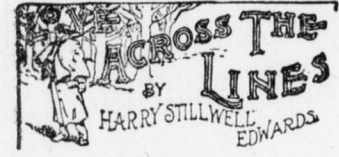


LIFE'S LESSON.

It is but folly and madness to sit down in sadness, And sigh for the past when the future is ours; Though the way may be dreary, and the heart faint and weary, We may list for the bird songs and look for the flowers. It is true there are hours when bird songs and flowers Would mock with their beauty and brightness our gloom; When to ease the heart's aching, we would welcome its breaking, To gain thus the stillness and rest of the tomb. When springing all 'round us are sharp thorns that wound us, And many the pitfalls that lie in our way; When over life's meadows hang fierce, threatening shadows, And Hope's beacon sheds not one glimmering ray. But the dark clouds that over life's fair meadows hover May be freighted with blessings and melt soon to rain; While the sun's brighter shining will shame our repining, And the landscape stands out in its gladness again. Tho' life hath its losses, its cares and its crosses, The loss and the cross may still be for our best, And each homely duty hold some hidden beauty; E'en by labor we learn the sweet meaning of rest. Thus by pain may we measure the worth of each pleasure— We value our wealth by the wants we have known; And joy after sorrow, by contrast we borrow A completeness and sweetness fuller e'en than its own. —Alice R. Corson, in Minneapolis House-keeper.



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CHAPTER XIII.—CONTINUED.

Holbin had heard of Frances' latest whim, the union soldier. He had not interested himself in the latter's welfare, but he made his appearance in the wingroom on the day after Louise had been pacified, and, finding only mammy there with the wounded man, he entered and engaged him in cheerful conversation. He gave him the latest news from the front, and supplied him with cigars. Responding to these attentions, the soldier readily told his story. When the name of Richard Somers, his former enemy, was reached, Holbin was visibly excited. Still, not for one instant did it occur to him to connect the presence of the wounded man in that room with the fact that Somers was his captain; and the soldier himself naturally took it for granted that the cause of his presence was well understood by all.

Frances found Holbin there, and stood silently resentful upon the threshold until he had explained his visit.

"I am told by the clerk in the department," he said, "that you had secured a pass for your protege, and I was repentant that you had been forced to go there in person. I have called now to offer my assistance. There is something else to be done for a wounded man besides getting him a pass. He must have transportation and assistance generally."

"I have been thinking of that," she admitted, troubled.

"If I may be allowed to do a wounded enemy a service," said Holbin, "I shall take him in my buggy to our outposts."

"I am sure that he will be greatly obliged," The soldier expressed himself grateful, and Holbin went away, making light of the service and without further effort to trespass upon the girl's rare mood. On the inner stair he paused in deep thought, his dark face savagely triumphant. His mother met him in the hall above and read excitement in his every movement.

"What is it, Raymond?" He hesitated and smiled wickedly.

"I am afraid even you would be shocked, mother mine. But trust me, when I do tell you about it, you will not be ashamed of your cub."

"Raymond, how dare you?" The woman's face grew crimson, and then white as from a sudden terror. He showed his teeth and disappeared before she could stop him. Angry and uneasy, she sought her own room.

The wounded soldier rode next day with Raymond Holbin, his pale face reflecting the light of liberty's sun not yet risen for him, his blue uniform dusted and cleaned until every button was as of gold.

"Good-by, miss," he said; "I'll deliver your message, an' I know the cap'n'll be a proud man to see me back!" He offered mammy his last greenback, but it was indignantly refused, witnesses being present.

"Dat green money ain't no good down here nohow."

"It will be," said the soldier, simply.

Holbin returned next day and gave a vivid account of his parting with the happy prisoner; and then he immediately sought his own room; but not before Frances, a little ashamed of herself, had thanked him warmly for his kindness to her soldier.

Upon the same day the confederate relief picket found a federal soldier lying dead within their lines. He had been shot from behind with a pistol held so close to his coat that it was burned by the powder. The affair afforded but a few minutes' discussion, for the explosion of firearms was almost incessant at times, and dead men in June, 1862, were plentiful around Richmond. The only part of the mystery worth considering from the military standpoint was how the man got through the lines at

that particular place. A watch taken from his body contained the names of Capt. Richard Somers and the regiment to which he was attached, and also the likeness of an elderly woman. It was surmised that the victim of the pistol shot was a deserter and robber; that he had been captured and killed while attempting violence or an escape. The officer into whose possession the watch drifted was in charge of a burial party next day under a flag of truce, and, learning that Capt. Somers was among the troops opposite, sent the watch to him with a courteous explanation. The gratification of Capt. Somers was only equaled by his bewilderment. Many weeks before he had entrusted the jewel to his faithful artilleryman, and this soldier, he had been assured, was left dead upon the bloody battlefield. His conclusion was that some one had robbed the body at that time and had been overtaken by fate while engaged in some other nefarious enterprise. But when Capt. Somers casually opened the locket and found therein a long, slender curl of reddish-golden hair and on the narrow ribbon with which it was tied the name "Frances," he was involved in a hopeless mystery. He was within sound of the Richmond church bells that morning, and between the intervals of fighting and moving to new positions he had already in imagination entered that city. The name thus sent was the only tidings of Frances he had ever received, and it made him a sadly happy man.

CHAPTER XIV.

Locked within his own room, Raymond Holbin drew from his pocket the packet of papers taken by him from the murdered man with the official order for which he had committed the crime. The order read: "Pass the bearer, Thomas Riley, paroled prisoner, through the lines." "It will not do Louise much good, anyway," he said, "even were I disposed to give it to her." The name "Martha Somers" upon the sealed packet attracted his attention, and he recognized in a Delaware address beneath the home of Richard Somers. He remembered then the dead soldier's description of the battle in which he was wounded, and guessed that the packet contained the papers given to him to deliver. Holbin would hardly have troubled himself to wade through a score of farewell pages from a soldier to his mother, and would have promptly destroyed the whole collection, but that the remaining envelope, addressed to Richard Somers, lay before him, and upon it his eye caught the Brooklin crest.

"This is very different," he said to himself with interest. "Let us see what Frances has to say to the fellow." He broke the seal and read:

"I send you back, well and free, the man who saved your life; I found him grievously wounded—a prisoner. It is all that I have been able to do in return for your kindness to me, a stranger, and for the wound you received in my house. Think me not indelicate when I say that the sweetest memory my heart carries is in the memory of your face beneath the match that night and of the words 'Frances, my wife,' which you have engraved in your locket, and over which I have placed a message to you. Forgive me; it can never matter much, for a sea of blood rolls between us. Good night. God be with you till we meet—in Heaven. —FRANCES."

Holbin sat gazing blankly upon the lines. His head was in a whirl.

"Her husband! her husband! Pshaw!" he exclaimed with an uneasy laugh, springing to his feet and beginning to walk the floor, "this comes of the damnable work out yonder to-day; my nerves are simply unstrung." He took a bottle from his dresser, poured out a stiff drink, and tossed it off with one gulp. Then he went back to his



THE CONFEDERATE PICKET FOUND A FEDERAL SOLDIER LYING DEAD WITHIN THEIR LINES.

table and, picking up the letter, read aloud: "wound received in my house"—"your face beneath the lighted match." As he stood thus the letter slipped from his hand. "Louise!" he whispered, "the man whom Louise shot!" Not in all the vicissitudes of his wild career had Holbin received such a shock of surprise. His mind, dazed and bewildered, could not arrange a deduction beyond the discovery that Richard Somers was the man around whom so much of mystery had gathered, and that Frances referred to him in the tender word "husband." He laid his hand upon the bell-cord and hesitated; then his wicked smile came back again as he pulled it.

"Tell your mistress I shall be glad if she will favor me with her presence here," he said to William. When, a few minutes later, Mrs. Brooklin came into the room he failed to hear her.

"What is it, Raymond?" she asked. He roused himself and spoke rapidly.

"Frances got her wounded soldier a pass through our lines, and to please her I carried him to the front. After he left me I found these papers in the buggy where he had dropped them. The fellow's captain is Richard Somers."

"And now, madam, read the note from Frances to him and let me congratulate you upon—"

She read it rapidly, and when her amazed face was lifted he added: "Your son-in-law."

"I do not understand! What does it mean?"

"Answer that question for me, mother; my head has ceased to be of any assistance. Undoubtedly, however, the woman who you lead me to believe gave you her promise to marry me some day is already in point of law Richard Somers' wife and has forfeited her right to any part of her father's estate. Madam, fortune favors the bold; I congratulate you!" His manner betrayed an intense excitement and bitterness.

"Wait, wait!" said the woman, quietly, her eyes riveted upon the letter. "It seems that he was her husband that night. Was not that night prior to the signing of the will?"

"Yes, the night before." The son, looking upon his mother's face, could find no evidence of satisfaction there. It was ghastly. "Why, what is it now?"

"A stronger will and a clearer head than we imagined has been at war with us. I do not know the law, but they were trying to defeat the will in advance. It does defeat it in some way, or our enemies would not have taken the risk. If Frances were really married before the will was signed, she cannot comply with its requirements, and the law will not demand an impossibility."

"Well!" He bent forward, his voice reduced to a whisper.

"We have lost, you and I. Except for my pittance, we shall be beggars upon the day that Frances comes of age; and that day is near at hand."

A long silence followed, and then the eyes of mother and son met.

"Do you not share alike if the will fails?"

"No. The intention of my husband will be operative; only the condition fails. There is no hope that way." His mother looked from him and spoke slowly.

"Is there no remedy?" he asked.

"Yes. If Richard Somers is not living when Frances comes of age, or should Frances—"

"Mother, mother, take care!" The words burst in sudden energy from the wretched man. "Lift a hand to harm but one hair of her head, and, by the Mother of God—"

"Hush! Hush!" she said, quietly. "You love her; that is enough. She is safe."

"Swear it."

"Read the other letter," she said, disregarding him. "It is likely that a man would mention his wife in his last letter to his mother." Raymond stripped off the envelope and shook two letters to the table. One, unsealed, was addressed to Mrs. Martha Somers.

"Nothing but gush," he said, running his eye hurriedly over the lines. Mrs. Brooklin had picked up the other, which was addressed to Dr. Brodnar.

"We are getting to the heart of the mystery," she said. "Read this one." Raymond read in silence first, and then, leaning forward, excitedly read aloud:

"Go to the girl I married at your request and say death has dissolved the bond. Break the news to her as gently as possible, for I have been vain enough to believe that the child loves me. You prepared the way by your partiality, and her loneliness and excess of gratitude accomplished the rest. Let me confess that I have been foolish enough to love her and to dream that some day you would permit me to return and openly seek her out. But this cursed war has killed my dream, Brodnar, and if this letter reaches you, it will be after it has killed your friend also! Go to her and say that since he met her Richard Somers has loved her as a man loves but once."

There were other lines dealing with the friendship between the two men while in Paris and containing a tender farewell.

"It is now plain to me," he said. "The meddlesome scoundrel Brodnar is the author of the whole plot!" Mrs. Brooklin folded the letters into their places. Her hands were without a tremor.

"Let them keep their secret. To inform them is to arm them. We will continue to be—their dupes. Richard Somers may not be living when Frances reaches twenty-one; who can tell? The man who lost those letters has, I suppose, ere this made a full report."

"The man who lost the letters, mother, has reported elsewhere with a bullet through his heart."

"Raymond!"

"What does it matter? We are killing them in front of our lines every day. One behind counts for little. He had a pass; I needed it. I need it now more than ever." The woman's face glowed with a sudden light.

"You are too rash, my boy; take no steps before consulting me. In the meantime these papers have no value for us. Burn them, burn them now! But no! give me the letter to Brodnar; it may be valuable some day as evidence that Richard Somers is dead." One by one Holbin held the others over lighted matches and saw them vanish into cinders. His mother placed her hand upon his shoulder.

"Raymond, you are again planning to cross the lines—"

"I know what I am doing! Do not seek to influence me."

"What do you mean?"

"There is no time for explanation, nor is there any need, for you already understand. It is sufficient to say that I am going across the lines for more than one purpose now."

"There are all sorts of people in an army," she said; "I have seen it stated that many officers killed in battle are shot from behind."

"That is one," he replied, "and men who serve their country in time of war are forgiven many things. I am in possession of that which will secure for me a review of my case and restore to me my commission. I have offered my sword to the confederacy once; the next time I will offer it point first!"

"You have valuable information for sale. Is that what you mean? Go slow upon that line; if you draw your sword against Virginia openly you sacrifice all interests here. Better be

a friend to both sides, and when you come back with proofs that Richard Somers is really dead all may yet be well. If she is free at 21 the will is binding, even if it were held that she has not already sacrificed her interest."

"Come what may," he said, passionately, "while I live Brodnar shall never see Frances Brooklin the wife in truth of Richard Somers."

"Nor while I live," said his mother; "there is my hand upon it."

"Keep out of it, mother, keep out, or you will regret it!" said the wretched man.

"Ungrateful boy! Where is your promise? Do you repudiate that? Have you forgotten your danger?"

"No, but she shall not suffer at your hands. Leave her to me. And, mother, if you ever find us dead together in that room downstairs, have no thought of me. The man who has neither love nor revenge has nothing to live for." He seized his hat and rushed from her presence.

[To Be Continued.]

HE WAS A MIGHTY RICH MAN.

But His Wealth Consisted in Never Owning Anyone a Cent.

A gentleman recently took a ride with an old New England farmer through one of the pretty little villages that are common in that region, during which some of the men in the neighborhood came under criticism, says the Chicago Times-Herald. Speaking of a prominent man in the village, the traveler asked: "Is he a man of means?"

"Well, sir," the farmer replied, "he hasn't got much money, but he's mighty rich."

"He has a great deal of land, then?" was asked.

"No, sir, he hasn't got much land, either, but he is mighty rich."

The old farmer, with a pleased smile, observed his companion's puzzled look for a moment and then explained: "You see, he hasn't got much money and he hasn't got much land, but still he is rich because he never went to bed owing a man a cent in all his life. He lives as well as he wants to live, and he pays as he goes. He doesn't owe anything, and he isn't afraid of anybody. He tells every man the truth, and does his duty by himself, his family and his neighbors. His word is as good as his bond, and every man, woman and child in the town looks up to him and respects him. No, sir, he hasn't got much land, but he's a mighty rich man, because he's got all he wants."

The Land of Chestnuts.

The home of chestnuts is in France, where an enthusiastic admirer declares that they are "as common as beans in Boston." On such an extensive scale are they cultivated that one factory in Lyons handles over 25,000,000 pounds every year. The "marrons" are of course the great luxury, but among the poorer classes the smaller chestnuts, or "schataignes," are eaten. The United States consul at Lyons, John C. Covert, visited a large chestnut factory which employs 250 women and girls. The chestnuts are peeled and boiled and placed for three days in a vanilla sirup; then they are drained, coated thinly with vanilla and prepared for shipment. Mr. Covert is anxious that America should go extensively into chestnut growing, and believes that as sugar is 50 per cent. cheaper here than in France, the candied product would soon undersell the French article. However, as marron trees do not yield profitably till they are ten years old, Mr. Covert admits that there is no immediate prospect of a reduction in the price of the candied nuts.—Youth's Companion.

Queer South African Battle.

A traveler in South Africa tells of a queer battle he once witnessed. He was musing, with his eyes on the ground, when he noticed a caterpillar crawling along, followed by hundreds of small ants. Being quicker in their movements, the ants would catch up with the caterpillar, and one would mount his back and bite him. Pausing, the caterpillar would turn his head, and bite the ant and thus kill the tormentor. After slaughtering a dozen or more of his persecutors, the caterpillar showed signs of fatigue, and the ants then made a combined attack. Betaking himself to a stalk of grass, the caterpillar climbed up, tail first, followed by the ants. As each one approached, he seized it in his jaws, and threw it off the stalk. The ants, seeing that the caterpillar had too strong a position for them to overcome, resorted to strategy. They began sawing through the grass stalk. In a few minutes the stalk fell, and the entire force of ants pounced upon the caterpillar, killing it at once.

The Queen and Her English.

The shy and retiring disposition of Hawthorne has often been commented on. Yet on occasion he could be quite as clever with his tongue as with his pen.

It happened in England. Mr. Hawthorne was a guest at a formal dinner given to one of the foreign ambassadors. The conversation had turned upon an autograph letter of the queen, which happened to be very clumsily expressed.

"What do you think of the queen's letter, Mr. Hawthorne?" he was asked. The man of letters was perplexed, but he replied that it showed very kind feeling.

"No," persisted the wicked interrogator, "but what do you think of the style?"

Mr. Hawthorne was equal to him. "The queen has a perfect right to do as she pleases with her own English," he replied.—Forward.

IN FAR-OFF LABRADOR.

Far Hunters in That Country Who Have Just Heard of the Death of Queen Victoria.

Reports are reaching civilization of the operations of the past winter in the interior and upon the coast of Labrador. The season was, generally speaking, a mild one, and the fatalities among the Indians fewer than usual, a good supply of furs was secured, but none of such peculiar value as some of those taken during the preceding winter, says the New York Sun.

The highest price paid for a single skin of last winter's catch was \$300, which was for a black silver fox, the king of all the fur-bearing animals of Labrador. Exactly double that amount was paid for a skin of the same variety, a very noble specimen, about a

THE NEW ENGLAND WOMAN.

Not a Prepossessing Figure in Outline or Motion, According to This Writer.

In body she belongs to a people which has spent its physical force, and lacks vitality, says Kate Stephens, in Atlantic. She is slight. There is lack of adipose tissue—reserve force—throughout her frame. Her lungs are apt to be weak, waist normal and hips undersized.

She is awkward in movement. Her climate has not suffered her relaxation and the ease and curve of motion that more enervating air imparts. This is seen even in public. In walking she holds her elbows set in an angle, and sometimes she steps out in the tilt of the Cantabrigian man. In this is perhaps an unconscious imitation, a sympathetic copy-

ABDUL HAMID II., SULTAN OF TURKEY.



This picture, taken from the New York Journal, is a reproduction of what is said to be the only likeness of the Sultan made in recent years, the pictures of him formerly published having shown him only as a young man. The Sultan is indeed an old man now. He suffers acutely and will not take anaesthetics to ease his pain. Suspicious, cruel, vindictive, lustful of power, Abdul Hamid II. awaits an end that—whether by revolution or assassination or by the action of heart-disease—must come, it seems, in a short time. He is well aware of this condition, and awaits his end with trembling fear.

year ago. Prices in general are scarcely so good at present as they were this time last year.

Marten skins, which have brought as much as \$25 a skin, sold this spring for from \$15 to \$18. Traders are especially proud of the otters and minks which they obtain from Labrador, which have fur of a peculiar fineness and luster.

The hunters from the interior of Labrador had not heard of the death of Queen Victoria until they emerged from the woods a few days ago. No mail matter can reach them during the winter. Even the residents along the coast had only six mails from autumn till spring, and these had to be conveyed over the snow by dogs, on sleighs, for want of proper roads and other means of conveyance.

Veritable Lions in a Salon.

At the Comtesse de Greffellu's reception at Paris, when the music and singing had ended, two young lions entered the saloon dragging a car

ing, of an admirable norm, but it is graceless in petticoats. As she steps, she knocks her skirt with her knees, and gives you the impression that her leg is crooked, that she does not lock her knee joint. More often she tees in than out.

She has a marvelously delicate, brilliant, fine-grained skin. It is innocent of powder and purely natural. No beer in past generations has entered its making, and no port; also, little flesh.

REFURNISHING WINDSOR.

The Old Furniture in the Castle Will Be Burned to Prevent Its Circulation.

His majesty intends to clear out a good deal of the old furniture and fittings at Windsor castle and replace them with his own. Having this in view, old residents have been on the lookout for signs of a bonfire somewhere in the precincts of the castle,

MOTOR BOATS ON THE DEAD SEA.



The Dead sea, which for thousands of years has been a forsaken solitude in the midst of a desert, on whose waves no rudder has been seen for centuries, is soon to have a line of motor boats. Owing to the continued increase in traffic and the influx of tourists a shorter route between Jerusalem and Kerak, the ancient capital of the Moabites, is desired, and German capitalists and merchants, who control the trade of that section, have determined to place a number of little steamers on the Dead sea. The boats will be about 100 feet in length, and carry 35 passengers and all kinds of freight.

decked with lilies and roses. It is a remarkable fact that they frightened nobody, but called forth the guests' unanimous applause. They were brought recently to France by Prince d'Arenburg, who was participating in the Paris-Berlin race and did not witness their triumph.

The Value of Shocked Nerves.

According to a legal decision in the Vienna courts "shock to the nerves" constitutes a serious accident, writes a Vienna correspondent. A passenger on a local line claimed damages, which were awarded him, for a shock to his nerves, caused by the conductor shouting out to the passengers to jump off the car as he feared a collision.

Need High Bidding.

Some people are always willing to do as they are bid, if the bid is high enough.—Puck.

for in past times, when any chairs and tables and other articles therein were condemned, it was the practice to have them burned, says Modern Society.

The object of this was to prevent pieces of furniture stamped with the queen's monograms from being let loose, as it were, and so allowed to drift into the hands of brokers, and thence into the possession of persons having no right to them, but willing to pay almost any price to be able to display such royal articles in their own houses. It was a wasteful expedient, but one can understand the need of such a precaution. There have been so many instances of royal gifts and discarded articles being found in shops and stores that some means of prevention are quite necessary. But up to the present time there have been no indications of a holocaust.