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Select Poetry.

"The Lord Will Provide."

BY JAMES HUNGERFORD.

O, laden and weary,
Who strive for the right,
Though earth be all dreary,
Still trust in His might;
Nor fear for the morrow,
That care will betide—
In sickness and sorrow
The Lord will provide.

Though friends look but coldly,
And speak not to cheer,
Act firmly, speak boldly,
A Helper is near;
An Armor for shielding,
A Banner for guide—
Be faithful, unyielding,
The Lord will provide.

The battle once over,
The tempest all past,
The peace of Jehovah
Will comfort at last;
Earth's cares, and its sadness,
But shortly can hide
Heaven's glory and gladness;
The Lord will provide.

Select Story.

FAR FROM HOME.

BY FRANK LEE BENEDICT.

From PETERSON'S MAGAZINE.

They had been up to Trinita di Monti to listen to the nuns singing, and Gary Willoughby managed very artfully, as he thought, to lose the rest of the party, and have Miriam Vaughn to himself on the way home. But speedy punishment for his deceitful works overtook him in the form of one of Miriam's numerous caprices, the name of which was at all times legion.

She declared that they must go down the hundred stone steps of famous memory, and so reach the Piazza di Spagna. Expostulation was useless, therefore Gary submitted. But he did lift up his voice in smothered wrath when Miriam stopped midway in the descent, and informed him that, in spite of history and newspaper writers, she did not believe, never had believed, and never would believe there were a hundred steps, unless he counted them in her presence then and there. Down she sat on the stones, regardless of her velvet walking-dress, and the stares of a party of decorous English, and announced her intention of not stirring from the spot until her wish was gratified. She looked so handsome in her wickedness, that though Willoughby felt more angry with her than he had ever done in his life, furious as she had many times made him, he was conscious of an insane desire to smother her with kisses without mercy or space for repentance.

She was not a fairy of a creature to whom such tricks would have seemed natural; she was rather a stately-looking damsel, and, I am happy to say, she did not possess blonde hair; nor was it bronze, nor even have red reflections on it; luxuriant, and very dark chestnut, one could admire it without being reminded of golden dyes, or poisonous acids, or anything else disagreeable.

Gary was fearfully in love, but he could not quite forget that he was past thirty, nor consent willingly to make a spectacle of himself by marching up the steps, then down, and counting the numbers in a loud voice for a bevy of insular wanderers to stare at.

"Are you going?" asked Miss Vaughn.

He began to expostulate.

"Never mind all that," said she, "I want a plain answer to a plain question."

He urged her to go home; he told her they should make a paragraph in some scribbler's letter; he ponted—he ill-treated his mustache; she only said,

"To go or not to go? Don't stand here growling at me—people will think we are married. I'd rather be a paragraph in a newspaper!"

This avowal made him look so reproachful and hurt, as it might any man whose betrothed uttered a sentiment so atrocious, that she burst out laughing; then he waxed angry again, and muttered something about "reaching limits and unpardonable arrogance, and the like."

"Do you mean to go?" she asked, her voice grown ominously quiet. "You can quarrel with me after at your leisure, when you get your breath back."

"But, Miriam——"

"It is time for me to be at home," she interrupted. "Once more—are you going? It may be a little thing, it may be a silly one, but I have chosen it as a test. We have quarreled more than enough lately."

He gave one last pull at his mustache, cast upon her what the novels would call "a stony glare," and set his foot on the step above the one where she was seated.

"You are to count," said she, "from here to the top; then begin from where I am, and count to the bottom."

"One!" groaned Willoughby, looking back at the Britishers, who were still staring; but there were four tall women and one gray-haired fat man—no chance of knocking anybody down.

"Have you started?" demanded Miss Vaughn.

"Didn't I shout—one?" retorted he.

"Oh, you did! Then two comes next."

"Two," repeated her victim, "three," and pushed his long legs up another step. "Four—five."

"Gary," she called, in the most amiable tone; he never turned his head. "Gary!"

"Nine—ten," howled Willoughby, too desperate now to heed lookers-on.

"Come back here this instant," commanded his tormentor; and back he went, and stood before her, wearing a more reproachful look than ever—and she rewarded him for his obedience by going into a hearty fit of laughter. "You weren't actually off?" she asked, as soon as she could speak. "You dear old boy—what a goose a man in love is! Don't you know that's not the way to manage me? You ought to have gone straight home and left me to pout."

A very foolish little affair from first to last, which certainly ought to have made no serious difficulty between the pair; but you and I learned in the days when we made love, or were made love to, according to our sex, that the trifles most frequently caused real trouble, and more heartaches were found in a bit of folly not worth noticing, than in all the grave causes for offence which we may have given or received.

Willoughby burst into fretful upbraiding. She stopped laughing, and went back to the sentence he muttered as he began climbing the steps.

"You said I had reached the furthest limit—be good enough to explain that remarkable speech."

He did not; but he rehearsed the story of her coquetries, of her caprices, of all the wrongs he had suffered at her hands during the Roman winter, in which they had been so happy, notwithstanding their troubles, and he made himself more angry by his eloquence, and roused her temper, too.

"Is that an epic?" she asked. "It certainly is as long as the story that tiresome old Æneas told Queen Dido—and I'm not in a mood for poetry."

"I believe you have no feeling whatever!" he exclaimed; "not a shadow."

"It is well you are finding it out in time," said she; and then for ten minutes they quarreled outrageously, getting so far away from the original cause of disagreement, and in such a state of excitement, that neither could have remembered how the difficulty began.

They agreed about one thing at last—that there was no chance for happiness to either if their engagement continued, it was better that it should be broken; and by this time they were both in a white rage, so intense that it seemed composure to themselves and to each other. I have told this lightly, and yet it gives one a heartache to write such things; they hold a warning lesson, too, if only the young could be made to see it.

"This was what you wanted," Willoughby said. "You never meant to marry me any more than you did the dupes before me—you are utterly without heart or conscience! I suppose, American woman like, you want to sell yourself for a foreign coronet."

"What I may mean, or want, cannot concern you now," Miriam answered. "It is plain that you ought not to marry me; you need for a wife some baby or slave, who will have no will but yours—go find her! Educate an orphan; teach her to look up to you and say with Eve, 'My author and disposer;' that would suit you exactly."

"Many thanks for the counsel," said he; "I'll not forget it! I see no other hope for me. At least, a girl young enough and humbly enough born not to be spoiled from her cradle, might be kept from the influences that have turned you and the women of your time into what you are."

"I am going home now," Miss Vaughn observed. "Be good enough to give me your arm down the steps—we may as well keep up a pretence of decent breeding for the benefit of lookers-on."

Then they quarreled a little more, then they started down the precipitous descent, and though his ears rang, and his eyes were dizzy with pain, and he knew that the best dream of his life had come to an end, Gary found himself insanely counting each step as he set his foot on it, and he wished impiously that they might fall headlong and reach destruction at the bottom.

But they gained the ill-paved square at length, and then, leaning against one of the great masses of masonry, they came upon two wandering minstrel-girls, who had paused to rest a little in their weary employment of earning biocchi enough to buy food and shelter before evening.

Miriam caught sight of them first, and in the midst of her anger and preoccupation she could not help pausing to admire; the wistful mournful faces, perhaps, touched a deeper chord in her heart than they would at another time have done. The elder girl was holding her violin to her bosom, looking straight before her with an absent, far-off gaze, as if questioning the life which had been so gloomy and hard; and the child beside her, possibly accustomed to such moods, stood clinging silently to her dress, her head bowed, and her great eyes filled with a sorrowful wisdom that no child's eyes should have, fixed upon the pair who approached.

"There is your orphan," Miriam said, bitterly, to her companion. "Indeed, a pair—Fate has thrown a choice in your way."

"I shall accept the omen," he answered.

Miriam went up to the girls, and he followed.

"You look tired," she said, to the elder, in Italian.

The girl started nervously, and the little one answered in broken dialect.

"She is very tired, and I'm hungry."

"You are not Romans?" Miriam said.

"No, signora," returned the elder girl; "we are Savoyards."

"Grandmother died, and the kids died, and they drove us out of the cottage," explained the little one volubly.

"Never mind," the other whispered.

"But I do mind," Miriam said. "I want to hear."

She made them tell their little story; Willoughby stood by, wearing an indifferent manner, which roused her to fresh anger. A moment before she had been so softened that one kind word from him would have led her to attempt a reconciliation.

"I am doing this on your account," she said to him in English. "I want to help Fate in her efforts in your behalf."

"You are very good," he replied; "I can help myself. Will you go home now?"

"Thanks—I'll not trouble you! I see our carriage at the English stationer's. I'll leave you with your orphans."

"Then you mean this to be the end?" he said.

"As we agreed. I am glad—so are you."

"Very!" he exclaimed. "I'll make your cruel jest good. I will accept the care of these children, that I swear."

"And I am witness of the oath," she returned. "Good-morning, Mr. Willoughby, and good-by."

She walked rapidly away across the square. He did not offer to follow for an instant; when he did, she ordered him imperiously back.

"We are strangers," she said; "these attempts at civility are an intrusion."

So he stood still and watched her till she reached her carriage, saw her enter, saw her drive away, and knew that the end had come. No matter how it had been brought about, the dream was over; neither could ever pardon or forget; he was to try now what life would be without Miriam Vaughn.

He was roused from his troubled reflections by a pull at his coat. He looked down and saw the child with her wistful eyes raised to his face; the elder had already turned and was walking away.

"I'm so hungry," pleaded the child in her pretty, broken Italian. "Shall I sing for you?"

"Call your sister back," Willoughby said; and as she flew off in obedience, he thought, "I'll keep my word, at least, so far as taking care of them is concerned—I believe it was meant."

The two girls returned; the child too full of her childish wants to think of anything else; but the elder looked fairly sullen, as if this nomadic life, with toil added, and worse yet, this depending on charity for sustenance, hurt her pride, and in her ignorant way she rebelled against the decrees of Fate as imperiously as a poet, or a ruined kaiser could do.

"I want you to come in an hour to the palazzo Fiano——"

"It's on the Corso," interrupted the child; but the elder girl put up her finger in sign for her to stop, though she did not move her eyes from Willoughby's face.

"You know where it is? You must ask for——" he had taken a card from his pocket, but hesitated, suddenly remembering that the words engraved would, probably, be hieroglyphics to them.

"I can read," the girl said, so haughtily that the tone reminded him of Miriam Vaughn.

"Then come and ask for me," he replied. "Don't fail, and—you must take this in the meantime."

The child was eagerly snatching the money he held out; but her sister pulled her back, saying,

"We haven't earned it. I didn't play—we'll not take it."

But Willoughby tossed the silver to the child and hurried off, recollecting only that he and Miriam were parted forever, and that his last hold on youth and its hopes had been wrenched away.

A week later, Gary Willoughby stood in sight of the pyramids, and watched the sun sink red and burning into the mysterious silence of the desert beyond, and with a loathing "of love, and life, and all things," turned his face resolutely toward the East, striving always to leave memory, as he had hope, behind.

It was only a month after that, one morning, when the American letters came in, Miriam Vaughn and her step-mother found that Fortune's wheel had taken a spiteful turn, and crushed them cruelly under its heaviest spokes. Their wealth had disappeared as suddenly as something enchanted, as treasures in this country have a trick of doing, and the first thing was to get back to America. That was Mrs. Vaughn's decision, that is, if her complaints, tears, counter-resolves, could be said to hold one, and as far as the weakly woman and her brood of fledglings were concerned, Miriam considered it best. For her own part, she had neither tears nor murmurs; she was not resigned, nor was she overwhelmed; she was ready to do battle with life and win her way. There would be enough for her stepmother to clothe and keep a roof over her children's heads—her relations must help about the rest. Miriam determined to remain in Europe for the present—to be a governess, if she could find a situation. Of course, Mrs. Vaughn went into hysterics, but Miriam brought her out, and proved that there was nobody to take care of her. Mrs. Vaughn's relatives naturally would not choose to support her, if she would allow them, and she had no kindred of her own, except the ill-conducted troop of half-brothers and sisters; unless it might be a wild slip of a midshipman, who called her cousin, but whom she had not seen since a school-boy.

Miriam's plans were quickly conceived and settled, the necessary letters written; and by the time Mrs. Vaughn was ready to start under the escort of some acquaintance on her homeward journey, Miriam was prepared to set forth in a different direction and begin her battle.

She was going back to Tuscany, so full of memories of girlish happiness and triumphs. Out on the hill-road that leads to Fiesole, in one of the pleasant villas scattered along it, lived an English lady, who had formerly been Miriam's governess. She had charge of some Russian prince's daughter, two or three English girls, and a few Italians; commanding outrageous prices, and able to live in comfort, and, better than all, she was a real woman, and Miriam could trust to her judgment and kindness.

Once more Miriam descended at the Florentine station, was put into a carriage, said farewell to her friends, drove down the Cascine road toward the beautiful city, and looked about, wondering that everything could have remained so unchanged, while her life had been desolated by such cruel tempests—it is so difficult for youth in its unconscious egotism to learn that a drop of water is of no consequence in the ocean!

She passed through the city, out of the gates, and was hurried away to her new home. I might make a sensational point here, I suppose, but it would be wasted—you know what she found when she reached Mrs. Osborne's villa. As the carriage stopped before the veranda, a child's merry laugh roused her. She glanced out; a little girl was playing with a dog, and near by, leaning against a pillar, and looking straight before her with an absent gaze, stood a girl of perhaps fifteen. Miriam and Gary Willoughby's charges had again met by one of those mysterious laws which we call chance, but which never fail, never vary from their course, remorselessly bringing us to the people whom we are to meet, bringing them to us, with the whole portion of trouble or pleasure they are to force into our lives.

Late that night, Mrs. Osborne and her new assistant sat talking together; and when everything connected with future arrangements had been completed, Mrs. Osborne began giving some account of her pupils, while Miriam listened in silence.

"But they are of slight consequence," Mrs. Osborne said, dismissing the Russian, the English girls, and the Italians, with brief comment.

"I have a real romance—I shall tell it to you."

Miriam looked less interested than a woman ought at such a promise; but Mrs. Osborne would not be discouraged.

"Last year I became well acquainted with a wealthy American gentleman, a Mr. Willoughby; young and handsome—you see I want to put in all the details that make my history like a novel! A few weeks since he wrote me from Rome, to say that he was starting for the East, telling me that he wished to place two Savoyard girls under my care. I was to educate them. In three years he should return; and I gathered that he meant to educete the elder for his wife, though she is not to know it. My dear, he offered me a small fortune. I telegraphed, 'Yes,' and on the pair came—the oddest wild creatures, but full of capabilities and promise, and prouder than Lucifer."

Miriam tried to say what was proper, but failed so signally, that to avoid an appearance of mystery she told her whole story, and it was agreed that Gary Willoughby was not to know she was there.

"These girls are to be your special charge," Mrs. Osborne said. "Their mother's name was Despard—a French woman. They are to be called so—Nina and Fanchon; and nobody but ourselves need know their history."

Miriam began her duties in a season of greater exigency than either she or Mrs. Osborne imagined, for before the morning dawned, little Fanchon was taken alarmingly ill. The child was removed the next day to a little house near the villa, lest the other pupils should be alarmed, though there was nothing contagious in her malady, and over her sick bed Miriam and Nina began their companionship.

In ten days the beautiful creature was carried away to the burying-ground, and Nina Despard went almost mad with the tumultuous grief which belongs to a nature like hers.

Miriam had taken upon herself a weary task, but she did not falter; and when at last the girl's struggles and despair ended in a serious illness, Miriam watched over her day and night, so that when Nina came back to life, she was ready to center upon her new friend all the passionate love which had been her sister's.

You will think that after presenting Miriam Vaughn to you in her willfulness and pride, I am now turning her into perfection. No such thing. She was true to her character—just as full of faults as ever; but she was a strong, earnest woman at heart, and from the time destiny had forced exertion upon her, she had been eager for the fray, and never once thought of being cast down or helpless. Of course, in her conduct toward Nina, she had a feeling of martyrdom, such as women like. She would do her best by this girl; she would develop her mind and heart; and when the season of probation was ended, she would give her up to Gary Willoughby, and say, "I have done this—have I earned your forgiveness? Receive your wife at my hands, and be happy."

And for herself after? Oh, no matter! she had nothing left in the future. It was all arranged for her—duties like the present, a home with Mrs. Osborne, dreary spinsterhood, or, perhaps, death—if that would only come.

You can imagine how the days passed with her, grew into weeks, months, even years, with seasons of passive endurance, stubborn obstinacy, active rebellion—the whole dreary round which we fight over and over before we learn to accept existence on a higher plane, to bear this world's burdens because they are right—the very trials needed for the growth of our souls.

Outwardly she had a quiet, monotonous existence, never making any sign to old friends, receiving no letters even, save an occasional one from her step-mother, which was always a sort of mental blister-plaster of complaints and reproaches.

Three years went by; Nina Despard was eighteen, and Miriam called herself ancient—she was twenty-four. She was astonished to find that she was neither wrinkled or gray-haired, and somewhat resented the fact. As I do not believe that any human being can possibly go on suffering always, night and day, for three years, in spite of romance and poetry, I am not ashamed to confess that Miriam found there was a good deal left in life after the first glory had worn off it. By this time, she could write on her heart the words which La Valliere inscribed on the door of her convent cell, "Not happy, but content;" though it was contentment of a higher sort than solitude and a recluse's prayers can ever give, for she had constant occupation, and the pleasure of feeling that she was of use, and had work to her hand, however humble and confined the sphere.

It was summer once more. The pupils had gone away for their season of relaxation; Mrs. Osborne had been ordered to the Baths of Lucca, and had taken her Russian princess with her—a dreadful white elephant that princess was, with brains like a sponge—and Miriam and Nina Despard were living quietly at the villa, amusing themselves after their own fashion.

And one day a surprise came into the house in the shape of Miriam's handsome cousin, Ned Vaughn, now a first lieutenant attached to the Mediterranean squadron, and likely to be within reach of Miriam for a year.

Ned had just come from America, and could give her news of everybody and everything; was delighted to see her; vowed her handsomer than ever; promised that she should not continue, what he call her slavery, many years, and so forth, both talking nineteen to the dozen, as was natural.

But the door opened, and as it closed quickly, Ned sprung up with a smothered exclamation, and Miriam said,

"Who was it?"

"The most beautiful creature I ever set eyes on!" cried the inflammable lieutenant.

"My pupil, Mademoiselle Nina, I suppose," Miriam explained. "Come out into the garden, we shall find her there; she's very shy, but a charming girl—not a bit missish."

Ned followed Miriam willingly enough, and they came upon Nina seated in an arbor, making an unconscious picture under the flowering vines in her simple white dress.

"You are not to run away," Miriam said. "Nina, this is the cousin I have told you about so often; you must not feel that he is a stranger."

"Indeed, I shall not," Nina replied, with a childish eagerness, prettily at variance with her appearance. "I am glad you have come, Mr. Vaughn, for now I shall have some one to tell how good she has been to me."

"Why, are you English?" asked Ned, in wonder.

"No, but she speaks the language as if she were," Miriam said.

"Thanks to her," cried Nina. "I have to thank her for everything—everything!" and in her foreign way she caught Miriam's two hands and kissed them; and Ned felt—well, as an excitable man does feel when he sees a lovely girl wasting kisses on one of her own sex.

They spent a delightful morning, and it was not until Ned had gone, promising to return the next day, that Miriam recollected she had not behaved with the caution a governess ought to have shown. She sat down at once and wrote a full account to Mrs. Osborne, and sent word to her cousin that he must not come again till she gave him leave.

"There is no reason why your cousin should not visit you," Mrs. Osborne replied; "because we are schoolteachers we need not be dragons. In Mr. Willoughby's last letter, he says he wants Nina to begin to see people; besides, I suppose she will not be long under our care now—he will be in Florence in a month."

Miriam had a return of her old wakeful nights, but she scolded her nerves well for their folly, and finally brought herself to believe that Gary Willoughby was no more to her than the other people connected with that past which had been so long dead and buried.

Glad of anything that took her away from thought, she welcomed Ned's visits, and Ned made himself wonderfully agreeable. He found saddle horses, and they taught Nina to ride; he caused them to make pleasant little pilgrimges; he persuaded them into the city to visit galleries and churches; he spent half of his time at the villa on one pretext or another; and Miriam, fortified by Mrs. Osborne's permission, never dreamed of any harm.

Concerning Willoughby, Miriam and her charge had seldom talked; the girl had seen so little of him, that beyond gratitude for his kindness, she had no feeling whatever. At first, indeed, the burden of his goodness seemed to make her irritable, and during the months immediately succeeding her sister's death, she had been rebellious, and often threatened to go off and earn her own living, rather than be dependent on the bounty of a stranger.

But when a fortnight of this pleasant companionship had gone by, Miriam was roused to thought again, and saw that both she and Mrs. Osborne had become unwise.

Some eager words which Ned spoke one night as he was leaving the villa, wakened her. It was plain that his quick fancy was touched—as if that dreaming, passionate Nina had woven a romance, too! Miriam felt miserable and wicked. If Gary were to return and find that the girl's affection had been stolen from him, how furious he would be; he would believe it Miriam's work. She nearly went mad at the bare idea.

"I want to come in," she said, tapping at Nina's door, with a sudden resolve in her mind.

"Come, my best," Nina answered; and she went in and found the girl seated by the open window in the moonlight, looking so beautiful, that she seemed something more than human.

Miriam sat down and began to talk, gradually leading the conversation where she wanted it to rest. She considered it right that, without speaking plainly, she should warn Nina what Willoughby might reasonably expect on his return.

Talking of a novel they had lately read, helped her—novels are always useful! It was a case not dissimilar to Nina's own; but Miriam was distressed and alarmed when the girl pronounced very decided opinions.

"A woman doesn't love from duty or gratitude, Miriam," she said. "I could not have loved that man."

"But she had an opportunity to repay years of kindness; she could make this man's happiness in return for all he had done," Miriam urged.

"That sounds very grand," Nina said, impatiently; "but if she had to break her own heart to make her guardian happy, he was a brute if he would accept the sacrifice."

"But, Nina——"

"Darling Americana," the girl broke in, "I can't reason, but I am in the right. See, if I had been the girl, I would have slaved for that man, begged for him, given my life for his; but marry where I did not love—never! It would be a sin; he could not be happy—never!"

Miriam crept away to her room, feeling that it would be worse than useless to pursue the conversation, and alone, in the stillness, she prayed God that Gary might be led to forgive her if by her thoughtlessness she had again endangered his hopes of peace. She must tell Ned the whole truth, and beg him not to come to the house any more. He only knew that Nina was an orphan, with a rich guardian; if he had heard the man's name, it meant nothing to him, as he had never known Willoughby; besides, when she did chance to mention him, Nina's words would have implied that he was an elderly man—thirty is elderly to fifteen.

The next morning, as Miriam was sitting in the library, she heard a carriage drive up, and a moment after a servant entered to say that a gentleman wished to see Mrs. Osborne. Miriam knew who it probably was—an Englishman that had a niece to place at the school. Mrs. Osborne had written Miriam he would come, and she was to see him, and make all arrangements in her employer's name.

"You may show him in," Miriam said.

The servant went out. Presently the door opened, and Miriam, looking up in the dim light, found herself face to face with Gary Willoughby.

"They tell me Mrs. Osborne is from home," he said, bowing courteously, and speaking in French. "I suppose it is to mademoiselle I am to apply for the information I desire."

She was dizzy and faint, but she would not give away to her folly; she would be the staid, middle-aged governess suitable to the occasion.

She rose from her seat and walked toward him, saying, "I can tell you everything. First, I will say, how do you do, Mr. Willoughby?"

"Miss Vaughn!" he cried. "Is it really you?"

"I am Mrs. Osborne's head governess," she explained. "I have been for three years. She is at the baths; you were not expected so soon. Your ward is well, and will be glad to see you."

He was staring wildly at her. She could see that these three cruel years had changed him somewhat; he looked older, sterner; but it was Gary's face still. He! changed or not, it was nothing to her—she was his cast-off love?

"Is it really you?" he reflected.

"It really is," she answered. "Explanations are always tedious! I lost my money ages ago, and have been here ever since. Please sit down."

He seated himself near her speechlessly.

"Nina is well," she went on, "and very beautiful. We have done our best by her—we trust you will be satisfied."

She tried to say it in the monotonous voice Mrs. Osborne could assume, and to sit up rigid as a governess ought.

"You—you—" Willoughby began, and could get no further. "I can't understand," he fairly groaned.

"It seemed an odd chance," Miriam answered, still in Mrs. Osborne's voice. "When I came here I had no idea of finding your ward. I have tried to do my duty—I need no thanks. I have been well paid."

"Have I gone mad?" exclaimed Willoughby. "It can't be you—obliged to teach—to—"

"I suppose you think I am not fit," she broke in, forgetting Mrs. Osborne's voice, and speaking rather sharply. "I am a good deal changed since you knew me."

She had not meant to make one allusion to the past; she had intended to be business-like and proper; but she found herself sadly shaken and astray.

She thought he muttered, "Poor Miriam!" The idea of enduring his pity was more than she could bear.

"I will take you to Mademoiselle Despard," she said. "I think it right to tell you something, for which you may blame me. My cousin Edward has visited us frequentey of late—"

"Do you mean that Nina has fallen in love with him?" he interrupted, in his turn.

"I don't know that; it was only yesterday that it occurred to me. I had been indiscreet. I wish you to know, if you can be made to believe it, that I had no disloyal thought toward you in permitting this acquaintance."

"I desire her to see people," he said; "there is no occasion for excuses."

"You are very good," returned she, with ungoverness-like haughtiness. "I will let Mademoiselle Nina know that you have come."

He started up as she was rising, and stood before her.

"Is this the way you meet me?" he exclaimed. "After all these years—"

"How else should I meet you?" was the conclusion she put to his sentence.

"You are still unforgiving—you still hate me?"

"A governess never indulges in extremes of feeling," said she with acid sweetness. "You forget that we have done with the past—we meet on very different terms."

"And whose doing was it?" he asked, angrily.

"I thought then it was yours," she replied; "I have since learned that we were both to blame. But it does not matter. If there is anything to be forgiven on either side, let us do it and forget."

His face was turned away, so that she could not see how it changed under her chilling words. The spasm of emotion passed—he looked hard and stern again.

"I beg your pardon for being so slow to adopt your decorous line of conduct," he said. "I should like to see my ward. No, don't ring, I would rather meet her unexpectedly."

"She is in the garden," Miriam answered; "I will show you the way."

She walked out of the room, and he followed. They passed through the hall and garden-paths in silence, and came upon the summer-house.

"She is there, writing a letter," Miriam announced, pointing toward the entrance.

She looked into the arbor as she spoke—Willoughby looked, too. Nina was there, certainly, but not writing; Ned Vaughn was holding her hands in his, and she was saying,

"You must go away now—I shall tell Miriam myself."

"And you love me? You will never be worried into marrying that man?" he pleaded.

"If he is as good and noble as I believe him, he will not wish it, when I tell him the simple truth," Nina answered.

Miriam, aghast and almost faint at the unexpected scene, felt a hand upon her arm, felt herself drawn swiftly from the spot; and when she could in the least collect her senses, she found that she had been placed on a rustic chair, a long distance from the summer-house, and Gary Willoughby was standing before her, with folded arms, looking fixedly into her face.

"I don't know what to say," she faltered. "I can't explain—you will never believe me, and I can't blame you."

"Miriam," she heard him say, "you trained a wife for me, and then went to sleep and allowed a wolf to seize my lamb."

She was blinded with tears, but as well as she could see his face, she thought he was smiling, and that his features had brightened till every trace of three weary years had faded from them. She could not speak—could not look up again; she buried her face in her hands, and sat waiting his condemnation.

"Miriam," he said, "before I had been gone a month I wrote to you—I have written twice since. Did you know it?"

She shook her head.

"I know how wrong, how unmanly I was. I loved you, but, oh! I love you better now. I beg you to forgive me! I meant to discover what had become of you; but I had no hope that life would grant me a meeting like this. Speak to me. Can you forgive me?"

He was at her feet, he was kissing her hands, uttering her name wildly, wailing out the story of his suffering and penitence.

"Say that I need not go—that you will try to love me again! Miriam! Miriam!"

The anguish in his voice restored her consciousness; she leaned her head upon his hand as he took hers, and whispered,

"I never forgot the old lesson—I have no need to learn."

And half an hour after, Ned Vaughn and Nina, passing down the garden-walk, came upon this couple; and there they all stood, a group so happy that I am sorry to leave their companionship, and fall back once more on reality.

What a Ton of Coal Yieids.

A ton of coal yields about 8,000 cubic feet of gas and 1,500 pounds of coke. The purification of the gas furnishes 45 gallons of ammonia water, from which is obtained sulphate of ammonia for agricultural purposes, and about 130 pounds of tar. It is here that the operation becomes especially interesting, for from this last named product are obtained 70 pounds of pitch, 18 of creosote, 9 of naphtha, 13 of heavy oils, 6 of naphthaline, 4 of naphthol, 2 of alizarine about 1 each of phenol, aurine, and aniline (the substance to which we are indebted for so wonderful colors), 10 ounces of toluidine, 6 of anthracene, and 12 of toluene. Finally, it will interest photographers to know that hydroquinon, that has been so much spoken of recently, and which was at first obtained from cinchona, is now obtained from coal by industrial processes.—*La Science en Famille.*

Music at Home.

Mothers teach the little ones to sing. Even the little two-year-olds will soon learn to catch the tunes if a little pains are taken with them, and nothing is sweeter than a child's voice in childish music. And sing to your children, if you have any voice at all, and they will think your music lovelier than that of anybody else. In the twilight hour have the funny songs from "Mother Goose," the dear old darkey tunes, and the Sunday School hymns sung by the little folks, and they will remember in the years of their life, when mother's voice has long been hushed and still, that hour as the dearest and happiest time of their lives.

A badly smoked wall paper may be greatly improved by rubbing it with rye bread. Six or or seven loaves will be enough for a small room. Cut a loaf in cubes of convenient size, take off all except the bottom crust which is kept for firmness in handling, and rub from the top to the bottom, being careful to go over every inch of ground. Papered ceiling may be cleaned in the same way and often look as good as new.

In selecting rice one can be sure that it contains no animal life by the following test: Take a handful and pour it from one hand to the other. If it leaves no flour on the hands it is good. If it leaves flour on the hands further search will show that this flour is the result of presences not originating in the vegetable world.

Do not use kerosene or other irritating oils on the bodies of animals to destroy insects or lice. Common lard oil is as good as anything else, as all kinds of grease are fatal to insects. Flavor the lard-oil with a spoonful of oil of pennyroyal.

For mulching gooseberries and currants no material is better than the short clippings from the lawn. They lie closely, keep down weeds and promote needed coolness to the soil.

For the first meal to little chicks a prominent poultryman recommends boiled eggs chopped fine, shells and all, with baked corn cake crumbled into scalded milk.

Eggs for hatching should be kept in a cool place, turned over every day, and the hen given a comfortable place for incubation.

Many take great pleasure in raising dahlias from seed. Sown now, the plants will bloom in the fall.

Cultivate a less number of acres than usual but cultivate them better; your returns will be greater.

The average farm-house cellar will be the better at this season for a thorough cleaning out.

Feed a colt and keep him growing, no matter if it takes as many oats as a grown horse.

Good healthy bracing roots are of more importance than a symmetrical top.

Lady bugs do great good in destroying aphides or plant lice.

Be on the watch to destroy caterpillars' nests in the orchard.

Skim milk is good for young chicks.

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