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SELECTED STORY.

From Godley's Lady's Book.

ALICE WARD; OR HE'S COMING.

BY PAULINE FORSYTH.

At twenty-one, George Mowbray found himself not only "lord of himself," but of a handsome fortune, which, by the early death of his parents, had been accumulating for several years. Some business connected with his property called him to a small town in the southwest of England, and detained him there for two or three months. Finding but little congenial society in the place, and being fond of an outdoor life, he spent most of his time in rambling about the picturesque country around. There was one spot in particular to which he frequently turned his steps, attracted by its wild beauty and perfect solitude. By the side of a stream, overhung with willows and other trees, and from whose banks on either side the ground rose in abrupt and rugged, though not lofty, precipices, there was a large rock, in which a couch as comfortable as a bed of stone could be had, been scooped out by some fantastic freak of nature. The upper part of the rock projected, so that the occupant of the couch was not only protected from the rays of the sun, but effectually concealed from the curiosity of those on the bank above.

Here George Mowbray would come, with his fishing-rod and line, and with a volume of poetry in his pocket, and while away a long summer's day; reading aloud, when he was tired of his sport, and making the air vocal with thoughts or feelings, soft, lofty, or impassioned, as the fancy of the moment demanded. Sometimes a few sandwiches, that he brought with him, sufficed for his noonday meal; but often his appetite demanded the more substantial refreshment he could obtain at a country inn, some two miles off.

Occasionally he would compose verses himself, for he was in the very heyday of life and feeling; and he loved to lie and chat them to the soft summer breezes, where from all unsympathetic listeners. He had a peculiar turn for improvising, and would sometimes amuse himself for hours with his attempts at impromptu versification, turning into rhyme not only his own feelings and thoughts, but incidents and stories that had an impression upon him. The burden of most of his songs was love, and the object of them a certain Margaret, who figured in various ballads, sonnets, lyrical pieces, and even arias; for so low did Mr. Mowbray stoop, under a variety of names, from the stately Margaret through the simple Maggie and frolicsome Madge, down to the pet name of Daisy, which seemed to be his favorite.

By the confidential and touching relations thus made to the regardless earth, air, and water around, it appeared that, true as Mr. Mowbray asserted his love to be, it had so far run very smoothly along its course. Margaret had smiled upon him, friends had been propitious, and, if no disaster intervened, which he implored fate in a most pathetic manner to avert, a few months would witness the fulfillment of his wishes. The thought struck him one day that a poem somewhat after the style of "The King's Quair" might be made, describing his first meeting and subsequent love for his "elected one." He was engaged upon this for several days, and was reading it for about the twentieth and last time, when he was interrupted by a stifled shriek. At the same time, something fell from the rock over his head into the swiftly flowing stream beneath him.

He involuntarily stretched out his hand to grasp the object, and succeeded in breaking its fall somewhat. He pulled it quickly from the water, and a little girl, pale and trembling, with curls dripping and matted around her face, stood before him, gazing upon him with widely open blue eyes, from which all expression but that of terror had fled.

"Please don't tell," said she at last, in a tone of the most urgent entreaty.

"Are you hurt?" asked Mr. Mowbray, taking no notice of her request.

"No; but don't tell any one."

"Why, whom should I tell? What is your name?"

"Kitty Jones."

"Well, Kitty, how did you happen to fall into the water in such a surprising way?"

The child began to cry; but Mr. Mowbray had a gentle, encouraging manner, and he gradually soothed her and induced her to answer his questions. Her replies were given timidly and reluctantly; but from them he gathered that she had been in the habit, for some time of watching for him, and, as soon as she heard his voice in reading or recitation, of creeping close to the edge of the overhanging rock, where, sheltered by the bushes and brambles around, she could hear him while herself perfectly concealed. She had been so much interested by the story he was telling about the pretty lady, she said, that she leaned far over the rock to watch him while he told it, and so lost her balance.

Mr. Mowbray felt a great many twinges on hearing that his wild flights of fancy had had such an unwearied auditor. He was glad that she was a simple, ignorant child, as yet incapable of ridicule or criticism; on the contrary, Kitty evidently looked upon him as a superior being. Her reiterated entreaties that he would not tell led to other inquiries, during which Mr. Mowbray learned that she lived in a lonely place about half a mile from there, with a man and a woman whom she called uncle and aunt—Mr. Davis and his wife. Mr. Mowbray had

met Mr. Davis, or "old Andrew," as he was generally called, in his fishing excursions, and had learned that he was a person of doubtful character, who had moved into the country within the last five years; and, as he was rarely known to work, and had no ostensible means of support, he was generally suspected of maintaining himself by unlawful means. Most of the petty robberies and thefts of the country around were ascribed to him, and he was a general object of terror to all the children about.

Mr. Mowbray did not wonder that the slender, delicate little girl who stood trembling before him should dread that old Andrew or his surly wife should know of her adventure, especially as she told him that they had forbidden her to go beyond certain limits, or to hold converse in any way with any person. If she were over addressed, she was not to reply, but to hasten home under the penalty of a severe beating. And, by her shivering terror as she told this, it was evident that a beating was not an unknown horror to her.

He promised her that he would not reveal her involuntary visit to him, but urged her to turn home and change her wet frock. She returned away with meek acquiescence; and, unable to continue his poem just then, Mr. Mowbray took up his fishing rod. Two hours after, on his way home, turning suddenly round a projection of the bank, Mr. Mowbray came again upon Kitty. She was sitting in the sun, trying evidently to remove all traces of her late adventure from her clothes. His compassion was aroused by her uncomplaining patience and suffering.

He extorted from her the further confession that she was afraid to go home till night; that her aunt often beat her for nothing, and would certainly not allow a wet frock to go un punished; that she had had no dinner; that she often had none. She ended by saying that she was not at all hungry, which was contradicted by the evident satisfaction with which she received the few sandwiches Mr. Mowbray had given her.

"You say you like to hear me read, Kitty?" asked he.

"Very much. Better than anything in the world."

"Then you can come every morning while I am here and listen to me. You look like a very quiet little girl," said Mr. Mowbray, for his pity was of an active, not a passive kind.

Kitty's eye brightened.

"But if Aunt Phebe should find it out?" said she, with a sudden misgiving.

"Oh, I'll take care of your aunt Phebe. She shall not be angry with you. I have a charm in my pocket that will make her quite amiable. I have never known it fail with any aunt Phebe yet."

Kitty evidently did not understand him.

"If I can come, I will," said she; "but you will not tell?"

"Oh, no, of course not." And Mr. Mowbray went lightly on his way.

For the next three weeks, Mr. Mowbray went regularly to the same spot, where he was sure to find the child watching for him. There was something painfully touching in the sad, wistful little face, over which a smile seldom fitted. She had a staid, quiet, old-womanish way that amused Mr. Mowbray, and he was especially pleased by a certain supervision that, with all her shyness, she assumed over him, watching that he did not go too near the water, or wet his feet, or allow the sun to shine upon his uncovered head, or leave his books and papers behind him, and especially that he should take his full share of the substantial lunch he was careful to bring with him. On all these points she had a positive, decided way of expressing herself that admitted of no debate.

Often Mr. Mowbray would leave his little companion for a solitary ramble; but, on his return, he never failed to see her straining her blue eyes to catch the first glimpse of him. This went on for three weeks; and, suddenly, she disappeared, and Mr. Mowbray looked for her in vain. The idea occurred to him that she might be ill, and he resolved to make some inquiries after her, for she had interested him exceedingly. He soon found Mrs. Davis's dwelling, a dilapidated cottage, and, when the woman herself came to the door in answer to his knock, he did not wonder that Kitty stood in such mortal dread of her, for he had seldom seen a person with a more repulsive countenance. Her manners, too, were very forbidding; and, when she discovered the object of his visit, she almost closed the door in his face, saying, as she walked abruptly away, that "the girl was very well, and that she needed no assistance in taking care of her." As Mr. Mowbray turned to depart, after his repulse, the woman thrust her head out of an open window to say that "the idle good-for-nothing was playing somewhere among the trees near."

That this was not true, Mr. Mowbray convinced himself by a close search. Besides, he was morally certain that, if Kitty had been at liberty, she would not have left him so unceremoniously. Before this, he had had some vague plans for making the child's position a pleasanter one, by proposing to send her, at his own expense, to the village school or something of that sort; but now, stimulated by this opposition, he determined not to leave the village in which he was until he had penetrated the mystery with regard to Kitty's movements.

Not having seen anything of her for a week, Mr. Mowbray sought old Andrew's cottage. Receiving no answer to his knock for admission, he pushed open the door which stood a little ajar, and entered the kitchen; there was no person

to be seen. He called loudly for Kitty, and at last distinguished a faint sound in reply.— Guided by this, he found his way to the cellar, which was bolted on the outside. He opened the door, and the little pale face of Kitty was lifted up towards his out of the darkness.

Mr. Mowbray could not induce her to venture out of her dungeon. She was in too great terror of Aunt Phebe to take such a step. But he learned that their meetings had been discovered; that for ten days Kitty had been confined in that miserable place, from which she was not to be released until his departure. Many other things the little girl told him of the severity with which she was treated, begging him all the while to go away, for they had threatened to kill her if she spoke with him again.

At last he yielded to her request, and, drawing the bolt and closing the outer door, so that Mrs. Davis might not suspect his visit, he returned to the village. But it was only to consult the proper authorities about the legal means of rescuing the child from the hands of such miscreants. He had great difficulty in doing this, for Andrew Davis and his wife resisted with the most unaccountable obstinacy the attempts that were made to relieve them from the charge of the little girl, to whom they acted so barbarously. First they claimed a right to her as their niece. But it was proved that Mrs. Davis had several times denied their relationship with the utmost bitterness. Then they brought forward an indenture by which Kitty Jones was legally bound to them until she was eighteen. It was decided that, by their cruelty, they had forfeited all claim upon her in that way; and at last Mr. Mowbray, having justice, mercy, and a heavy purse on his side, gained his point, and the little girl was given up to his charge, as, in order to hasten the course of justice, he had promised that he would be answerable that she should not come upon the parish.

He was not quite in such a dilemma at this stage of the proceedings as the man who won the elephant in a raffle; but he was very much perplexed to know what he should do with the child. His own wishes would have prompted him to have her brought up as a lady, for which sphere he could not help fancying she had a natural adaptation; but he recalled a sage maxim that he had heard often repeated by some whom he respected as older and wiser than himself, to the effect that "it was a very unwise thing to raise any one above the position to which they were by birth entitled." He had often been accused of being enthusiastic and injudicious when his feelings were interested.— He determined now to show himself very discreet, indeed. She had been evidently indentured as a servant; she should be trained for one. So Mr. Mowbray placed her under the care of a respectable but poor widow, who promised to be very kind to her, and bring her up carefully for her destined position; a small yearly allowance from Mr. Mowbray more than repaying her for her trouble.

Pleased with having settled matters so well, he took leave of Kitty, resolving with great difficulty her earnest pleading to be allowed to go with him. Apart from her love for him, which had become very strong, she had a constant dread of falling again into the hands of old Andrew and his wife, and no arrangements could convince her of the folly of her fears. It was with the submission of despair that she at last unclasped her slender fingers from his arm and allowed him to depart.

Four months had passed away, and Mr. Mowbray's wedding-day was now but six weeks off. He was in the midst of preparations for that event, and for the long tour that was to follow it, when he received the intelligence that Kitty had disappeared. As Mr. Davis and his wife had left the country at the same time, there was little doubt but that the child was again in their possession. For a few days, Mr. Mowbray contented himself with writing letters and offering a large reward for Kitty's recovery; but, these producing no effect, he resolved to carry on the search himself. For he was a man of a most persevering nature. He had seldom been known to give up or to fail in an undertaking.

Mr. Mowbray was then in London, where Margaret Ward, the lady to whom he was engaged, resided. After a consultation with her, in which she promised to find a home for Kitty, if he should recover her, he set out upon his search. On arriving at the village where she had left Kitty, he found the people generally interested in recovering the child, but quite at a loss as to the course he should pursue. Each one had a suggestion to make or a plan to propose, but none could give him the least clue that would be of any real assistance to him. He was obliged to rely entirely on his own sagacity, and the indications by which he was guided were so faint and doubtful, that he hardly knew himself whether they were not the creations of his wishes and imagination rather than the work of reality.

After wandering a day or two among the hills and valleys of Wales, he came upon the little girl suddenly, more by chance it seemed than by his own good judgment. He did not recognize her at first, for her curls had been cut off, her fair skin stained brown, and her dress changed; but her delight, almost painful in its silent intensity, and her large blue eyes, soon convinced him that she was the child for whom he was seeking. Within an hour they were on their way to London. As soon as they arrived there, before going to his own residence, Mr. Mowbray sought Miss Ward and placed Kitty in her charge. It was well he did this; for, rapidly as they had come to London, old Andrew was there before them, and Mr. Mowbray, as he

alighted at his own door, saw the old man loitering near, trying to conceal himself from observation as he watched eagerly, evidently expecting to see another person follow Mr. Mowbray.

Feeling sure that such conduct could only be prompted by some reason as strong as it was mysterious, Mr. Mowbray resolved to proceed with the utmost caution. His prudent resolve to bring Kitty up for service was laid aside; he decided, and Margaret agreed with him, that she was too gentle and delicate for such a life. There was something exquisitely winning and confiding in her manner, a singular degree of natural refinement about her that interested every one, while the sad dejection that was evident in her countenance awoke pity. Miss Ward adopted her at once as a sister, changed her name to Alice Ward, and was at great pains to find a boarding-school where she would be safe and happy and well-taught.

One comprising all these advantages was at last discovered. It was in the country, at some distance from London; and there Alice was sent, under the charge of a lawyer, a relation of Margaret's, as Mr. Mowbray, perceived that he was closely watched, thought it better not to appear in the matter. It would have been hard even for old Andrew to recognize in the well-dressed little girl, who called Mr. Ward uncle, and whom he called Alice, the ragged and half-starved Kitty Jones.

Immediately after his marriage, Mr. Mowbray left for Italy, intending to spend the winter there on account of his wife's health, which had long been delicate. He remained there for eight years, all his intercourse with his *protégée* being carried on by letters, which were regularly exchanged four times a year. During the second year of his residence in Italy, his wife died. His grief for her loss was very great. He could not resolve to leave a spot endeared to him by so many associations. Besides, a real and strong love for art rendered Italy full of interest to him. Although his wealth precluded all necessity for exertion, he had a studio where he worked as earnestly as though his livelihood depended upon it. This occupation, which he had first taken up as one means of preventing his mind from dwelling with morbid intensity upon his loss, became at last a source of great intellectual enjoyment to him, and he was thought to display no mean genius in the art he had chosen.

At the end of eight years, he was recalled to England by the loss of nearly all his fortune. The same mail that brought the intelligence of that disaster also brought to him a letter from Alice. She reminded him that she was now nearly nineteen, and, thanking him for all that he had done for her, said that she needed no longer to be a burden upon him, and only waited his permission to accept the proposal that had been made to her of becoming a teacher in the school in which she had passed so long a time. She did not allude to his pecuniary misfortune, though she was evidently aware of it. Mr. Mowbray was pleased by her letter, but delayed answering it until he saw her in person.

His first visit, after an interview with his lawyer, immediately on his arrival in London, was to the secluded village in which Alice had been placed. He could hardly realize that the pretty graceful girl, with manners at once simple yet agreeable, was the poor child who had formerly awakened his compassion. The tie that united them was a strong and peculiar one. He was the only living being on whom Alice could feel that she had the slightest claim, and consequently her affection for him had in it a kind of devotion and of intensity that made it akin to love. On his side he was almost equally alone. He had no near relatives, and the interest of his more distant connections had been cooled by his long absence. He found his friends scattered, and all his social ties loosened or broken. It was refreshing to have one to turn to whose trust in him almost amounted to reverence, and who gave him the sympathy and affection which are so necessary to the happiness of most persons.

The result was what might have been anticipated, when an unfettered gentleman of twenty-nine and a lady some ten years younger are thus brought together. Six months after his arrival in England, Mr. Mowbray and Alice Ward were married. One of the few things that still remained from his former large fortune was a cottage, with a few acres of ground around it, in a town in the North of England. There he carried his wife and established himself, intending to add to their very small income by the practice of the only profession for which his previous life fitted him, that of an artist.

He succeeded in this beyond his expectations, owing, in a great measure, to his unremitting industry. After painting all the morning, he would spend the afternoon in rambling over the adjoining country, sketching whatever struck his eye or his fancy. On his return from these excursions, he was always sure to find his wife awaiting him, either at the window or in the porch, or when the weather would permit, by the cottage door or gate, her sweet, thoughtful face lighted up by the smile of welcome as she perceived him in the distance. After a while, an infant came to cheer the lonely hours of her husband's absence; and Alice, as she watched its daily growth in strength and beauty, wondered if in all England a woman could be found happier than herself.

There was an old mansion, somewhat dilapidated, but still grand and picturesque, about five miles from Mr. Mowbray's home, towards which he often directed his steps. The peculiar beauty

of the building and of the grounds surrounding it, in which neither woods, hills, streams, nor waterfalls were wanting, afforded an infinite and always pleasing variety of landscape. He learned that the property had long been held by a family of the name of Lenthal, but that, by the marriage of the heiress, it had passed into the possession of a Colonel Fairchild, who, on being left a widower, went to London, where for many years he was known as one of the most fashionable and dissipated men about town. Mr. Mowbray remembered distinctly having met him during his own short stay in London, and being struck with his great personal beauty, and fascinated by his peculiar charm of manner. About five years after that meeting, a severe and incurable illness had put a sudden stop to Colonel Fairchild's gaiety, and he had retreated to the country, where, weakened in body and mind, he was said to be under the entire control of his housekeeper, a Mrs. Daniels. She had dismissed all the other servants but one, and often, for weeks together, would allow no one but herself or her son, not even the physician, to approach the sick man.

Mr. Mowbray had been informed that, in the picture-gallery of the old mansion, there were some fine paintings, undoubted originals from the best masters, and he had a great desire to see them. By all that he had heard, he knew that it was in vain to apply to Mrs. Daniels for permission to examine them; but he was certain, from the slight acquaintance he had had with Colonel Fairchild, that his great courtesy would induce him to grant so slight a request, if it could be conveyed to him. After waiting for some months for an opportunity to prefer his petition in the absence of the female Cerberus, Mr. Mowbray had the satisfaction of catching a glimpse of Mrs. Daniels seated in a chaise driven by her son in the direction of the village. He was at that time sketching a waterfall near the road, but hidden from it by a grove of trees. He lost no time in approaching the house.

A stupid country girl answered his summons, who at first refused positively to allow him to enter, but softened somewhat when a crown was slipped into her hand, and at last consented to take his card up to her master. The bit of paper could do no harm, she said, but she jealously shut the door in his face when she left him.— She soon returned and asked him to follow her, saying—

"The master be in a terrible way," and before Mr. Mowbray had time to question her as to her meaning, she ushered him into the presence of the invalid.

Mr. Mowbray saw before him a pale, emaciated, shrunken man, with no trace about him of the once splendidly handsome Colonel Fairchild, but two brilliant eyes, which flashed and rolled with something of the uncertain glare of insanity. "Be seated, sir," said he abruptly, yet with a little of his old grace, while his fingers played nervously with the card that had just been sent up. "Excuse me, but I have no time for ceremony. I have long been desiring a personal interview with you; but your letters have never given me a hope of seeing you here. If I were not the miserable helpless wretch you see, I should have sought you myself long ago."

"I beg your pardon, but I have received no letters from you."

"Your name is George Mowbray?"

"Yes."

"You are the gentleman who once passed a summer in the south of England, and obtained possession of a little girl named Kitty Jones, are you not?"

"Yes."

"You have resided principally in Rome?"

Mr. Mowbray bowed.

"Within the last four years, I have written no less than twenty letters to you there," continued Colonel Fairchild, "to most of which I have received answers. Here they are," and he drew from a writing-desk near him a bundle of letters, which he handed to Mr. Mowbray.

"These were not written by me," said Mr. Mowbray, examining them. "Some of them, I see, are dated within the last two years, from Rome, but since that time I have been living in this country."

"I suspected as much," said Colonel Fairchild. "Will you tell me if Kitty Jones is still living? These letters assert and offer to prove her death."

"That is as untrue as their signature. Kitty Jones is now my wife, Alice Mowbray," and Mr. Mowbray related to his agitated listener the history of the child, from the time he had recovered possession of her, until then. During the narration, Colonel Fairchild gradually recovered his composure. When it was finished, he drew from the desk a number of papers carefully arranged and tied together. These he gave to Mr. Mowbray.

"I have been guilty of a great crime," said he; "for the last four years I have been trying in vain to expiate it. I thank God that I am enabled to succeed in doing justice at last. These papers will explain everything to you. I am glad you have come to relieve me of them, for I have dreaded every day that Mrs. Daniels would find them and destroy them. But yet she seemed so kind and devoted that I felt as though I were doing wrong to suspect her," continued he, mournfully. "She is the one whom you know as Mrs. Davis."

"Is there anything to be done about these papers?" asked Mr. Mowbray, seeing that Colonel Fairchild was sunk in a gloomy reverie.

and any friend of yours as a witness. Insist on being shown to my room, and the rest I can attend to myself."

Mr. Mowbray found his wife sitting in the bright moonlight, with her child asleep on her lap, looking anxiously for him. He was later than usual, and she had begun to feel a little anxiety at his delay.

"I have been hearing something that interested me very much, about a little Kitty Jones that I knew a long time ago," said Mr. Mowbray in answer to her questionings, and he related the incident of the afternoon.

When tea was over, they turned with eager curiosity to the examination of the papers. The first one they opened was written by Colonel Fairchild, and dated a few months before. It gave an account of his marriage with Mrs. Graham, the heiress of the Lenthal property, who was then a widow with one child, a girl of two years old named Catharine; of Mrs. Fairchild's death a few months afterwards, leaving by a will made just before her second marriage, a large annuity to her husband, but the bulk of her property to her child. In case of Catharine's death, it was all to revert to Colonel Fairchild. There was a later will found, but as it was incomplete, it was thrown aside. By this she had reversed the decisions of the former, giving the estate to her husband and the annuity to her child.

Colonel Fairchild persuaded himself that, as this was his wife's real wish, he could not be acting very wrong if he carried it out. Mrs. Graham's wealth had been her chief attraction in his eyes, and to have it taken from him when it was almost in his grasp, was a bitter disappointment. He was ambitious in his own way, fond of pleasure and distinction. To have the means of gratifying himself in these aims withdrawn from him by a little child incapable of appreciating them, was more than he could patiently endure. After contending with these unlawful hopes and wishes for two years, he at last yielded to the temptation when it came, accompanied by a favorable opportunity.

A little girl, daughter of Andrew and Phebe Daniels, was a favorite playmate of Catharine's. One day, when they were both together near the river, Annie Daniels fell in and was drowned. Colonel Fairchild came by as Mr. Daniels and his wife were trying in vain to recover their child. He knew them both well, and, as soon as they would listen to him, he promised them a sum which seemed immense to them, if they would only testify to the death of Catharine at the same time. He knew that they were people to whom money was all powerful as a motive, and he did not judge them hardly. They consented. Catharine was hurried off to their cottage, and kept concealed until they could leave the country. Col. Fairchild detailed minutely all the steps he took to avert suspicion, and said that he succeeded beyond his expectations. The yearly allowance he made to Andrew and his wife was ample to enable them to bring up Catharine in comfort; but he feared, from some circumstances that had lately come to his knowledge, that his wishes in that respect had been disregarded. He told about his efforts to recover the child after Mr. Mowbray had taken possession of her, and said that for four years Mr. and Mrs. Daniels never lost sight for a week at a time of that gentleman, but in vain.

Then this sudden and prostrating illness had fallen upon him. He retired to the country, where he was soon followed by Mrs. Daniels, who, being left a widow, installed herself as his housekeeper and nurse. At the time she did this, Colonel Fairchild wrote that he was too much weakened in mind and body to make any opposition, and she soon gained great control over him, so much so that, having assured him that Catharine was dead, and letters from Mr. Mowbray having confirmed this fact, he had several times been on the point of making a will in favor of Mrs. Daniels and her son. Within the last six months, his mind had recovered somewhat of its former vigor. He recalled various circumstances that made him think that he was about to be made the dupe and victim of the same base love of gold through which he had been led into a similar crime. He wrote this paper, he said, in hopes that if he died without having been able to verify Catharine's death, or to do justice to her if she were still alive, some other person might undertake the office.

"I always knew I should turn out a fortune to you at last," said Alice joyously, when they had finished reading Colonel Fairchild's revelations. "I had dim reminiscences of my early life, so very dim that I did not like to speak of them; but I see now that they were real."

Mrs. Daniels's impotent anger and dismay when she found her plans foiled would be difficult to describe. But Colonel Fairchild's conscience, though late in its awakening, was too thorough in its work to leave her any hope of being able to accomplish her desires. The next day he made, in the presence of Mr. Mowbray and the friend and lawyer who accompanied him, not only a full confession, but an entire restitution of all the property to its legal mistress.

At Alice's earnest request, the real facts in the case were kept secret as far as possible from the world. Colonel Fairchild was left in possession of the Lenthal mansion until his death, which occurred within the year; Mr. Mowbray and Alice meanwhile showing him the kindness and attention of attached children. Mrs. Daniels disappeared with her son from the country, taking with her a large sum of money which she had gradually amassed in her long and wicked service. It was discovered before her departure that she had early recognized Mr. Mowbray as

the one whom she had met under such peculiar circumstances long before, and in his wife her former victim, and therefore had jealously avoided being seen by them. Even after so many years, and under such different circumstances, Alice could not meet her without a shudder, and was greatly relieved at her departure. And though Mr. Mowbray's subsequent life was a highly prosperous and quiet one, she always said her happiest years were the two she spent in the little cottage as the wife of an artist, as yet unknown to fame.

MISCELLANEOUS.

HINTS ABOUT AVOIDING FIRES.

We copy the following judicious remarks on this subject from a late number of the American Agriculturist. They are doubtless from the pen of Orange Judd, a practical chemist and one of the editors of that paper:—

Very many large fires, as well as many severe burns, may be avoided by understanding that air is necessary to produce combustion, and that the exclusion of air is as effectual as an application of water. Indeed, in extinguishing fire, water chiefly acts by shutting out air, and any other means of shutting out the air is just as effectual. We have shown this frequently in lectures on heat, by pouring upon the table a quantity of spirits of turpentine, alcohol, or ether, and when set on fire so as to produce a large flame, we have instantly extinguished it, by quickly spreading over it a silk handkerchief or piece of paper, which for the instant shut out the air.

A week or two since a young lady in Danbury, Ct., upset a campfire lamp, the contents of which spread over her dress and enveloped her in flames, but she seized a blanket from a bed, and immediately wrapped it closely around her, and thus smothered the fire, (shut out the air) and escaped without injury. Five years since we were transferring from one vessel to another, two gallons of mixed sulphuric ether and chloroform—both very inflammable substances, which burn with a great flame—when a person in the room carelessly brought a lighted lamp near, and set the whole on fire. We instantly snatched a table-spread from a table near by, and with this entirely covered the flame and extinguished it. We sacrificed the dishes and food upon the table, but saved the house, perhaps the block of buildings, and perhaps our lives, as a moment's delay would have enveloped the whole room in flames.

Two years since a servant girl, contrary to oft-repeated and positive directions, undertook to fill a fluid lamp while burning, and, as was certain to be the case, the can of liquid took fire, ("no exploded,") and was dropped upon the floor, setting her under garments on fire.—She ran for the door, but another domestic happened to catch hold of her outer clothes in such a way as to draw them closely around her, and thus unwittingly smothered the flame, while a member of the family extinguished the burning lamp, can, and fluid upon the floor by spreading an ironing cloth over it.

Some dozen years since, one of the boys on our farm, was at work in the horse and carriage barn before light one winter morning. When called to breakfast he left the lantern where it was knocked down by one of the horses, and a large mass of straw for bedding was set on fire. When discovered, the whole mass—four or five feet in diameter—was in a flame that nearly reached to the hay hanging down from a mow above, containing several tons. In this case, a horse blanket was at once thrown upon the centre of the flame, and others quickly added, and the fire extinguished without damage, although larger volumes of smoke poured forth from the doors and other openings, and almost prevented any one from entering.

We have known of instances of rooms being found one fire, where by closing them up, the fire has been confined, and kept in a smothered state until sufficient help with abundance of water could be procured to at once extinguish the flames. In a great number of instances, extensive conflagrations could have been avoided, had the fire been kept where it originated till efficient aid arrived. This could have been done by simply closing up the doors and windows, instead of throwing them all wide open, as is usually the case.

We have thus given a few instances, and we might add many others, where serious injury has been averted by applying a simple preventive, that of shutting out the free access of air, which is necessary to feed the flame. Let every person fix it in their minds, and in the minds of every member of their families, old and young, that other means than water may be used to smother fires. Do not teach this by precept only, for in the excitement of a fire mere precepts will be forgotten, but let a few experiments be made before the family to illustrate the principle.

For example, pour upon the hearth—or better, upon a flat stone or board out of doors—a quantity of alcohol, turpentine, burning fluid, oil, ether, or other inflammable substance, set it on fire, and then extinguish it by spreading a cloth quickly over it. Re-light it and extinguish it with a newspaper, and repeat the experiment with a handkerchief, an apron, a dress, a cloak, a table-cloth, bed-quilt, &c. It would also be well to make the experiment with burning shavings, straw, &c. The experiment may be varied by smothering an upright block, barrel, or post with oil, alcohol, or otherwise, and when on fire, extinguish it with a cloth or old garment. Some simple experiments like these are always interesting; they develop thought, and prepare one for acting coolly and effectually in an emergency. They are drilling and unaccustomed soldiers previous to battle.