



CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

The little group about Aube's chair made way at once for the ladies, who were now all smiles, and after a while Aube's court dispersed, leaving the trio alone.

"My darling, you look quite weary," said Madame Saintone, taking Aube's hand.

"Yes," echoed Antoinette, eagerly, "Aube, dear, have some tea or lemonade."

"No, no," she said, smiling gratefully; "I only want to be quiet and look at the beautiful sunset. I ought not to mind, but talking so much tires me. It is ungrateful, for everyone is so kind."

"Of course," said Madame Saintone, and these fashionable young men chatter so much nonsense—so full of flattery, it is wearisome at times. I know poor Antoinette is glad to get away from it all."

Aube smiled at the girl, and wished in her heart she could like her better, and that she did not always think there was something in her companion which recalled her as much as the effusive tenderness of her mother.

"We shall soon be there now, shall we not?" said Aube, after a silence, during which she sat back, gazing wistfully at the sea.

"Yes, to-morrow morning; and then we shall be at home."

"And it is very beautiful, is it not, Madame Saintone?"

"Beautiful beyond description, my dear, very different to Paris. A land of sunshine and flowers and fruit. No cold, dry, chilly skies there."

"Yes, it must be very, very lovely," gazed Aube; and then to herself, "a fit time for the dear mother who is waiting to take me to her heart." And then words came to her lips. These people had seen and known her mother slightly, they had seen her, and she wanted to question them out—her to ask what she was like—out the home to which she was going—hundred things. But there was something about Madame Saintone which kept her from making her the depository of a burning thought which agitated her, the days had glided by during the careful voyage till now, when it was early at an end, she was as ignorant of her mother and her surroundings as ever.

"Yes, my dear, it is beautiful; and, oh, don't think me vain. You will be lighted with my home. You know I love flowers, and my home is a perfect wreath. Ah, my darling, I am so glad at we met as we did. I can never be thankful enough to the Consul for giving me so delightful a charge."

"I ought to be grateful, too, Madame Saintone," said Aube, coloring. "You and Antoinette here have been most kind to me."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Antoinette. "Who did help being kind to you?"

"Ah, who indeed? Aube, my dear, you must make our place your home as much as you can. Our society may be a little dull, but the welcome will be sincere, and Antoinette must play and practice with her."

"Is mamma gone mad?" she thought herself.

"You are too kind to me," said Aube, who felt oppressed by all this. "Of course, I shall come to see you, but after this long parting, my mother will hardly like me to leave her side."

At first, of course, said Madame Saintone. "Ah, look!" she said, "you are having a glorious welcome home. It is as if you were smiling upon your return."

"Yes," said Aube, softly, as she gazed at a strange feeling of awe at the feet of the western sky. "I never saw things so grand as this."

No, my dear, shut up as you have been in convent. And now, look here, I am going to take upon myself to give you a bit of advice. To-morrow morning you meet your mamma. Now I should urge you to look your best and put on your richest dress."

your hands are cold. You are not going to be ill?"

"Oh, no!" said Aube, smiling. "I am a little excited, that is all; it is not natural just as I am about to meet the mother I feel that I have hardly ever seen?"

She kissed Madame Saintone, who embraced her affectionately, and then turned to Antoinette, who kissed her lovingly on either cheek.

"Do have the dress, dear," she said, "I should be so glad to lend it to you."

Aube shook her head, and went to her cabin without another word.

"Nearly now, and I could never have worn it again," said Antoinette in an angry whisper. "It would have been contamination. Mother, you must be mad. What do you mean?"

"Wait and see, my dear," said Madame Saintone, mockingly, "wait and see."

CHAPTER IX.

The French mail steamer did not reach Port au Prince at daybreak next morning, for there was a screw loose in the machinery, with the customary result on board a French vessel. Everybody, from the captain downwards, flew into a state of the most intense excitement, behaving as if it was his bounden duty to hinder everybody else, so that a slight mishap that ought to have been rectified in a couple of hours took five times that time, and it was again evening when they went slowly in.

Fortunately the weather had been glorious, and the delay had been the only trouble with which the passengers had to contend, a delay which told heavily upon Aube, who felt a strange constriction at the heart, and as if the hour of meeting would never come.

As the afternoon came slowly on she had stood beneath the awning watching intently the high ground of the interior of the island gradually assuming form, and looking less like clouds resting on the sea; then forests and valleys began to grow distinct, and beneath the dazzling sunshine in a glowing haze she had realized fully that the place was indeed an Eden set in that wonderfully blue sea.

As of old, during the voyage, she had been surrounded by an eager little throng; but she was so abstracted, so rapt in the sight of her future home, that, one by one, impressed by her silence and the look of excited agony in her face, they had all dropped away. Hence it was that Aube was standing alone beneath the awning, when, some few miles still from the port, whose houses were now distinctly visible, a yacht-like vessel with white sail came skimming alongside, and catching the rope thrown, one of her crew climbed cleverly on board, to be followed by her passenger, a gentleman clothed in white, who after saluting the captain, to whom he seemed well known, went quickly to where the passengers were gathered, and was clasped in Madame Saintone's arms.

"Etienne, my dear boy, once more?" she cried, tragically. "Have you got wet?"

"Only a splash or two," said the young man carelessly. "Well, Tonie," he continued, kissing that young lady with a kind of peck which was coolly received on one cheek, "Paris hasn't done you much good; you look skinnier and yellower than ever."

"And you," retorted the girl with an angry flash of her eyes, "you look—Pah! contemptible!"

"Hush!" said Madame Saintone, sternly. "Etienne, here. To-night, go and see that everything in the cabin is ready for going ashore."

The girl gave her brother a vindictive look, a task which came easy to her, and turned away, while her mother took the newcomer by the arm.

"No, no," she said, in a quick, eager whisper. "Don't smoke now. I want to talk business to you."

"Business, eh?" he retorted. "That means money. Well, it is as scarce as ever."

"Because of your extravagance, sir," said Madame Saintone, bitterly.

"No," he replied with a laugh. "Madame's Paris society fashions. That's the way the money melts, dearest mother."

"I mean her to be your wife, boy," said Madame Saintone, sternly.

"My wife—Mamma's child?"

"The child of your father's old friend and companion. Do you hear me? She has been from a mere infant at a French convent pension, and she is now all that is graceful and beautiful."

"Yes, and her mother is—"

"The woman who has been waiting for her all these years, and amassing money that her daughter might be a lady. Etienne, my son, if you are not blind you will see that here's a prize that will restore us."

"Oh, yes; but the mother!"

"Bah! What is the mother to us? What will she be to such a girl? Can you not see a few yards beyond your nose?"

"Yes, but—"

"Foolish boy! I can manage all that. Trust me."

"Oh, yes; but I should be laughed at by every one I know. Just too, as I am trying hard to come to the front. Mother, I am almost certain to be elected as a deputy."

"And some day you may be President, my boy. But you want more money—to live well, to entertain your friends, dinners, carriages, wines, Etienne."

"Yes, but—"

"You have not seen the lady, boy. What is birth to us here? Who among us could bear an examination?"

"Well, at all events we have no stain of black blood in our veins," said the young man, hotly.

"Indeed!" said his mother, with an imperceptible sneer.

"But, really, mother—"

"You foolish fellow! We are getting close in to the port, and I want to make an impression on her before she meets her mother. I tell you she is heart whole, and so innocent that you, with your handsome face and winning ways, backed up by me, are safe to conquer. Come, now, and I'll introduce you."

"Ah, well," said Saintone, flushing a little with this firing of his natural vanity. "I can see her of course, but I'm not going to bind myself to anything, and so I tell you."

"Come," said his mother, with her eyes half closed and a peculiar look about her thin lips. "Come, Etienne. I know you again as she took his arm. 'I know your nature better than you know it yourself. I was never so blind to all your follies,' she whispered."

"What do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing," she said with a laugh; "perhaps I was thinking of Lily and Euphrosyne, and half-a-dozen others, ending with swarthy Eugénie. But I heard rumors of some one else."

"Oh, nonsense!" he said consciously, as he let his mother lead him toward the awning where one figure draped in soft white stood alone gazing wildly at the port with its crowd of boats and well-thronged wharf.

The figure of the young girl seemed to stand out in a wonderfully statuesque fashion in the glow cast by the sun through the awning. Her back was to the ward them, and Etienne Saintone could only see the soft outlines of a graceful figure, and the great coils of black hair beneath a light straw hat; but the mother smiled slightly as she saw a flash of eagerness in the young man's eyes, and as she said, quietly, "Aube, my darling, let me introduce you to my son," she drew back to watch the result.

Aube turned round dreamily, and met Saintone's eyes, raising her hand to him mechanically.

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

THE PREACHER CHOOSES AN INTERESTING TOPIC.

His Views of the New Woman—Spiritual and Physical Health—A Word for Mothers—Their Influence and Counsel—A Strong Exhortation.

A Word with Women.

Rev. Dr. Talmage took for the subject of last Sunday's sermon "A Word with Women," the text for the occasion being the following letter received by the distinguished preacher:

Reverend Sir—You delivered a discourse in answer to a letter from six young men of Fayette, Ohio, requesting you to preach a sermon on "Advice to Young Men." Are we justified in asking you to preach a sermon on "Advice to Young Women?"

Christ, who took his text from a flock of birds flying overhead, saying, "Behold the fowls of the air," and from the doves in the valley, saying, "Consider the lilies of the field," and from the clucking of a barnyard fowl, saying, "As a hen gathereth her chickens under her wing," and from a crystal of salt picked up by the roadside, saying, "Salt is good," will grant us a blessing, if, instead of taking a text from the Bible, I take for my text this letter from Cincinnati, which is only one of many letters which I have received from young women in New York, New Orleans, San Francisco, London, Edinburgh, and from the ends of the earth, all implying that, having some months ago preached the sermon on "Advice to Young Men," I could not, without neglect of duty, refuse to preach a sermon on "Advice to Young Women."

It is the more important that the pulpit be heard on this subject at this time when we are having such an illimitable discussion about what is called the "new woman," as though some new creature of God had arrived on earth and were about to arrive. One theory is that she will be an athlete and boxer and foot-ball and pugilist and all the rest of it.

Another theory is that she will be a superior ballet dancer, and through improved politics bring the millennium by the evil she will extirpate, and the good she will install. Another theory is that she will adopt masculine attire and make sacred a vulgarism positively horrible. Another theory is that she will be so aesthetic that broom handle and rolling pin and coal scuttle will be pictorialized with tints from soft skies or suggestions of Rembrandt and Raphael.

The New Woman.

Heaven deliver the church and the world from any one of these styles of new woman. She will never come. I have so much faith in the evangelistic triumph and in the progress of all things in the right direction that I prophesy that style of new woman will never arrive. She would hand over this world to diabolism, and from being, as she is now, the mightiest agency for the world's uplifting she would be the mightiest force for its down thrust. I will tell you who the new woman will be. She will be the good woman of all the ages past. Here and there a difference of attire as the temporary custom may command, but the same good, honest, lovely, Christian, all influential being that your mother and mine was.

Of that kind of woman was Christian Eddy, who, talking to a man who was so much of an unbeliever he had named his two children Voltaire and Tom Paine, nevertheless saw him converted, he breaking down with emotion as he said to her: "I cannot stand you. You talk like my mother." And telling the story of his conversion to twenty companions who had been blatant opposers of religion they asked her to come and see them also and tell them of Christ, and four of them were converted, and all the others greatly changed, and the leader of the band, departing for heaven, shouted: "Joyful! Joyful! Joyful!"

If you know any better style of woman than that, where is she? The world cannot improve on that kind. The new woman may have more knowledge, because she will have more books, but she will have no more common sense than that which tried to manage and discipline and educate us and did as well as she could with such unpromising material. She may have more health than the woman of other days, for the sewing machine and the sanitary regulations and added intelligence on the subjects of diet, ventilation and exercise and rescue from many forms of drudgery may allow her more longevity, but she will have the same characteristics which God gave her in paradise, with the exception of the nervous shock and moral jolt of the fall she took that day when not noticing where she stepped she looked up into the branches of the fruit tree.

But I must be specific. This letter before me wants advice to young women.

The First Need.

Advice the first: Get your soul right with God, and you will be in the best attitude for everything that comes. New ways of voyaging by sea, new ways of traveling by land, new ways of thrashing the harvests, new ways of printing books—and the patent office is enough to enchant a man who has mechanical ingenuity and knows a good deal of levers and wheels—and we hardly do anything as it used to be done; invention after invention on top of invention. But in the matter of getting right with God there has not been an invention for 6,000 years. It is on the same line of repentance that David exercised about his sins, and the same old style of prayer that the publican used when he emphasized it by an inward stroke of both hands, and the same faith in Christ that Paul suggested to the jailer the night the penitentiary broke down.

Aye, that is the reason I have more confidence in it. It has been tried by more millions than I dare to state lest I come far short of the brilliant facts. All who through Christ earnestly tried to get right with God are right and always will be right. That gives the young woman who gets that position superiority over all rivalries, all jealousies, all misfortunes, all health failings, all social disasters and all the combined troubles of eight years if she shall live to be an octogenarian. If the world fails to appreciate her, she says, "God loves me, the angels in heaven are in sympathy with me, and I can afford to be patient until the day when the imperial chariot shall wheel by my door to take me up to my coronation." If health goes, she says, "I can endure the present distress, for I am on the way to a climate the first breath of which will make me proof against even the slightest discomfort." If she be jostled with perturbations of social life, she can say, "Well, when I begin my life among the thrones of heaven and the king and queens unto God shall

be my associates, it will not make much difference who on earth forgot me when the invitations to that reception were made out." All right with God, you are all right with everything.

Martin Luther, writing a letter of condolence to one of his friends who had lost his daughter, began by saying, "This is a hard world for girls." It is for those who are dependent upon their own wits and the whims of the world and the preferences of human favor, but those who take the Eternal God for their portion not later than 15 years of age, and that is ten years later than it ought to be, will find that while Martin Luther's letter of condolence was true in regard to many, if not most, with respect to those who have the wisdom and promptitude and the earnestness to get right with God, I declare that this is a good world for girls.

Importance of Physical Health.

Advice the second: Make it a matter of religion to take care of your physical health. I do not wonder that the Greeks deified health and hailed Hygieia as a goddess. I rejoice that there have been so many modes of maintaining and restoring young womanly health invented in our time. They may have been known a long time back, but they have been popularized in our day—lawn tennis, croquet and golf and the bicycle. It always seemed strange and inscrutable that our human race should be so slow of locomotion, when creatures of less importance have powers of velocity, wing of bird or foot of antelope, leaving us far behind, and while it seems so important that we be in many places in a short while we were weighed down with incapacities, and most men, if they run a mile, are exhausted or dead from the exhaustion. It was left until the last decade of the nineteenth century to give the speed which we see whirling through all our cities and along the country roads, and with that speed comes health. The women of the next decade will be healthier than at any time since the world was created, while the invalidism which has so often characterized womanhood will pass over to manhood, which, by its posture on the wheel, is common to a curved spine and cramped chest and a deformity for which another fifty years will not have power to make rescue. Young man, sit up straight when you ride. Darwin says the human race is descended from the monkey, but the bicycle will turn a hundred thousand men of the present generation in physical condition from man to monkey. For good womanhood, I thank God that this mode of recreation has been invented. Use it wisely, modestly, Christianly. No good woman needs to be told what attire is proper and what behavior is right. If anything be doubtful, reject it. A hoydenish, boisterous, masculine woman is the detestation of all, and every revolution of the wheel she rides is toward depreciation and downfall. Take care of your health, O woman; for of your nerves in not reading the trash which makes up ninety-nine out of one hundred novels, or by eating too many cornucopias of confectionery. Take care of your eyes by not reading at hours when you ought to be sleeping. Take care of your ears by stopping them against the tides of gossip that surge through every neighborhood.

Health. Only those know its value who have lost it. The earth is girdled with pain, and a vast proportion of it is the price paid for early recklessness. I close this, though, with the salutation in Macbeth:

"Now good digestion wait on appetite And health on both."

A Word for Mothers.

Advice the third: Appreciate your mother while you have her. It is the almost universal testimony of young women who have lost mother that they did not realize what she was to them until after her exit from this life. Indeed, mother is in the appreciation of many a young lady a hindrance. The maternal inspection is often considered an obstacle. Mother has so many notions about that which is proper and that which is improper. It is astounding how much more many girls know at 18 than their mothers at 45.

With what an elaborate argument, perhaps spiced with some temper, the young ladies try to reverse the opinion of the oldling. The springing of gray on the maternal forehead is rather an indication to the recent graduate of the female seminary that the circumstances of to-day might not be not fully appreciated.

What a wise boarding school that would be if the mothers were the pupils and the daughters the teachers! How well the teens could chaperon the fifties! Then mothers do not amount to much, anyhow. They are in the way and are always asking questions about postage marks of letters and asking, "Who is that Mary D.?" and "Where did you get that ring, Flora?" and "Where did you get that ring, Myra?" For mothers have such unprecedented means of knowing everything. They say "it was a bird in the air" that told them. Alas, for that bird in the air! Will not some one lift his gun and shoot it? It would take whole libraries to hold the wisdom which the daughter knows more than her mother. "Why cannot I have this?" "Why cannot I do that?"

And the question in many a group has been, although not plainly stated: "What shall we do with the mothers, anyhow? They are so far behind the times." Permit me to suggest that if the mother had given more time to looking after herself and less time to looking after you she would have been as fully up to date as you in music, in style of gait, in aesthetic taste and in all sorts of information. I expect that while you were studying botany and chemistry and embroidery and the new opera she was studying household economics. But one day, from overwork, or sitting up of nights with a neighbor's sick child, or a blast of the east wind, on which pneumonias are hoisted, mother is sick. Yet the family think she will soon be well, for she has been sick so often and always has got well, and the physician comes three times a day, and there is a consultation of the doctors, and the news is gradually broken—that recovery is impossible, given in the words, "While there is life there is hope." And the white pillow over which are strewn the locks a little tinted with snow becomes the point around which all the family gather, some standing, some kneeling, and the pulse beats the last throb, and the bosom trembles with the last breath, and the question is asked in a whisper by all the group, "Is she gone?" And all is over.

Maternal Supervision.

Now come the regrets. Now the daughter reviews her former criticism of maternal supervision. For the first time she realizes what it is to have a mother and what it is to lose a mother. Tell me, men and women, young and old, did any of us appreciate how much mother was to us until she was gone? Young woman, you will probably never have a more disinterested friend than your mother. When she says anything is unsafe or imprudent, you had better believe it is unsafe or imprudent. When she declares it is something

you ought to do, I think you had better do it. She has seen more of the world than you have. Do you think she could have any mercenary or contemptible motive in what she advises you? She would give her life for you if it were called for. Do you know of any one else who would do more than that for you? Do you know of any one who would do as much? Again and again she has already endangered that life during six weeks of diphtheria or scarlet fever, and she never once brought up the question of whether she had better stay, breathing day and night the contagion.

The graveyards are full of mothers who died taking care of their children. Better appreciate your mother before your appreciation of her will be no kindness to her, and the post mortem regrets will be more and more of an agony as the years pass on. Big headstones of polished Aberdeen and the best epitaphs which the family put together could compose and a garland of whitest roses from the conservatory are often the attempt to atone for the thanks we ought to have uttered in living ears and the kind words that would have done more good than all the calla lilies ever piled up on the silent mounds of the cemeteries. The world makes apologetic ad over the work of mothers who have raised boys to be great men, and I could turn to my bookshelves and find the names of fifty distinguished men who had great mothers. St. Bernard's mother, Benjamin West's mother. But who praises mothers for what they do for daughters who make the homes of America? I do not know of an instance of such recognition. I declare to you that I believe I am uttering the first word that has ever been uttered in appreciation of the self denial, of the fatigues and good sense and prayers which those mothers go through who navigate a family of girls from the edge of the cradle to the schoolhouse door and from the schoolhouse door up to the marriage altar. That is an achievement which the eternal God celebrates high up in the heavens, though for it human hands so seldom clap the faintest applause. My! My! What a time that mother had with those youngsters, and if she had relaxed care and work and advice and solicitation of heavenly help that next generation would have landed in the poorhouse, idiot asylum or penitentiary. It is while she is living, but never while she is dead, that some girls call their mother "maternal ancestors" or "the old woman."

Grief and Comfort.

And if you have a grief already—and some of the keenest sorrows of a woman's life come early—roll it over on Christ, and you will find him more sympathetic than was Queen Victoria, when, after her children, the princes and princesses, came out of the school-room after the morning lesson had been given up by their governess and told how her voice had trembled in the morning prayer because it was the anniversary of her mother's death, and that she had put her head down on the desk and sobbed, "Mother! Mother!" the queen went in and said to the governess: "My poor child! I am sorry the children disturbed you this morning. I will hear their lessons to-day, and to show you that I have not forgotten the sad anniversary I bring you this gift." And the queen clasped on the girl's wrist a mourning bracelet with a lock of her mother's hair. All you young women the world around you mourn a like sorrow, and sometimes you burst out crying, "Mother! Mother!" put on your wrist this golden clasp of divine sympathy, "As one whom his mother comforteth so will I comfort you."

Advice the fourth: Allow no time to pass without brightening some one's life. Within five minutes' walk of you there is some one in a tragedy compared with which Shakespeare's King Lear or Victor Hugo's Jean Valjean has no power. Go out and brighten somebody's life with a cheering word or smile or a flower. Take a good book and read a chapter to that blind man. Go up that dark alley and make that invalid woman laugh with some good story. Go to that house from which that child has been taken by death and tell the father and mother what an escape the child has had from the winter of earth into the springtime of heaven. For God's sake make some one happy for ten minutes if for no longer a time.

A young woman bound on such a mission, what might she not accomplish? Oh, there are thousands of these manufacturers of sunshine! They are King's Daughters, whether inside or outside of that delightful organization. They do more good before they are 20 years of age than selfish women who live 80, and they are so happy just because they make others happy. Compare such a young woman who feels she has such a mission with one who lives a round of vanities, carouses in hand, calling on people for whom she does not care, except for some social advantage, and insufferably bored when the call is returned, and trying to look young after she is old, and living a life of insincerity and hollowness and dramatization and show. Young woman, live to make others happy, and you will be happy! Live for yourself, and you will be miserable! There never has been an exception to the rule; there never will be an exception.

Plan Out Your Life.

Advice the fifth: Plan out your life on a big scale, whether you are a farmer's daughter, or a shepherdess among the hills, or the flattered pet of a drawing-room filled with statuary and pictures and bric-a-brac. Stop where you are and make a plan for your lifetime. You cannot be satisfied with a life of feivility and gigue and indirection. Trust the world, and it will cheat you if it does not destroy you. The Redoubtable is the name of an enemy's ship that Lord Nelson spared twice from demoltion, but that same ship afterward sent the ball that killed him, and the world on which you smile may aim at you its deadliest weapon.

Be a God's woman. Draw out and decide what you will be and do; God helping. Write it out in a plain hand. Put the plan on the wall of your room or write it in the opening of a blank book or put it where you will be compelled often to see it. A thousand questions of your coming life you cannot settle now, but there is one question you can settle independent of man, woman, angel and devil, and that is that you will be a God's woman now, henceforth and forever. Clasp hands with the Almighty. Then you can start out on a voyage of life, defying both calm and cyclone, saying, with Dean Alford: "One who has known in storms to sail I have on board; Above the roaring of the gale I hear the Lord."

"He holds me when the billows smile; I shall not fall; If short 'tis sharp, if long 'tis lighter He tempests all."

From the errors of others a wise man corrects his own.