordeaux, where he will embark for Venezuela.

Boston is to have a crusade against rats similar to the one conducted at San Francisco.

A plot to kill the ameer of Afghanistan was unearthed and 1,200 arrests have been made.

A millionaire iron man, a banker and four others are to be indicted at Pittsburgh for bribery.

Francis J. Heney has protested against the appointment of Fulton as Federal judge in Oregon.

Governor George Curry, of New Mexico, has resigned. He was appointed by Roosevelt in 1907.

The Pennsylvania senate has passed a resolution offering a reward of \$1,000 for the capture of the kidnapers of the Whittell boy. A bill has also been introduced making kidnapping punishable by death.

The empress of Russia is a nervous wreck.

Cuban reciprocity may cause a tariff war with other nations.

Ex-Vice President Fairbanks has retired from politics completely.

District Attorney Jerome, of New York, is again raiding gambling houses.

The great increase in Germany's navy has caused a panic in Great Britain.

A St. Louis physician has left an estate of over \$1,000,000 to a 3-months old girl.

The German steamer Ella was held up by Nicaragua and searched for spies and arms.

The government will seek no more land fraud indictments unless the evidence is strong.

The California senate sent for a sick member to break the deadlock on the direct primary question.

The United States Steel corporation will close some of its large plants April 1 unless business improves.

The French government may relieve Minister Simyan, who has charge of posts and telegraph, in order to appease the strikers.

Russia is ready to intervene in Persia if necessary.

A Washington physician says over-eating causes a desire for smoking and drinking.

A Brockton, Mass., man has come to his right senses at Los Angeles after wandering three years.

The universal suffrage measure has advanced to second reading in the British house of commons.

The condition of Mme. Helena Modjeska, the famous actress, is such that her death may occur at any time.

The king of Christmas island, in the Pacific ocean near Singapore, has abdicated because his wife objects to being queen.

An abscinding Oklahoma bank cashier has sent back nearly all the money taken and promises to return the balance soon.

The British parliament may authorize eight instead of four battleships of the Dreadnaught type on account of activities on the part of Germany in increasing her navy.

After a searching investigation a board of inquiry has recommended the suspension of the pilot who had charge of the transport Logan when it went aground at the entrance to Honolulu harbor.

The Chinese boycott against Japanese goods has been revived.

Servia may yield to the terms of a joint note from the powers.

The Cuban revolutionists have surrendered to government troops.

The crisis between China and Russia over Manchurian territory is said to be over.

News agents on trains in Mexico have been forbidden to sell liquor in future.

The Nicaraguan president defies the United States to intervene in Central America and threatens to fight marines to a finish.

CALL FOR CONGRESS.

Trans-Mississippi Commercial Body to Meet in Denver.

Denver, March 23.—Secretary Arthur F. Francis, of the Trans-Mississippi Commercial congress, today issued the official call for the 20th annual session of that association, to be held in Denver August 16 to 21 inclusive, of this year. Added interest attaches to this meeting from the fact that President Taft will be present and take part in the proceedings. A large attendance of representatives of the Latin-American countries is also expected, in the interest of closer international relations between this country and the republics of South and Central America and Mexico.

One thing will be barred, according to the executive committee, and this is a discussion of questions of a political nature.

Besides these questions of closer relations with the southern republics, with special reference to the early completion of the Panama canal and the consequent stimulating commercial development in the trans-Mississippi states, the following questions will come under discussion:

National defense, with special reference to the needs of the Pacific coast and Hawaii; an adequate merchant marine and the need of government aid in its upbuilding and maintenance; conservation of natural resources. This promises to be one of the leading questions to come before the congress. Irrigation and the reclamation of semi-arid lands will also be taken up, as will waterway improvements, drainage of submerged lands, scientific dry farming, Alaska, separate statehood for New Mexico and Arizona, parcels post, postal savings banks, insurance, trade relations with Mexico, Central and South America, Gulf ports and the railroads, Panama canal, Hawaii, immigration, good roads, sugar beet and cane industry, Barataria and Lafourche, national finance, consular service.

STRIKE IS OVER.

Paris Postal Employees Sue for Peace and Are Met Half Way.

Paris, March 23.—The great strike of the employees of the postoffice department, which virtually has isolated Paris and cut off France from communication with the outside world for last week, collapsed today. The strike committee decided to call off the employees and made the first move to effect a settlement, virtually suing for peace. The government will meet the committee half way.

Representatives of the linemen called today upon M. Barthou, minister of public works, ostensibly for the purpose of protesting against the charges that they had cut the wires, but during the course of the interview they communicated to the minister the terms on which the allied associations collectively would resume work.

These were: First, the resignation of M. Simyan, under secretary of posts and telegraphs; second, that no employees should be dismissed on account of the strike. They desired also the assurance that the delegates of the association hereafter should be permitted to lay their grievances directly before the minister of public works.

M. Barthou received the deputation in a conciliatory spirit. He said the government could not discuss the resignation of an official except with parliament, but he gave the delegation the satisfaction it demanded on other points.

Premier Clemenceau met the deputation later and confirmed M. Barthou's statement with regard to the attitude of the government.

At the conclusion of these private interviews with the ministers, the strike committee met and decided upon the resumption of work tomorrow.

This decision was announced at a mass meeting at which 5,000 strikers were present.

Peace Pact Assured.

City of Mexico, March 23.—It is now believed a certainty that a conference of the five presidents of Central American republics will be held soon. Word has reached here that Presidents Cabrera, of Guatemala; Davilla, of Honduras, and Zelaya, of Nicaragua, have agreed to the proposed meeting. It is thought that President Figueroa, of Salvador, and the president of Costa Rica will consent to the invitation sent out by M. Echeverria, president of the Central American branch of the bureau of American republics.

Governor Cosgrove Improves.

Paso Robles Hot Springs, Cal., March 23.—That Governor Cosgrove is improving so rapidly he will be able to leave for Washington by May 1 to assume the reins of government in that state, is the opinion of Dr. F. W. Sawyer, managing director, who says the reports he has to give out are highly encouraging.

13 Warships Ready in 1912.

Berlin, March 23.—In view of the assertions made in the British house of commons that Germany, in the spring of 1912, would have 17 warships, all of them of the big-gun type, the Navy department authorizes the statement that in the autumn of 1912 Germany will have 13 such vessels.

PROVISIONS OF BILL

New Tariff Measure Goes Before House of Representatives.

PROVIDES FOR INHERITANCE TAX

Steel and Lumber Rates Are Cut One Half—Coal Is Placed on Free List.

Washington, March 18.—Downward revision, maximum and minimum provisions which impose an average maximum duty 20 per cent in excess of the present tariff and numerous provisions by which it is estimated that the revenue to the government will be increased from \$40,000,000 to \$50,000,000, are the salient features of the new tariff bill which was introduced in the house yesterday by Representative Seno E. Payne, chairman of the ways and means committee.

The recommendations made by President Taft that an inheritance tax be provided and that a limited amount of tobacco and sugar be admitted free from the Philippines are included in the bill. The measure also provides for the issuance of Panama canal bonds to the amount of \$40,000,000, to reimburse the treasury for the original purchase of the canal and re-enacts the provisions for the issue of treasury certificates, the amount being increased from \$100,000,000 to \$250,000,000.

While there is no duty imposed upon coffee, tea is taxed 8 cents when imported from the country where it is produced and 9 cents when from other than the producing country. The internal revenue tax on cigarettes is materially increased, while the tax on beer and whisky is undisturbed. A cut of 50 per cent is made in the steel and lumber schedules and iron ore, hides, tallow, cottonseed oil and works of art more than 20 years old are placed on the free list.

The tariff on boots and shoes is reduced 40 per cent, and on other leather manufactures in proportion. The pottery schedule remains about the same, but the duties on window and plate glass of the smaller sizes are increased, while the duties on the larger sizes are reduced. The tariff on wool of the first and second class, used in clothing principally, is not disturbed, but on wool of the third class, known as carpet wool, it is reduced on the cheaper grades. A 5-cent reduction is made in the duties on shoddy, and waste white wool tops are assessed 6 cents a pound more than the duty on scored wool, which is unchanged. The recommendations for placing wool pulp on the free list and reducing the duties on print paper, with certain restrictions made by the Mann committee of the house are incorporated in the bill. The duty on refined sugar is reduced .04 of a cent a pound, and on dextrin 1/4 cent a pound. A reduction of 1/4 cent a pound is also made in the duty on starch, with the exception of potato starch. Zinc ore is assessed 1 cent per pound for the zinc contained. The tariff on pig iron is reduced from \$4 to \$2 per ton.

The principal increases are made on lemons, cocoa and substitutes for coffee, coal tar dyes, gloves and coated papers and lithograph prints.

As was expected, the new tariff bill is made on a maximum and minimum basis, with the provision that the maximum rates are not to go into effect until 60 days after the passage of the bill. The reciprocity provisions are contained in the paragraphs assessing duties on bituminous coal and coke and agricultural implements, by which these articles are given entry free of duty when imported from countries which permit the free importation of these articles from America.

The inheritance tax provision of the bill is similar to the New York state law. It provides a tax of 5 per cent on all inheritances over \$500 that are collateral inheritances, or in which strangers are the legatees. In cases of direct inheritance the taxes prescribed are:

On \$10,000 to \$100,000, 1 per cent; on \$100,000 to \$500,000, 2 per cent; on those over \$500,000, 3 per cent. It is estimated that \$20,000,000 annually will be derived from this tax.

The maximum and minimum provisions of the bill do away with the necessity of continuing the foreign trade agreements. The abrogation of these is provided for in a section which authorizes the president to issue notices of the termination of these agreements within 10 days after the bill goes into effect. The French agreement would therefore terminate immediately, while the German agreement would remain in force for six months.

Missouri After Negroes.

Jefferson City, Mo., March 18.—The senate passed a bill today to provide an educational qualification for voters. Most of the Republicans voted no. The theory of the Democrats was that the bill would disfranchise more negroes than it would ignorant white.