

AN OLD-FASHIONED FANCY.

BY MARY SHAW.

I remember fondly the zigzag rail fence enclosing the vast farm, hill and dale; the barbed-wire is now of more consequence. But to me the old-fashioned rail fence was the only one that counted. Luscious wild berries grew its angles between. It was easy to climb or creep through. The golden grain and the green of the grass by the rail-fenced fields that childhood knew. Nooks to claim 'thout pre-empting. Offered wild berries and honey-suckle. And in those days—ah, who could pass by? The ones I recall had corners the rarest. From which roses nodded good-day. As clover-caps lifted, from meadows the fairest. Where wild birds nested, or carolled gay. And barbed-wire—well, yes, I know it is better. Lasting, not easily blown by the breeze. "Progressive," all that; yet I'm a regretter. Of the rail fence "going," and not by degrees. Though far freer from harm. Is a barbed-wire fence. The children protest, and so do I. MILWAUKEE, WIS.

Dr. Elfenstein's Mission

A Remarkable Romance.

BY EMILY THORNTON.

CHAPTER XVII.

ETHEL did not entirely recover from the effects of her fright until after the night's sleep had served to calm her nerves, and all the evening that followed she was excited and scarcely able to control herself.

When she bade the family good-night and locked herself into her room, in order to proceed to her nightly task, it was with a dashed feeling and an aching head. Nervous herself for duty, however, as well as she could, she proceeded to light her candle, and, taking the indispensable knife, she passed through the wardrobe and passageway into the corridor beyond.

Possessing herself of the basket of food, she remembered to fasten the door with the iron bolt, a precaution that the baronet had charged her always to observe, that by no possibility could she be surprised while accomplishing her task, then, passing onward, she opened the panel as usual, and placed the plate of food upon the shelves.

As she did so, she heard distinctly a movement on the other side, which, being rather unusual, for silence alone ordinarily reigned, startled her already excited nerves so much that she gave the shelves the required shove, and, just as they whirled away, she saw, to her horror, when it was too late to stop them, that she had dropped the knife from her hand, and it had gone around with the food.

Breathlessly she waited for the return movement, hoping that the creature within would not observe it, and that it would come back with the plate.

As she waited, a singular, loud, shrill noise or cry came from within.

The next moment the shelves had revolved, and the plate alone appeared. Appalled by her own carelessness, and fancying she knew not what as the result, the terrified, half-frantic girl could only draw out the panels with all the expedition possible, and then hastily return the basket, fasten the door, and seek the safety of her own apartment.

Oh, how she blamed herself for that careless, blundering act, and the more she blamed, the more she could not foresee the result of her first move.

What was now her duty? Should she immediately seek the baronet, who was probably asleep by this time, and, telling him the mishap, ask what was to be done?

No! she could not think this course a wise one.

The baronet was an exceedingly passionate man. Such a tale, at this hour, would throw him into a whirl of nervous anger, that might cause damage to the broken hip, the bones of which, all hoped, had by this time commenced to unite.

She saw, then, at once, that this course would not answer.

But would it be well to tell him on the morrow?

What could he do if acquainted with the nature of her disaster?

He could not move from his bed. He could not, or would not crave assistance of any person he knew. It would only distress him, and prove of no avail in the end.

Perhaps, after all, the ape, or whatever the creature was, would do no harm with the knife. He probably would handle it a little, then drop it, and where it fell, it would lie unremembered and unused.

Certainly this must be the result. She felt she must consider it so, and trust that Providence would direct it all on this way, and so allow no harm to be done.

No sleep visited her weary eyes, until long after midnight, she was so unhappy and so unnerved by all the events of the last twenty-four hours, and again and again she prayed that all might go well, and nothing terrible result from the loss of that dreadful knife.

Rising with the alarm of the usual bell that rang to awaken the household, the poor girl again commenced to review the problem that had presented itself to her, and she worked out the night before. Once more she asked the question.

Should she worry Sir Reginald by telling him of the accident that had befallen her, or should she not?

Before deciding positively, she resolved to pay the corridor a morning visit, and by listening, study out if all was going on as usual.

This resolve she instantly carried into effect.

Turning once more from her room, down the corridor, she placed her ear close to the panel, and listened intently to hear if any movement could be discovered within the concealed room.

All was still. Not the faintest motion was perceptible; therefore, feeling greatly relieved, she returned, quite sure that all must be well, and finally resolved to say nothing of what had happened, and while keeping silent endeavor to drive the entire circumstance from her own mind, and so be at peace.

The day passed on as usual, and when night brought her to the shelves she once more found to her satisfaction silence reigning, and felt that now, in deed, all was right.

Poor Ethel! She little knew the fearful consequences yet to ensue from her first blunder.

look out, and tell me if a shower is approaching."

Ethel arose at his bidding, and, after examining the sky, returned, saying, as she resumed her seat:

"There is, indeed, a very black cloud lying in the west, which foretells a hard shower."

"Then, just outside your instrument and draw close to me, as I have some private instructions to give you in regard to a new work to be done to-night. Are we entirely alone?"

"We are. Mrs. Fredon left the room to prepare you some nourishment, and your wife and niece are in the grounds," replied Ethel, trembling, she knew not why.

"Then listen intently to my instructions. If that storm rages about half-past nine or ten o'clock to-night, you must visit the Haunted Tower and put in motion some machinery I have erected there."

"Oh, Sir Reginald," murmured the shrinking listener, "please do not ask that of me."

"Shut up! You just attend to my orders, and do what I tell you to do. Never dare dispute my will."

The baronet then proceeded to give minute directions for the lighting of each light, and also for the movements of the frightful and hideous image there concealed.

At its conclusion he remarked: "Do you think you understand every particular of the work I now require to be done?"

"I do," replied Ethel; "but, sir, my soul revolts from the whole thing. I consider it a wicked deception, and I beg you to excuse me from undertaking it."

"Who cares what you think about it? No one asked your opinion. Do you wish to do it or not?"

"Sir Reginald, I have faithfully performed your wishes in regard to feeding the animal, whose life you value so highly, knowing that to preserve the life of even the least of God's creatures is a duty, but I can see no possible necessity for striving to impose upon the credulity of the inhabitants of this quiet place."

"That, I tell you is my business and not yours," was the angry reply. "You are here simply to attend to my work and I have well paid you for doing so."

"I know that; but surely I am at liberty to point out an error in your wishes and judgment. Sir Reginald, this thing that you ask me to do is wrong, and I cannot consent to carry it out further. You say you have done this yourself for twenty-five years; surely that can answer any purpose you may have to effect by it. Please, then, be satisfied, and let this thing rest!"

"I tell you I will not," replied the baronet, fairly purple from rage. "Do you not see that your obstinacy is doing me infinite trouble and injury? I command you to obey my wishes: If you dare refuse, you shall leave my house this night, even though I know you have nowhere to lay your head. Do you hear?"

"I do!" murmured the distressed girl. "Will you obey?"

No answer came, the only reply she could make being a burst of tears.

Maddened by her silence and sobs, the baronet started up, until leaning upon his elbow, a thing he had been expressly forbidden to do, as it would jar his hip, he shook his fist violently in her face, while he demanded in fury:

"Will you obey?"

"I will!" she at last gasped, between her sobs. Poor girl! Seeing his violent excitement, and remembering her aunt's last charges, she dared not refuse.

"Then see that you do it," he returned, more calmly, as she sank back with a groan upon his pillow.

Mrs. Fredon having by this time reappeared, Ethel withdrew from his side, and repaired to her own apartment to weep over her unfortunate lot, and to watch the clouds, hoping that the expected shower might pass around without reaching the spot in which she resided.

But her hope was vain!

As the evening came, the dreaded cloud approached nearer and nearer, and when 10 o'clock struck, thunder, lightning, wind, and rain were riding furiously upon, and around the earth.

The wind, therefore, no escape from the disagreeable duty that awaited her, so at her usual time she took the lighted candle in her hand and started with fearful eyes to attend to the task before her.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DR. ELFENSTEIN MAKES A MOVE.

After Dr. Elfenstein had asked permission of Sir Reginald Glendinning to search the Haunted Tower he felt exceedingly puzzled over his future course.

Resolved as he was to penetrate the mystery, and to ascertain how the thing was to be accomplished, he felt that he must do so.

Sometimes he thought he was foolishly interested in this ghostly visitant, but again his promise to Mr. Rappelye to examine all the premises, penetrate to and study all the rooms, would return to his remembrance, and he felt that his mission was included in that sacred charge.

In all his visits to Sir Reginald, although reserved in manner, his every nerve had been on the alert. He had been told that the room occupied by the present baronet was the one where Sir Arthur had met his sad fate.

Knowing this, he fairly studied that room.

He noted its width, height, and breadth; the height of the two windows from the floor, the size of those windows, and particularly he noted the one from which the rope had dangled that had been used to lower the body to the ground.

He had several times walked to that window, as if meditating over his patient's case, and looked out, surveying the ground below, and the distance from it to the lake, which was visible through the trees.

Then he scrutinized every article of furniture the room contained, from the massive black-walnut bedstead to a large, tall wardrobe, of the same material, that stood opposite the door, and which he observed was always locked.

Several times he caught himself wishing he could see its contents, but smiled at his own curious nature.

From this house, which he visited daily in his professional calling, he often drove around, examining the stables and outbuildings, and sometimes strolled about the tower to view the ruins, and to see if he could effect an entrance.

One day—it was the one on which Ethel started for the eventful walk, he in a drive noticed a small, well-trodden pathway leading up to a clump of bushes. Instantly the thought struck him that behind those bushes, concealed from view, might be an open passage to the place, although he felt certain there was no doorway.

The more he thought of this the more he sure it must be the case.

Why that well-used path through the grass if not for some such purpose?

Yes; some human feet were in the habit of entering there, and he resolved to return to the place, under cover of darkness, and investigate those bushes.

Full of this discovery, and full of hope that he might yet penetrate to the mysterious tower, he touched his horse with the whip and drove hastily away.

But just as he emerged again into the ramble, he saw Miss Belle Glendinning gazing at him from an upper window, and felt mortified that she should have noticed his ride around the premises, as conscience whispered that it must speak to her of a prying nature.

Feeling, however, that it was done, and could not now be recalled, he passed on, and proceeded to visit the homes of several sick persons who need his advice and assistance.

On his return it was that he suddenly heard a wild shriek of terror, and looking around, had seen Ethel in that dangerous situation, while the nearing train told of the death awaited her.

Springing to the ground, he had rushed to her assistance, and had, as we have already said, wrenched apart those stiff fastenings, and drawn her from her peril.

Then, with her fainting form clasped in his arms, he had carried her to a place of safety, and, placing her upon the grass, had held her against his breast, while he removed her hat, and by faning her with it sought to restore animation.

How lovely she looked to the young man as she thus lay so quietly in his embrace, her golden hair, which had become disheveled in his awkwardness, floating around her, with her white cheeks, upon which the long, black lashes curled, nestling so closely against his heart.

But he did refrain from pressing his lips to hers, in his deep joy, that she was saved from the horrible danger that had surrounded her.

But he did refrain, and after she had recovered, and the shoe had been replaced, and her hair and hat rearranged, and restored, he could not overcome a feeling of longing to have her in his arms once more, before he must yield her back, and again banishing her sweet remembrance, must return to his stern duty he had so solemnly undertaken.

Oh, how this spring of love resembled the uncertain glory of an April day. Now shows all the beauty of the sun, and by and by a cloud takes all away.

Too well he remembered that he had promised, in the most sacred way, to give himself to the cause of another, to give for him, and to let nothing stand in his lawful way, in order to unravel this mystery.

No love, then, must enter his breast! No maiden must divert his mind from his life work, and his vow!

But one thing he would do: he would gather her in his arms just once more, place her in his kiss, and carry her safely back to the Hall, and after that work alone should be his portion.

This, then, he proceeded to accomplish, but her startled look as he caught her up had frightened him, and the fear of her displeasure had led to the half apology he had uttered in his own defense.

After he had left her at the Hall it was hard to recall his transient thoughts to their proper sphere, but with set teeth and a firm resolve he plunged into study and active work in order to be at peace with himself.

He then returned to the remembrance of the little pathway he had discovered to the ruins, and determined to visit the place that very night.

But a writer as well said that "Man proposes, and God disposes," for he did not go near the place that evening, as a sudden call to visit a person in great agony, several miles away, sent him into an entirely different region, and detained him there awhile.

The dragon wing of night o'erspreads the land, and not until

The first opening of the gorgeous east did he return.

The great suffering of this new patient even detained him by his side until after midnight the second evening, and a third time had night folded the earth before relief came to the weary one, and Earle Elfenstein was at liberty to pay the lonely ruin the desired call.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

TEMPERANCE.

FEARFUL TO CONTEMPLATE.

Archbishop Ireland says: "It is fearful to think of it, but in this Nation of the United States over \$1,000,000,000 annually are spent in the direct traffic in intoxicating liquors."

Being the cause of the waste of so much more money. Men are unable to work because of injury done to their appetites by drink. Time is absorbed in drinking; the country is in a state of anarchy; and the world is in a state of anarchy.

It would be much better if the money given to drink were taken and cast into the lake; at least, it would then leave behind it no harm."

DON'T RUN THE RISK.

A devout old hermit, well seasoned in virtue by many years of prayer, was passing through the city of Alexandria in company with a novice—a young man just beginning. As they came by a wine shop the novice said: "Father, let us go in here for a few moments. I want to see a friend who is a wine merchant."

The hermit answered, "My son, that may be the case with you, but as I am a hermit, I cannot go in. I have no wine to drink, and I have no money to buy it. I have only my prayer book and my beads."

The novice said, "But there is no danger of our doing wrong." The hermit answered, "My son, that may be the case with you, but as I am a hermit, I cannot go in. I have no wine to drink, and I have no money to buy it. I have only my prayer book and my beads."

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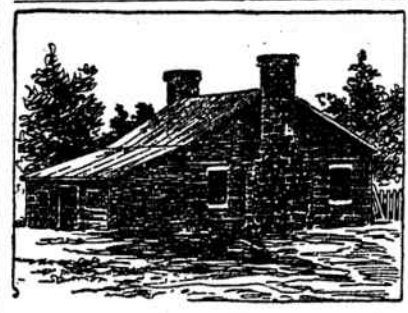
HIS NATAL DAY.

THE BIRTHDAYS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Anniversaries of His Birth Were Often Important Landmarks in His Career—The Great General's Life Reviewed.

GEORGE WILLIAM, son to Augustine Washington and Mary his wife, was born the 11th day of February, 1731-2, about ten in the morning, and was baptized the 3d of April following, Mr. Bromley Whiting and Captain Christopher Brooks, godfathers, and Mrs. Milfred Godfrey, godmother.

When Washington was born his father was about thirty-six years old and his mother twenty-eight. He was the first of his father's children by a second marriage, born of good family on both sides, but in a house which modern luxury would deem mean in its size and appointments. It had four rooms only, a chimney at each end, was perfectly plain seen from the outside, but had a miniature picture gallery within in the "best room," consisting of a chimney piece ornamented with Dutch tiles showing scenes from the Bible. In this plain home of Westmoreland County, Va., lived a family distinguished for its good breeding, of which the husband



WASHINGTON'S BIRTHPLACE.

was the great grandson of a John Washington, who emigrated to America in 1657, and was sixth in descent from the first Lawrence Washington, of Ludgrave, Northamptonshire, England.

Of inestimable value to his country is the opportunity which every year affords to review his work and character. Before his death his birthday was celebrated in every great town throughout the Union, and the custom will never fail of being honored by the setting apart of the anniversary as a general holiday, its date adjusted to the Gregorian calendar, and falling on the 22d day of February.

Washington's earliest birthdays were spent in Stafford County, Va., on the east side of the Rappahannock River, opposite Fredericksburg, whither his parents removed while he was still a baby.

At school, in Westmoreland County, under Mr. Williams, he learned reading, spelling, English grammar, arithmetic, surveying, bookkeeping and geography. He had been taught the rudiments of his thorough acquaintance with the mother tongue by an obscure and humble person known in history for this reason only, as Holby.

The elder brother took a most affectionate interest in George, for whom, when the boy was fourteen years old, he procured a midshipman's warrant, which his mother's prophetic solicitude prevented him from using.

The next two years George spent in residence at the interesting house, surveying chiefly, under the direction of Mr. Williams, the nature of whose instructions was better adapted to the country than would have been a classical education. He was sixteen when he went to live with his brother at Mount Vernon, and there, a tall and graceful youth, perfected himself in the dance and other social accomplishments.

Lafayette described the beauty of Washington's physical proportions as the most superb he had ever seen, and this when the hero had passed the best years of his manhood. What must have been the fascination of his presence in the morn and liquid dew of his youth, and the heart flutterings of the Virginia maidens whom he met in the refined society of his brother's mansion, and in his frequent visits to the beautiful country seats in the neighborhood?

A few months after his birthday, in 1749, he qualified as county surveyor, which was a profitable occupation at that time, and he had added to the property left him by his father, when, at nineteen years old, he was commissioned a major of militia, with the considerable salary of £150 a year attached to the honor. On February 22d, 1752, he and his brother, Lawrence, were on their way home from a trip to Barbadoes, whither they had gone in the hope to regain health for the master of Mount Vernon, who, the same year, died at his beautiful seat. The estate was left to his surviving daughter, and in case of her decease without issue, with other lands to George Washington, with the reserve of the use of the same to his wife during her lifetime.

In the fall of 1753 Governor Dinwiddie sent the young officer as commissioner to a French fort claimed to have been built as a hostile demon-

stration on English lands. He was away eleven weeks on this errand, which was accomplished with tact and judgment, but the war cloud spread in broader and darker shadow, and February 22d, 1754, saw George Wash-

ington at Alexandria, collecting military supplies for use in the threatened campaign. The succeeding May, before the declaration of war had been made, Washington encountered the French troops and heard for the first time the whistling of bullets. He is accused of having said on the occasion: "I heard the bullets whistle; there is something charming in the sound."

Washington's birthday in 1755 was spent in retirement. He had retired from his military duties after succeeding Colonel Frey in command; but in the spring volunteered under General Braddock with the rank of Colonel. He had barely recovered from a fever when he took a heroic part in the disastrous battle of Monongahela, after which he retired to Mount Vernon.

On February 22, 1756, he had been several months in command of the Virginia troops to serve against France, with headquarters at Winchester; but was absent on a journey to Boston on the day we celebrate, where he arranged with General Shirley that an inconveniently independent officer in command at Fort Cumberland, Md., should be made subject to his orders. He fell in love for the second time, of which we know, on this trip, with a New York beauty, who had the bad taste to prefer another young officer for a husband. In February, 1757, we find him laying papers before the Earl of Loudoun—he was then in command of the Virginia troops—with the object of putting them upon the regular establishment.

His birthday in 1759 found him again in private life, the object of the war in the middle colonies having been achieved. Denied the privilege of being more than a colonial officer he resigned his commission, much to the regret of his colleagues in the army. On February 22 of that year he was a benedict, having had a partner of his joys and sorrows about six weeks. His marriage to Mrs. Custis was an exceptionally fortunate union, adding to his wealth and social distinction, and giving him as perfect companionship as is ever reached for the long space of forty years.

The years from 1759 to 1764 were a comparatively uneventful period in Washington's life. During this time he was the planter and the man of business, exporting produce and importing from England goods for domestic and family use.

With the passage of the stamp act came momentous thoughts to Washington as to what would be the effect on the colonies of the wilful violation of the principle "that no subject of the realm can be taxed except by himself or his representative." The importance of this violation was perceived by him at the beginning. By the time of his birthday in 1769, Washington had advanced so far in his patriotic opposition to tyranny that he took charge of the articles of association drawn up by his good neighbor, George Mason, for presentation before

the burgesses of Virginia, with the object of crippling British commerce by reducing imports. When subsequently the patriot-statesmen of Boston assembled in public meeting, passed a resolution calling on all the inhabitants of the colonies generally to enter into an agreement that they would hold no further intercourse with Great Britain, either by imports or exports, Washington opposed the adoption of the passage relating to exports, because it involved the violation