



CHAPTER XXXIV. 20 Continued.

But if the record of the work was lost, the fruits were well preserved, and among these the colonel spent many a busy day. The news of Winyard's return soon spread among the initiated, and the house in Seymour street was besieged by visitors. The results of the journey were, however, kept strictly secret, only the colonel and a few experts being allowed to assist the invalid in the work of putting them in order. Soon, however, the news leaked out, and questions were asked in Parliament with the result of acquainting Russia with the fact that she had been beaten in her own favorite theatre of Eastern diplomacy. Article after article appeared in the Moscow papers, calling for further investigation into the carelessness of the avowed Russian agents in Afghanistan, who could give no details of the passage of this dangerous traveler through their midst. These writings, hot from the brain of one who, even as these lines are penned, is being mourned by the nation he served so well with pen and press, were issued with the view of learning more of the results of Winyard Mistle's observations; but in this object they failed. All that the world learned was that the journey had been accomplished, whether alone or with companions, whether hasty and superficial, or slow and searching, never transpired. Day by day Winyard regained his strength, and the lines upon his face—lines speaking of hardship, hunger, thirst and anxiety—began to disappear. They never quite left him, however, but remained there, signs of age upon a young face—silent testimonials of forgotten sufferings. His appearance had at first been rather a shock to all who remembered him as he was in former days. He was not pale, but the dull brownness of his face seemed only to accentuate the drawn and weary expression of his features; through all, however, and even when he could not stand unsupported, the brave, strong look never left his eyes. It may have been by sheer force of will, but his boyish cheerfulness was as reliable as of old. He laughed at his own weakness and incapacity to walk alone; yet his laughter failed to detract from the pathos of the picture afforded by the colonel assisting him to move about. He laughed at his own childish helplessness in the matter of cutting up his food, and audaciously handed his plate to Lena for assistance. Altogether he was the most unsatisfactory convalescent imaginable, except that he made visible and rapid strides toward health. There was no demand for lowered tones and noiseless movements in his presence. Inquiries after his welfare were treated jocosely, and unless the medicine was administered with severity and regularity, he was only too ready to forget all about it.

CHAPTER XXXV. The Two Lone Ones.

A few days after Winyard Mistle's return to London, his brother Charlie went to Devonport. From there he wrote that he had been offered the White Swallow, a gunboat, destined for service in the Pacific Ocean. "Of course I have accepted," he wrote; and gave no particulars as to when the White Swallow was likely to sail, and of what duration her absence from England would probably be. "With all his assumed laziness," observed the colonel gravely, "Charlie will push his way upward through the truck. He is a fine sailor, I am sure." That same afternoon Mrs. Mistle and Mrs. Wright went out together. In order, they said, to have a quiet afternoon's shopping, as there were many things to be purchased and sent on to Broomhaugh. The mother and son had been nearly a week in Seymour street, and there was now nothing to delay their departure for the North. The colonel, being left in charge of the invalid, proposed a drive in the park, as the air was lovely and the sun not too warm. But Winyard languidly expressed a fear that he was not quite up to it, innocently ignoring the fact that he had walked downstairs alone that morning. Then he lay back on his sofa and gently closed his eyes, as if composing himself to peaceful slumber. Presently the colonel left the room, treading noiselessly so as to avoid waking the sleeper. Shortly afterward the street door closed with a smothered bang. Lena was seated on a low chair near the window, the regular click of her needle acting as a lullaby to the sufferer. Soon, however, Winyard slowly unclosed one eye, then the other. The click of the needle continued. He turned slightly, and lay there watching her. He could scarcely have wished for a pleasanter picture to look upon than that fair English maiden, sitting with daintily bowed head and busy fingers—"on duty," as it were—quietly fulfilling her woman's mission. Like his brother, he noticed that Lena was no longer the thoughtless, merry girl whom he knew two years before. The same brave cheeriness was there, but it was less liable to the influence of circumstances; the same healthy power of enjoyment, but it was tempered by a greater thoughtfulness. Something in the curve of her closed lip, something perhaps in a newly acquired droop of the eyelids, reminded him of the

bravest woman he had ever known; of one who, widowed, and the mother of wandering sons, had yet made her life a bright one, and by seeking to make others happy had acquired the habit of happiness herself. What pen could hope to follow the thoughts passing through a man's brain? Winyard Mistle lay watching Lena for about five minutes, but five pages of mine could not tell a tithe of what was passing in his mind. Presently he rose gravely from the sofa, and stood for a moment by the mantle-piece, supporting himself with both hands. His back was turned toward Lena, and on the lean brown face reflected in the mirror—at which, however, he never glanced—there was a strange, restless expression. Contrary to her custom, Lena failed to look up. She did not even ask him if there was anything he might require. Then he slowly turned and made his laborious way across the room, assisting himself with one piece of furniture after another. Somehow she forgot to offer him her help; somehow he had no little pleasure in making her smile, and yet neither seemed to notice the difference. She continued her work—the stitches were unpicked later on, being of very peculiar construction—and Mistle stood close at hand, looking down upon her bent head. There was an humble chair at her side, and into this she lowered herself cautiously, after the manner of an old man. "Lena," he said, turning towards her with a hungry look in his eyes—"Lena, do you think that a man can be sure of his own mind if the same thought has never left it for nearly two years?" She bowed her head lower over her work, still striving to make the needle perform its right and proper function, but answered him no word. He leaned forward and took the work from her hands, allowing it to fall to the ground. Then he quietly took possession of those busy fingers. "Answer me," he whispered—"answer me!" "Yes, I think so," she replied at length. "Through it all," he said eagerly, "through danger and hope, through work, through sleep, through hunger, sickness and success, there has been one thought in my brain. That thought was Lena—Lena—Lena!" Still bending over her imprisoned hands, she swayed unconsciously toward him. Then, somehow, he and his arms were round her, though he had no recollection of placing them there. Three weeks later, one afternoon as the sun began to throw a golden ray from west to east, up the English Channel, a gunboat moved out into Plymouth Sound, and cast her anchor there. The White Swallow was ready for sea—"ready for anything," her young commander said. Deeply laden with coal for her long voyage, she was as taut and trim and sparkling as paint and polished brass could make her. Already the strong individuality of the stalwart ruler was beginning to make itself discernible among the members of her company. The White Swallow was eminently a "quiet" ship. There was no shouting, no unnecessary blowing of boatswain's whistles. Everything seemed to fit into its place—every man into his duties. And yet she was not a gloomy ship, for every man looked forward to his six years' absence with serenity. About an hour before she was due to sail a boat put off from the dockyard, and in a few minutes was alongside the gunboat. Seated in the stern of this small craft was Laurance Lowe. He climbed up the white ladder, and made his way aft with slow but assured steps. Charles Mistle came forward to meet him, and they turned toward the quarter-deck together. "It is very good of you to come," said the young sailor. The old man did not appear to consider that this required an answer. He looked around him critically with a practiced eye. It was not the first time that he had trodden the deck of a man-of-war, though his recollection of such dated back to the days of the Crimea. He loosened the old silk comforter that took the place of a top-coat on his spare frame, and said: "You are ready?" "Yes; we sail in half an hour." The young sailor looked across the smooth water to where the land rose gently, green and tree-clad, toward the blue heights of Dartmoor. There was no shadow of fear in his clear eyes, no sign of flinching from the dreary years he knew he was facing. And thus they stood side by side, the old man whose voyage across the troubled sea was nearly over—he had made bad weather of it, beating up against a head wind all the way—and the young sailor—tall, stalwart, and almost painfully self-contained—who, like his companion, had met the stress at the very beginning of his journey. They talked a little in their usual scrappy, unsatisfactory manner, and then Laurance Lowe beckoned to his boatman to haul up to the ladder. He turned, and looked round the vessel once more; then he raised his solemn eyes to his companion's face. They were unusually wide open, and Charlie noted the pale blue-ness of the iris as he returned their gaze. "I suppose," said the old man, slowly—"I suppose"—and with a wave of his lean hand he designated

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The belief that the hours of sleep should be artificially restricted is prevalent. Yet it is contrary to ordinary good sense. If the human body does not need sleep for the rebuilding of its tissues it will not call for it. A rule of health which cannot be wrong is to sleep, if possible, as long as any inclination for it exists. The erroneous view on this subject is undoubtedly due to the fact that when the mind and body are thoroughly rested it is often difficult to arouse the mind from its comfortable lethargy. On the other hand, the man who is under a mental strain and sleeps only five or six hours at night is keen and alert soon after awakening. But it is an unhealthy activity. His nerves are at a high tension. He is on edge, so to speak. Such a strain, long continued, results inevitably in a nervous breakdown.—Cleveland Leader.

Half Truths.

A small brain that works is of more use than a massive intellect that balks. Rest assured that most of your stray ideas have come over a neighbor's fence. A naked truth offends the most sacred prejudices of society. The domestic service problem is the pig in the clover problem—first to get the domestics into the circle, then to keep them there. The family is a despotism governed by the meanest member. It is not the strongest, but the worst-tempered, who rules.—Louise Herrick Wall. "In Lighter Vein" in the Century.

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HOW TO SAVE OTHERS.

Because He loved He gave Himself for love of us! Who would another save? Must give his heart's love thus: The worthiest gift must always wait Till love unlock the golden gate. Some gifts are only alms That have no love behind; In them there are no palms To heal the troubled mind; Who gives them has no joy nor pain; Who takes them has but little gain. But he gives more than gold Who gives, who gives, who gives; Riches of worth untold; Who gives the low and trust; Giving himself, he cannot live, Unless his heart and hands may give. So learn thou to bestow From the great Giver Christ; Love's gifts will freely flow When the heart keeps his trust; And no one else can count the cost; Who would lead life in love, let—Marianne Farmington, in London S. S. Times.

Her One Talent.

Margaret Sangster tells of a woman, an neither young, not beautiful, nor robust, nor accomplished, nor educated, who became a bride. She realized that she was extremely unlike her brilliant husband. "I have not even one talent to fold away in a napkin," she said. But the husband loved her, and she loved him, and would, please God, make him happy. "There is one comfort—I can keep house," she said. So she planned the delicate, dainty, healthful meals, and kept the home clean, but not forbiddingly spotless. It invited the tired husband to rest, to litter it with books and papers, if it pleased him to bring work home from the office, while she sat beside him ready to smile or speak as he looked up. The husband said one day: "There is one talent you have, Margie, by the way of the world, the talent of having time enough for anything." His home was a suburb of paradise, and he went forth to the competitions of life steadily successful in all his enterprises. And the quiet wife, who had time to love him, to share his hopes, listen to his plans, and make him personally happy, and give him a element in his success, which counted more largely than even the husband knew.

It is rare to find in this hurrying world a being who works with an air of repose; who can pause to listen to another's story; who has a heart touched to so responsive a key that sympathy in a friend's good fortune is as ready as pity for a friend's calamity. This woman, who had the one talent of doing fully and blithely every home obligation, by degrees became a social power. A large class of girls each Sabbath bent eagerly around her while she unfolded the lesson to them, and upon stated occasions she entertains the poor, pale, fagged-out girls of the downtown factories, and keeps them by kindly word and helpful ministry and a Christian example, from places of temptation; for she believes it is as much a Christian work to keep young girls pure as to save the poor remnant of their ruined lives after they have fallen. The wife of a man who has the one talent of doing fully and blithely every home obligation, by degrees became a social power. 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