

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTORY.

WHEN I was a child I often thought that nature made a mistake when she brought me into the world. It always seemed to me that I was out of place, and from my earliest remembrance I was made to feel that I was in the way of other people, and that I was a useless thing whose presence was tolerated because it could not be avoided. On one occasion when I was quite small, and when I was worse discouraged than usual, I asked my father if he didn't wish I was a kitten, and when he asked why I thought he should wish that, I said: "Because then you could drown me like they do kittens and get me out of the way." I really felt then that it would surely be a great relief to my people if I should die, or get drowned, or break my neck; and frequently I wished, in all earnestness, that some such circumstance would happen to me.

I never was a favorite with anybody, and I never could make friends. Why such was the fact I was never able to understand. I'm sure I tried to please everyone with whom I came in contact, and I exerted myself to the utmost to gain their good will. I was docile, kind and obliging to a fault, and a more self-sacrificing creature I am certain never lived. I made it the great study of my whole youth to devise ways and means for pleasing others, and I would at any time gladly inconvenience myself if by so doing I could serve the interest of some one else.

Yet, with all my self-sacrifice and all my willingness to favor others, I remained friendless and unloved. The favors I rendered people were accepted as a matter of course, and I verily believe that if I had given up my head to save the life of any one of the people I knew, I would not even as much as have been thanked for my pains. Those who would have known of the sacrifice might, perhaps, have thought I had done very well, but I'm sure the act would have created no serious comment. In my efforts to please, to make friends and to win words of praise I failed completely, and in spite of all I could do I was made to feel more and more painfully as the years went by my utter uselessness in the world.

If my mother had lived it would all have been different. I should have had one friend, at least, and what a comfort that would have been in my loneliness and isolation! What a world of happiness I should have found in a mother's love! Then, perhaps, she might have caused others to love me; I used to think of that when I was uncommonly depressed and sad, and many long nights I lay awake in my dark garret loafing weeping for the loss of one I had never known—my mother.

I loved my father in spite of his neglect of me, and I tried in every way to make him understand my feelings, hoping to win some expression of love from him. When I was just a little "tot" I watched for him when he came home at evening, and often, when I could muster up sufficient courage, I stole up to him and kissed him, then shrank away feeling that I had committed a grave offense. I do not think my father



HE PUSHED ME AWAY FROM HIM.

was pleased with such attentions from me, for while he never openly resented it, his face would take on a frown, and he would shrug his shoulders in such a way as to make me feel that he would rather have me stay away from him.

My father had married again soon after my mother's death, and he had a second daughter two years younger than I. My sister was a very pretty child, at least every one said she was, and my father was exceedingly fond of her. Sometimes, sitting unnoticed in a corner of the room, I watched him as he fondled and caressed her, playing with her curls or gently tweaking her ears, and I wondered then what I could do to win such attentions to myself. Once or twice I left my corner and, stealing forth, attempted to seat myself on my father's other knee in the hope of sharing his attentions with my sister, but he pushed me away from him, and I slunk back to my seat with a deeply wounded heart, feeling a tinge of jealousy of the favored child.

I don't think my father could have ever felt much love for my mother,

Such, at least, was the impression I gained as I grew up. I never heard him speak of her, and if anyone mentioned her name in his presence it seemed to disquiet him. It appeared to me that any remembrance of her was extremely unpleasant to him, though why it should be I was unable to comprehend. For I'm sure she was a most excellent woman and loving wife. Such was the impression I gained of her from our old colored cook, Aunt Mary, who had known her from childhood up to the day of her death.

"Dar neber libed a better 'oman an' what yo' ma was," Aunt Mary said to me time and again, "an' der neber will lib a better 'oman if de worl' stan's a millin' y'abs. She was de kindest hearted an' de best-natured creatur eber I knowed, an' if eber der was a Christian pesson on dis yearth she was dat pesson."

As I grew up I tried to discover from Aunt Mary some information regarding my mother's married life, but on that point she was singularly reticent. She was ready at all times to sing the praises of "Misses Marg'et," but not a word had she to say regarding her marriage to my father and the short life they lived together. Once when I perseveringly pressed her for an answer to the question, whether or not my mother was a happy wife, she said:

"Tain't de place ob a ole no'count niggah like me to be tellin' tales an' mixin' my gab 'long 'o' odder folks' business. Yo' mudder's done dead an' gone, chile, an' I'll warrant she's happy now, 'case ef anybody eber went to jine de fol' of de Lamb she sho'ly did."

That was the extent of my information, but vague as it was it served to impress me more firmly with the belief that my mother's marriage was an unhappy one, and that my father never loved her. My impression may have been false, but it seems to me even now that if my father really loved the mother he must have had some love for the child.

My stepmother was never kind to me. She never addressed me except to scold or find fault, and besides burdening me with work beyond my years and strength she often beat me most cruelly on the least provocation. I soon came to fear her so much that a sight of her was sufficient to set me trembling from head to foot. I think she found real enjoyment in seeing me suffer, for when she turned her little black eyes on me and saw me quaking with fear a thin, wan smile played over her sharp face, the nearest approach to a pleased expression I ever saw in her features. As my fear of her grew from week to week her loathing and hatred of me increased in equal proportion, and before I had known her a year I learned to think that she would not only be glad to see me dead, but would willingly end my existence with her own hands if she dared to do it. I suppose I judged my stepmother too harshly, but I was only a child, and she had made such an impression on my mind, and I was not to blame for entertaining it.

My father was exceedingly fond of my stepmother, and he never tired, seemingly, of trying to please her. He strove to gratify every wish she expressed, and, besides catering to her desires himself, he plainly held to the idea that every one else should find it a pleasure to do so, too. He appeared to be very happy with her, and often, in my childish way, I wondered how he could be, when I saw so little in her that was calculated to call forth love or admiration.

CHAPTER II
MY SISTER AND I

One thing that used to cause me a great amount of worry was my name. My mother had selected the name for me and it was very pretty, and if people had only used it completely I should have been satisfied. But no one did that except Aunt Mary, and instead of being called Agnes I was simply Ag. Somehow the short, crabbled abbreviation always impressed me with the thought of the little space I occupied in the affections of others, and it was also suggestive of the fact that in whatever people had to do with me they wished to be as brief as possible. My sister, whose name was Mary, was often called Maggie, but no one ever thought of calling her Mag, and yet that wouldn't have been near so unpleasant as Ag, because it is not so scrippled and pinched, and so void of sentiment.

Perhaps it was the contrast between my sister's name and my own that made mine so distasteful. I remember that I used to think Maggie very pretty, and I always associated it with a beautiful, accomplished young lady loved and petted by everybody, while Ag always seemed adapted to a great, coarse, awkward gawk, ignorant and unloved. The idea was a mere fancy, of course, but it was born out of my surroundings, and it took a strong hold on my mind and I could not rid myself of it.

I was envious of my sister. It was no doubt ungenerous of me to feel so, but I could not help it. She was loved and "made over" by everyone, and I felt that it was unfair that such a distinction should be made between two sisters when there was no reason why it should be. I envied her the kind words, caresses and other attentions she received continually, and sometimes I felt bitter toward her because of it. While I knew she was not to be blamed for being loved, yet I thought it cruel of her to complacently accept attentions that ought to have been shared between us. It seemed to me that if I

were in her place I should refuse to be petted and flattered while she was neglected.

From the first my stepmother made all the distinction possible between her daughter and myself, and my father, I am sorry to say, was quick to follow her example. Any little action on Mary's part which was cunning or affectionate commanded great attention and was talked about and commended as though it was the most wonderful thing imaginable, while the same action on my part would have met with a heartless rebuff and I would have either been roundly upbraided or referred to as "smart," a term, by the way, which was invariably applied to me whenever I ventured to say or do anything cunning.

In the matter of personal appearance I don't think there was a marked difference between my sister and myself. I think we were both fairly good looking, and if any difference existed I think it was in my favor. Yet father and stepmother, and, in fact, everyone else, pretended that there was the greatest difference and that it was all to my disadvantage. Even traits of character that we possessed in common were given a different definition, being considered laudable in her and pernicious in me. So with personal appearances. What in her were considered as charms were in me looked upon as defects.

Mary and I were both quite positive in our views. In her case that trait was commended, because, as they said, it showed firmness of character; while with me it was condemned, because it denoted a hateful stubbornness. We both liked reading, a fact which, as far as she was concerned, was noted with pleasure, since it showed a love of learning; but which on my part denoted laziness. And so it was through the whole category. She was always right; I was always wrong. That which was commended in her was condemned in me.

Our hair was alike in color, length and texture, yet she had auburn locks, while I had simply "red wisps"—she was "auburn-haired," I was "red-headed." In every particular where there was a likeness between us it was spoken of in her case as a charm, while with me it became a hideous defect. These things, of course, were mere trifles, but they were enough to make a sensitive child very miserable, notwithstanding.

In spite of the vast difference made between us, and the feeling of jealousy that sometimes rankled in my breast because of it, I loved my sister dearly, and did everything that I had the power to do to make her love me in return. For a time she seemed to be very fond of me, and often when I wept in loneliness and sorrow she came to me, and, putting her arms about me, kissed me and took away that feeling of desolation that was sometimes so heavy on my heart. But that was when she was very young and before her mother had instilled into her mind the principles of her own.

My stepmother made it a point to impress her daughter with the idea that though we were sisters a wide gulf lay between us, and that her life and mine lay in widely separated grooves. This teaching, persistently pursued, had its effect in time, and gradually my sister and I drifted farther and farther apart, a chasm across which we could never reach hands, opening wider and deeper, day by day, at our feet.

Mary grew to look upon me as being inferior to herself and as one not worthy of her consideration. The little love she had held for me died out of her heart, and she had neither sympathy nor care for my sufferings and heartaches. The change in her was not so gradual as to escape my notice, and many were the tears I shed and many the hours of agony I experienced as I watched her love slipping from me and knew there was none other to lean on for sympathy.

Oh! what would I not have given for the power of retaining my sister's affections and of drawing her closer to me and making her feel for me as I felt for her! What sacrifice would I have not made to retain the little love, scant though it was, which she had given me? That sacrifice, in short, did I not make to that end? I willingly gave up to her the best of everything—willingly consented to her having all the new dresses, the jewels, the musical instruments, and in fact all the beautiful and desirable things that came to the house. Of course in such self-sacrifices I made a virtue of necessity, since she would have had all these things, anyhow; but it was a virtue, nevertheless, for loving such luxuries as I did it required a great effort of will-power not to covet them—not to feel that they should be in part mine.

Furthermore, I made myself a servant for my sister, and was ever ready to administer to her wants. I would do any service, no matter how menial, if thereby she could be favored. I would deny myself any pleasure or comfort, if by so doing her pleasure was augmented. I abased myself at her feet, in short, and all in the hope of retaining her love.

Yet my sacrifices availed me nothing. No matter how I denied myself for her sake, Mary thought I was only doing my duty. No matter how I abased myself for her aggrandizement, my sister felt that I was simply rendering to her the homage that was her due. She showed no appreciation of my sacrifices, and failed to so much as return me thanks for my services. In spite of all my efforts my sister's heart closed against me, the chasm between us widened day by day and we drifted farther and farther apart.

At last I was forced to a realization of my sister's feelings, and, though I would have given the world to have avoided it, I had to acknowledge to myself that she had no love in her heart for me. This knowledge, when I allowed it to possess me, came with crushing effect, and I felt that my heart would break beneath it. I realized that the only tie of love I had on earth was severed, and that I was alone and a stranger in my own family. Ah! how I longed for love—how I mourned my desolation! How I prayed that some

heart might reach out toward me, extending a thread of sympathy, and throwing a ray of light into the darkness that surrounded me!

Time passed on, and with each setting of the sun I saw a perceptible widening of the dark gulf that separated me from all that was pleasant of earth. With each day, each hour, I felt the gloom and desolation deepening and thickening about me. I was unloved, friendless and alone.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

PICTURES IN COLORS.

A Very Clever and Successful Swindler in Photography.

The pictorial swindler who guarantees to take your photograph in colors has bobbed up again, and this time he has located his lair on Grand street.

The feat which he ostensibly performs is one that certain well-known scientists have been vainly endeavoring to accomplish for some time.

While photography in monotone has been brought to the highest degree of perfection, a process by which the plate will accurately reproduce the tints and colors of the object before the camera has not been discovered. However, this don't phase the Grand street gentleman. The failure of science was a matter of small import to him, and having reached the conclusion that photographs in color would pay he proceeded to produce them.

His methods are the same as those of a similar concern that had a brief but flourishing career on Broadway about four years ago. While the subject is being posed, assistants concealed behind a properly perforated door make minute notes of his or her facial tints and the colors of the clothing. When the picture is developed and mounted it is colored by hand according to these notes, and sent home as an example of instantaneous photography in tints. The collapse of the Broadway firm was due to a mistake on the part of one of the second conspirators behind the door. He got mixed up in his notes, and when a certain brunette actress received a stack of photos which portrayed her with rich, ripe tomato-tinted locks, a row was raised that ended in the silent exit of the photographic confidence man. The samples exhibited by the Grand street deceiver would not mislead anyone familiar with photography, but judging from the constant crowd around the showcase the general public seems to be taken in by them very nicely.—N.Y. Commercial Advertiser.

THE GREAT BEAR.

A Few Pointers About the Dipper and the North Star.

Most people on a clear day can, without a watch or other timepiece, form a closely approximate idea of the time of the day by the position of the sun, but few, perhaps, have guessed at any similar method of computing the time during the night without any other means than the "starry skies." Notwithstanding, a fairly reliable time indicator can be found in the northern skies on every cloudless night. As is generally known, the group of fixed stars called the "Dipper" makes an apparent revolution toward the north star in every twenty-four hours, with the two stars forming the outer elevation of the bowl of the dipper pointing nearly directly to the polar star continuously.

If the position of the "pointers" is taken at any given hour, say six o'clock in the evening in winter time and as soon as it is dark in the summer, the hour can thereafter be pretty accurately measured by the eye during the night. Frequent observations of positions will have to be made at the given hour, as, owing to the constant changes of the earth's position in space, the position of the "pointers" in relation to our point of observation and the star also change. Observations taken during a year and impressed on the mind will make a very good time indicator of that part of the celestial space.—Chicago Journal.

JAPANESE PEARLS.

A Possible Source of Wealth for the Flowery Kingdom.

A traveler recently returned from Japan has written to the London Figaro: "A possible source of wealth to Japan is in the abundance of pearls in the waters around the southwestern islands. These beds are practically unworked, and even a Japanese paper admits that there is scope for energy in this direction. On these islands, it appears, the women are the laborers."

In connection with this statement a New York gem expert said to a Jeweler's Weekly reporter that the pearls are a greenish yellow variety secreted by the abalone. The Japanese name for this mussel is "awabi."

The Crow's Crown.

The Russian crown and other royal insignia, together known as "the crown jewels," are valued at the enormous sum of eleven million dollars, taking the money of the United States as a basis of calculation. The crown itself is reckoned as being worth six million dollars in cool cash. It is adorned with hundreds of diamonds, individual specimens being worth all the way from a few dollars up to many thousands. Besides the diamonds, which make this costly head-covering look as if it had been buried in a shower of falling stars, there are fifty-four magnificent pearls, each without a flaw, set around the rim, a ruby of extraordinary size and beauty being used as a centerpiece. The crown was made by Pansie, the Genesee jeweler, and was first used by Catherine the Great.—Philadelphia Press.

The number of lighthouses in the world has quadrupled during the last fifty years.

THE DAIRY.

MILK CONSUMPTION.

As an Article of Diet Its Use Is on the Increase.

Reader, did you ever consider what a complete and superior diet milk was for the human stomach? Used as it is in almost every household in the land, in conjunction with other foods, its real nutritive value is not always appreciated by the laity. Physicians of the highest repute strongly recommend its use for a form of nourishment in disorders where other food would be prohibited. It is so easily digestible, and at the same time so nourishing that very weak stomachs will assimilate it. Milk can be by the following formula be digested before it enters the stomach, and thus be rapidly taken up by the blood as nourishment without exciting the action of a perhaps dyspeptic organ: Take of the extract of pancreatine five grains, and of bicarbonate of soda fifteen grains, and add to one pint of fresh milk and a gill of water. Heat the whole to 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and hold at that temperature forty-five minutes; then cool quickly, and it is ready for drinking. This preparation has a slightly bitter taste, and cannot be coagulated by any acid. It is digested milk, and for feeble stomachs it makes an excellent food.

While manufacturers are seeking to extend the consumption of cheese and butter the consumption of milk is taking care of itself, and it is increasing especially in the cities and towns all over the land. To what cause can this be attributed? One thing the good qualities of milk are becoming better known, and then there is far less adulteration of the product than formerly. This is not because the average milkman has reformed especially, but because the laws of inspection are becoming more thoroughly enforced. Consumers have become aware of this, and they know that they can obtain better milk than formerly and at just as low a price.

Our observation of city milk consumption has made us confident of this fact, and it is a pleasing feature of the results of honest dairy work. Do not be afraid to drink all the good sweet milk you want. Physicians recommend it, and dyspeptic stomachs endorse it; what better evidence is needed of its nutritive and valuable qualities as a diet? It is the healthy naturally flavored milk that is to be recommended. Tainted or stable-flavored milk is not fitted to make even good pork, much less to be used on the table. We do not go so far as to claim that milk is a panacea for all digestive woes, but we do say that it has excellent and enduring qualities as a diet not possessed by other foods, and that it seldom irritates the dyspeptic stomach.—George E. Newell, in Ohio Farmer.

BOGUS BUTTER.

It Cannot Compete with the Genuine Article.

There is no question that the sale of bogus butter has been encouraged by the large quantities of poor butter that is sold. Nobody wants poor butter. But nobody wants oleomargarine or butterine for his own use. In all our observation during the years that bogus butter has been on the market, we have never met with a single individual who ever called for a pound of imitation butter unless he was a hotel, restaurant, or boarding-house keeper. Nobody, so far as we could ever find, wants to eat it himself, and the only way by which so much of it is sold is by representing it directly or indirectly as pure butter. Butter always tells just what it is. It is an honest product. It tells the truth. If it is good it is good because it has the real merit of goodness. If it is bad it tells us and we can leave it alone. But butterine is a liar; it seeks to deceive and does deceive. It shows a beautiful exterior, and does not offend the palate. Yet it is the most offensive, dirty and repulsive thing that comes upon our tables. As good butter increases, this miserable product will have less chance of success; and good butter is all the time increasing. Dairymen and farmers are taking better care of the cows, feeding more properly and adopting the improved methods of dairying. Better butter must necessarily be the result.—Farmers' Voice.

Dairy Notes.

—The dairy sire to be prepotent should be descended from a long line of dairy cows of great natural capacity.

—A cow over-fed will not digest all her food, thus injuring her milk and the butter made from it. Good digestion and assimilation are imperatively necessary.—American Farmer.

—When buying a cow get one of the dairy breeds, if possible. If not, take the best one you can get and feed liberally and house and handle carefully, and you can gradually improve her productiveness.—Orange Judd Farmer.

—The one who can invent a cheap method of extracting all the nutritious value contained in skim milk and whey and present the same in a form to make human food will be a benefactor to society.—American Dairyman.

—In feeding dairy cows supply all the proper food that can be digested and turned into milk. The profit consists in getting the largest possible product from a given number of cows.—Prairie Farmer.

—From the start the cow should be trained to stand quietly until milked, so that the milking can readily be done with both hands and without the risk of the milk being spilled.—Farm, Field and Stockman.

—Summer dairying may be more easily carried on than winter dairying, but it is not always the easiest methods that give the best profits, and the silo has greatly lessened the difficulty of winter dairying.—Colman's Rural World.

—There are dairymen who have a private butter trade, but, as a rule, it is not practical to attempt to find private customers for dairy products, unless it be among the acquaintances of the dairymen. There are families in the city who would, no doubt, be glad to pay a high price for a uniform, good product, the year round. But the trouble is to find them.—Farmer's Voice.

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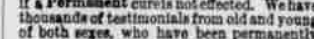
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