

ONLY A FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

By
MRS. FORRESTER.

CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

A sharp pang of annoyance shot across Flora Champion as she saw Lord Harold bending over her cousin. She had expected to find Winifred a smart and well-dressed girl, and here she was, perfectly at ease, and elegantly dressed. It was in Miss Champion's heart to treat her with slighting disdain, but Lady Grace was there, and she could not for get her good breeding to grant her spite.

So she walked straight up to where her cousin was sitting and held out her hand, as though there had never been anything else but the most cordial friendship between them.

"How do you do? Did you have a pleasant drive from Harriet?"

"Delightful," said Winifred, recovering herself. "Mrs. Champion was kind enough to send me in her carriage, although she was prevented coming herself. She sent a message through me to you that Sir Howard was rather unwell, and she did not like to leave him, but she hopes to drive over early next week."

"I trust there is nothing serious the matter with grandpa," exclaimed Miss Champion, feigning interest.

"Nothing more than a severe cold."

At this juncture in came pretty Miss Alton, and on Lady Grace introducing her to Miss Eyre, she sat down beside her and spoke in such a pleasant, winning way that Winifred thought her the prettiest, sweetest little creature she had ever seen. And then the other guests came in, and were introduced to her in turn; and when dinner was announced, Sir Clayton gave her his arm and led her into the dining room. Miss Champion's lip was curled contemptuously, but Winifred was deeply touched by the kind consideration of her amiable hostess. She was a little shy at first with Sir Clayton, but he talked so pleasantly to her, and his manner was so reassuring that she soon felt at her ease. And then after dinner Miss Alton came and sat beside her, and chatted to her of their afternoon excursion, and the picnic that was arranged for the following day. When the gentlemen came in, Winifred felt no longer shy; she was thoroughly enjoying her first glimpse of the world. Mr. Clayton came up and carried Miss Alton away to the piano, and Lord Harold went over to Miss Champion. Winifred took the opportunity of looking around at the different faces.

There was a handsome, melancholy-looking man, who attracted her attention in particular. He had come in late, and was the only person who had not been introduced to her. He was sitting alone near the piano watching Miss Alton. Winifred thought, with a tender, almost sad interest, as she saw her brilliant French chaperonne. The little fairy had thrown him her gloves and fan, in that careless, peremptory way women of her use to men who they know love them—and he held them gently and reverently. Mr. Clayton frowned as he saw the gesture, then he turned away to the piano and began arranging the music.

When Miss Alton finished her song she moved back to her place beside Winifred on the sofa. Mr. Clayton walked up to Col. d'Aguilar.

"I must trouble you for Miss Alton's fan and gloves," he said, smiling. "I will give them to her myself." Col. d'Aguilar said, coldly, rising.

Mr. Clayton turned away with a scowl, that reminded Winifred painfully of Mr. Fenner.

"Miss Alton," said Col. d'Aguilar, "have you forgotten that you entrusted your property to my care?"

"Oh! my fan and gloves," she exclaimed, "thank you, I did not remember them; the fact is, I was so anxious to return to my new acquaintance that I forgot them."

But I will make amends for my neglect by sharing my pleasure with you, Miss Eyre—Col. d'Aguilar. And she made room for him on the sofa beside her, greatly to Mr. Clayton's annoyance, who began to talk to Miss Eyre as though Winifred did not dislike him so much when he was talking; his conversation was certainly amusing, and he told her a great deal about Parisian society that she found extremely entertaining. It was only now and then, when she remarked the malicious, ugly scowl that crossed his face when he glanced toward Miss Alton and Col. d'Aguilar, that she remembered her instinctive repulsion for him.

As the days passed, Flora Champion became very uneasy, and not without reason. She had feared it from the first, and now there was no possibility of doubting that Lord Harold Erskine was transferring his allegiance from her to her cousin. She detested Winifred, as only a woman can hate a rival who supplants her. A stinging innuendo, a pointed sarcasm, at times betrayed her feelings, but as a rule she had too much tact to indulge her angry malice. Now and then came an opportunity she could not resist. One day at lunch, Lady Grace was speaking of Mr. Hastings.

"I regret so much," she said to Miss Vance, "that we have lost such a charming neighbor as Mr. Hastings. Promised to be. His sudden departure is a complete mystery to every one."

"We quite thought he intended to live permanently at the Court," answered Miss Vance. "It appears he made the most complete arrangements for doing so. All his horses are still there, and I have not heard of the servants being dismissed. A friend of his is staying there now, playing host to a party of gentlemen. What reason did he assign for his sudden departure?"

"In a note I received from him a few days before he left he said he could not as yet accustom himself to a quiet country life, and felt a longing for the excitement of foreign travel. But I cannot bring myself to think that was anything more than an excuse, which he thought simple enough to repel further questioning. I wish," Lady Grace continued, turning to Winifred, "that you could have met the gentleman we are speaking of, you would have liked him so much. He is not only singularly handsome, but has a peculiar fascinating manner that renders him a general favorite. Perhaps some day he will return, and I shall have an opportunity of introducing him to you."

Winifred beat down her head in silence. Miss Champion looked up, and a glance of malicious light shot from her cold, blue eyes.

"An introduction between such intimate friends would scarcely be necessary," she remarked in her clear voice, that was heard from one end of the long table to the other. "I should think Miss Eyre and Mr. Hastings would be greatly amused at such a formality, after their rambles in the Harriet woods."

The crimson blood dyed Winifred's

cheeks until tears of mortification stood in her eyes. A sharp pang of annoyance shot across Flora Champion as she saw Lord Harold bending over her cousin. She had expected to find Winifred a smart and well-dressed girl, and here she was, perfectly at ease, and elegantly dressed. It was in Miss Champion's heart to treat her with slighting disdain, but Lady Grace was there, and she could not for get her good breeding to grant her spite.

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Just about one o'clock Col. d'Aguilar, who had been away on a dinner invitation, came in, in high good humor and spirits.

"We have had a charming evening," he said, in answer to a question from Capt. Culledee. "Some very jolly fellows there, and I was greatly tempted to stay the night, as they asked me. However, as I had said nothing about it to Lady Grace Farquhar, I was afraid of committing a breach of good manners by remaining. Arthur le Marchant had driven over from Harriet Court—a rare good fellow he is, too, the very life of a party."

"Did he say anything about Hastings?" inquired Reginald Champion.

"I think he mentioned the name of Hastings. If I recollect rightly it was something in connection with a yacht in Constantinople."

"I am sorry Hastings took it into his head to leave England," interposed Lord Harold Erskine. "He was one of the nicest, most gentlemanly fellows I ever met with. He entertained me in a princely way at Court last month."

"Hastings?" remarked Francis Clayton, interrogatively. "I seem to know the name. By the way, Erskine, was not that the man Miss Champion accused Miss Eyre of being so much in the woods with?"

Lord Harold colored with passion.

"I presume they were only together just as d'Aguilar and Miss Alton might have been in the park this afternoon."

"Ah!" said Francis Clayton, quietly, but with his most disagreeable smile. "Let those laugh who win, is a capital maxim. But you're not congratulated us yet, any of you."

Col. d'Aguilar grew very pale; the hand that was on the back of his chair trembled.

"I am no hypocrite," he said, quietly, but with a curious ring in his voice. "I cannot wish you happiness when I know it entails her misery. And amidst a dead silence he left the room.

Before the party assembled at breakfast the following morning he had left Endon Vale.

(To be continued.)

INSECT VANDALS.

Tropical Anis that Ravage the Country Like a Plague.

The Hums and Vindrils of the insect world are undoubtedly the marching army ants. In tropical countries everything falls before these invaders; they leave nothing but ruin behind them. The author of "Tangweera" gives this description of them:

I have never found where these ants concealed when not engaged in foraging; but two or three times in the year, just before or after heavy rain, they come out of the forest in millions, advancing in a solid column, which may cover an acre of ground. Sometimes the column may separate in divisions, one going in one direction, one in another. Each travels in a fixed direction, in which it is guided by the guards, distinguished by enormous heads and threatening mandibles, who march ahead of the main body, as if to reconnoiter the ground.

The army follows after its officers, and rummages everything as it advances. Some sweep up the trees to considerable heights, searching in the cracks of the bark, or among parasitic plants. Every fallen or hollow log and every stone is carefully inspected.

They destroy as if a fire had passed over the ground. Snails, beetles, butterflies, slugs, spiders, centipedes, scorpions, centipedes—everything is devoured. Wasps' nests are riddled of the grubs; birds are driven from their nests and the young ones eaten up. Fortunately, some swarms up the trees to escape the invasions of the ants; but the birds are rearing their young, when they have heard eight inches long writing, lashing the tall, rolling over and over, covered with ants which soon mastered and devoured them.

Twice in the middle of the night we have been roused by such invasions of the marching army ants, and had to rush out of the house and wait till the foray was over. But we were consoled by their leaving us a clean house, for the ants search the thatch through and through, plumb the rafters, and nest with their line of oases, and drag from hiding every lizard, cockroach and spider.

PLUCKING OSTRICH FEATHERS.

Process Is Both Simple and Painless.

Many have wondered whether the ostrich felt pain during the plucking of his feathers, and whether the operation was cruelly performed. The process is both simple and painless. Over the head of the ostrich is placed a long bag with a breathing hole in one end. A man then holds the bird while another cuts with shears the long feathers. Only those of the wings and tail are taken. The short feathers, being ripe, are pulled out without pain, as they would soon drop in the course of nature. Great care must be taken not to injure the feather root, for if it is "socked" is destroyed, a feather cannot grow again. The stumps of those that are cut remain in until three months later. Sometimes the bird picks them out herself, and often the keeper assists her. To pluck this terrible creature is often a dangerous operation. Care is taken to stand behind it to escape its kicks. The feathers of the back and abdomen drop off and are gathered in bundles. Natural colors are black, white and drab. The black ones are kept for black entirely because of the natural shade and the fine, silky down. The feathers of the male bird, says the Christian Endeavor World, are the most valuable. Also, those from a live ostrich are better than those from a dead one. The plumage of wild ones is held in higher esteem than of tame varieties. Those of the female birds and of the young rank as second quality. The white feathers are often very pure and beautiful. Those of the tail are various and inferior in quality. The dainty bags—all feathers, wing feathers, white, black, gray. They are then graded, weighed and shipped to the feather dressers, where they are washed, scoured together, dyed and curled into many styles.

AN UNEXPECTED CELEBRATION.

By Candice A. Bramble.

Jack and Nellie Foster and their young neighbors, the Blakes, were holding a consultation beneath the tree which stood just upon the line between the two dooryards.

"I tell you, I call it a shame that we can't go in to the city, as we always have before!" said Jack Foster, discontented.

"Well, you know we can't," said the use of scolding all the time about it, Jack's sister Nellie.

"Of course father isn't to blame for being sick, and I suppose your father is almost as sorry as we are that his business calls him away just now," said Gladys Blake in her gentle voice.

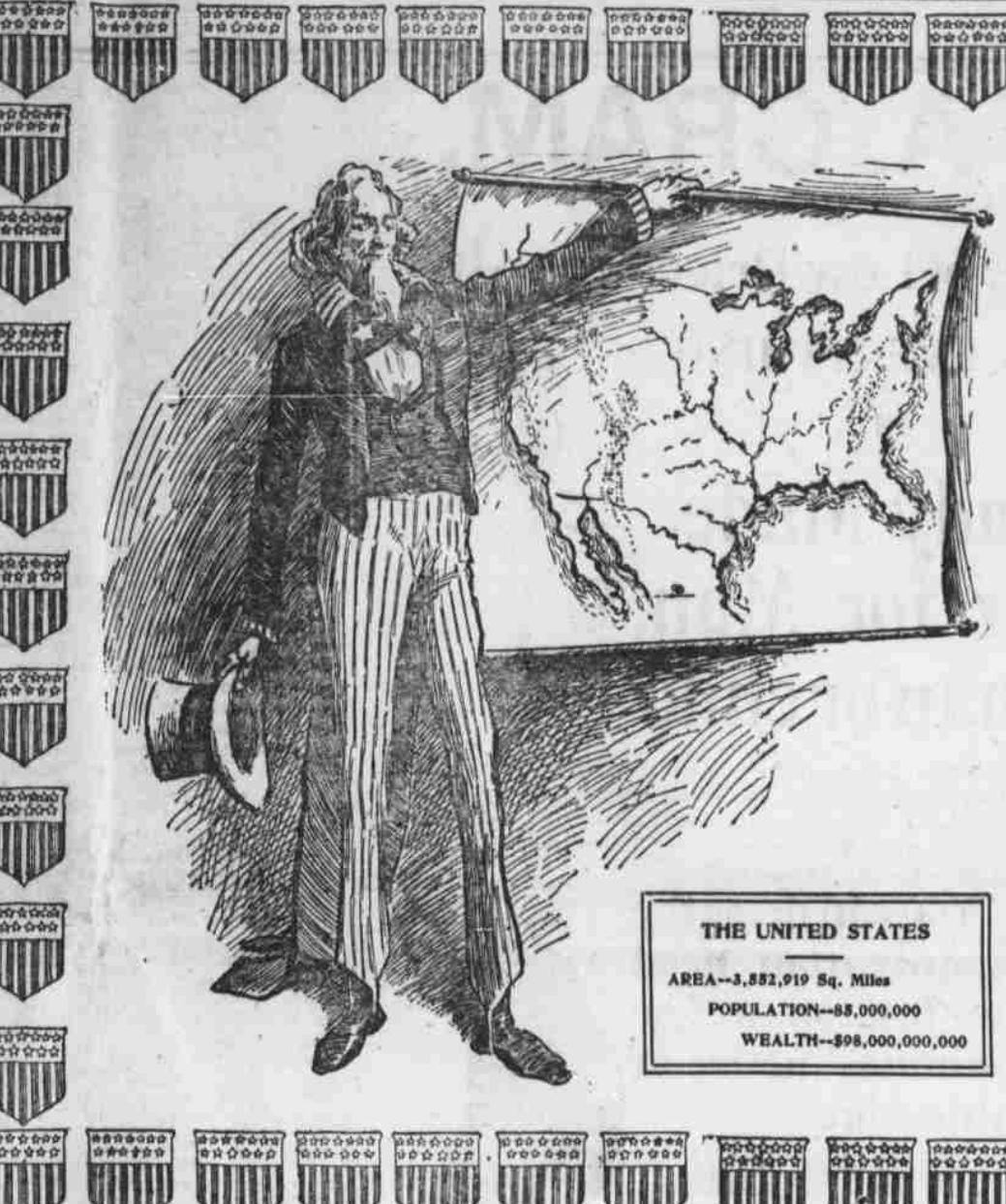
"But on the Fourth of July," interrupted her brother Tom, impetuously, "it's too bad for anything. It wouldn't be quite so mean if we had a few fireworks to let off at night; but here we are, almost dead-broke, with hardly enough money between us to buy a decent supply of firecrackers, let alone anything else."

"Well, never mind," answered Jack, good-naturedly. "Firecrackers will make a dreadful lot of noise if they're properly handled, and what fun to be had from noise is bound to be ours next Thursday, eh, Tom?" and he gave his friend a poke which tumbled him over upon his back in the grass, where he chuckled a delighted "You bet it is, old chap."

"Oh, but we've forgotten all about poor old Mr. Norris!" cried Gladys, remorsefully. "We can't go to shooting off crackers almost as sorry as we are that his business calls him away just now, and I don't think you ought to, either, as many times he has set his horrid dog on our cats, and you know he never will let us step inside his yard, even to look for a ball or anything."

"Yes," chimed in Nellie, "he's a dreadful mean, cross-patchy old thing, Gladys—you know yourself he is—and I don't care if his head does ache a little, and I don't think you ought to, either, as many times he has set his horrid dog on our cats, and you know he never will let us step inside his yard, even to look for a ball or anything."

"Yes," chimed in little 3-year-old Robbie, "I don't like that old Mr. Norris, and I don't think you ought to, either, as many times he has set his horrid dog on our cats, and you know he never will let us step inside his yard, even to look for a ball or anything."



THE OLD-FASHIONED FOURTH.

Give us an old-fashioned Fourth in the way the papers are putting the matter to-day. Give us an old-fashioned Fourth with its fun and its noise;—

Recollect about it, I guess, don't you, boys?

Its speech and procession, with fireworks at night.

And the red lemonade in long draughts of delight!

The big wooden stand on the quaint village green.

The flags and rosettes with the mottoes between:

The game and Guards and the big country band.

The drum major marching with baton in hand.

The man with a voice like a sawmill or two.

Who sang of the flag of the Red, White and Blue;

And the orator, well, was there ever before A man whose two lungs could hold quite so much more?

What speeches he made, though, and how he'd portray The patriot who sprang with their guns to the fray.

When the signal for combat at Lexington was given.

And they faced the smart red-coats and met the death-battle.

With a shout of approval when he told of it all.

That is heard to this day ringing on round the hills.

To hear him dilate on that grand battle-news!

If ever the eagle had screamed, it would scream When he pictured the conflict at quaint Concord.

And then Valley Forge—and the end at Yorktown.

While the sweat shows upon him from chin to crown.

As the great orator required all his strength To bring out the climax at just the right moment.

Ah, the old-fashioned Fourth, and they want it again.

But I guess it's a want they'll be wanting in vain!

BOY'S DREAM OF AN IDEAL FOURTH.

At last the morning dawned, bright and beautiful as a Fourth of July should be, and every one was so busy that no one noticed when Robbie awoke out of the yard and stood looking wistfully across the road.

"Poor old man!" he said, softly. "I'm sorry he isn't got any little boys and girls to love him, and I'll take him some pop-sies and a good hool of firecrackers to make him a good Fourth of July. I don't think he'll be cross to me."

A few moments later Mr. Norris, fretting upon his softly cushioned chair in the dim library of his great, lonely home, was surprised to hear the tap, tap of tiny feet in the hall, and then to see Robbie's face smiling upon him from the doorway.

"What does it mean? Somebody pinch me, so I'll be quite sure it's not all a dream!" gasped Nellie, after a moment of breathless silence.

"No, it isn't a dream, because here's the basket, and do let's see what's in it," returned Jack, seizing the heavy basket and eagerly tearing away the paper covering.

"If I should try, I could not tell you all the goodies which that basket contained. Nor could I describe the beauty and brilliancy of the fireworks upon the lawn that evening. But every one of the children declared, when tired and happy they separated for the night, that Mr. Norris was a most delightful person and that this Fourth of July had been by far the best they ever yet had known.—Detroit Free Press.

A PATRIOTIC PEACE.

"Julius, I thought you weren't going to speak to the Smiths any more."

"Well, Julius, I had to borrow their little boy to send off those rockets."—Detroit Free Press.



CHAPTER IX.

And yet the very next night Fee tapped at Winifred's door, and when it was opened she went quickly in, and, throwing herself in a chair, burst into tears. Winifred was fairly distressed; great drops welled into her eyes for sympathy.

"Don't cry, dear Fee—what is it?—what ails you?"

"It was starting to see the gay, inconspicuous little fairy in such a plight."

"Oh, Winifred, I am so miserable—I hate myself!"

Winifred guessed the rest.

"You have not consented, Fee?—you are not going to marry Mr. Clayton?"

"Yes, I am."

"Oh, Fee, how could you? you cannot like him."

"What is the use of talking like that? Miss Alton cried, with feverish petulance. "Why didn't you congratulate me?—it is a splendid match."

"I love you, Fee. I cannot deceive you. If you do not care for him—and you cannot love a man like that—his money will not make you happy."

Winifred went sorrowfully to bed, for she loved the frivolous, worldly little creature dearly.

Mr. Clayton's reflections were tolerably satisfactory, as he smoked his Spanish cigarette after the ladies had retired.

"Though after all," he muttered, "I am not quite sure the game's worth the candle. Of course fellows will laugh at my being caught, after all I've said about the 'happy state.' They won't give me credit for being caught 'with intention.' I wish d'Aguilar was here, but I suppose he won't be in until very late."

GEO. P. CROWELL,

(Successor to E. L. Smith, Oldest Established House in the Valley.)

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