

The IDYL of TWIN FIRES

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CHAPTER XVII—Continued.

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As the busy autumn days came upon us, Twin Fires took on a new aspect, and one to us greenhorns indescribably thrilling. In the first place, our field of corn rustled perpetually as we walked past it, and down in the greenish-golden lanes beneath we could see the orange gleam of pumpkins (I shall so spell the word lest it be mispronounced by the ignorant). Great ears of the Stowell's evergreen were ripe, for Mike's prediction about the early frost had not come true, and we ate the succulent food clean to the cold every day at dinner, besides selling many dozens of ears to the market. In the long light of afternoon, Stella loved to go along the path by the hayfield wall and then turn in amid the corn, losing sight at once of all the universe and wandering in a new world of rustling leaves. She felt, she said, just as Alice must have felt after she had eaten the cake; and once a rabbit bounded across her foot, to her unspeakable delight. She looked to see if he had dropped his gloves!

Then there was the potato field. We were eating our own new potatoes now. Often Stella dug them.

"It seems so funny to go and dig up a potato," she declared. "I've always felt that potatoes just were. But to see the whole process of growth is quite another matter. Oh, John, it makes them so much nicer!"

"Especially when you are getting seventy-five cents a bushel for them," I laughed.

The loaded tomato vines, too, with the red fruit hanging out from the wire frames and sending a pungent odor into the surrounding air, appealed to Stella endlessly. I used to see her now and then, as I glanced from the south room of a morning, eating a raw tomato like an apple, her head bent forward so that the juice would not spoil her dress.

And there were the apples! Already a red astrachan tree invited us on every trip to the brook, and other old trees were bearing fast-redening fruit. I had wanted to set out more orchard, but we agreed that we could not afford it that year, if we were to build chicken houses against the spring, so I reluctantly gave up the idea. But our old trees, in spite of (or perhaps because of) my spring pruning, were doing fairly well. We had enough for baked apples and cream all winter, anyhow, Stella reckoned, smacking her lips at the thought.

Every day, on our way to the pool, one or the other of us took a hoe along and scraped a tree for five minutes, gradually getting the old bark off, and making a final preparation for a thorough spraying the next winter just so much easier. I used to prune a bit, too, in spare moments, so that by the end of the summer considerable renovation had been accomplished.

And now came the foxglove transplanting. According to the gardener's directions, we took two long rows where the early peas had stood (and where Mike had disobeyed my instructions to spade the vines under, that being a form of green manuring your old-time gardener will not see the value of, I have discovered), trenched them, put in manure and soil, and set out at least three hundred foxglove plants six inches apart. It was a cool, cloudy day, and they stood up as though nothing had happened.

Then, as an experiment, we moved scores of tiny hollyhocks from the crowded seedbeds into their permanent position as a screen between the south kitchen windows and the sundial lawn, and as a border on the west side of the same lawn. They, too, were quite unaffected by the change.

Meanwhile, we ordered our bulbs—hyacinths, daffodils (which in our climate refuse to take the winds of March with beauty, cowardly waiting till May), a few crocuses, Narcissus poeticus, Empress narcissus, German iris, Japanese iris and Darwin tulips. We ordered the iris and tulips in named varieties.

"They have such nice names," said Stella, "especially the Japanese iris—Kimi-no-megumi, Shirataki, Momochiguma! The tulips are nice, too. Here is Arildine and Kate Greenaway hobnobbing with Professor Rauwenhoff! What's the use of having plants that aren't named? We must show them as much respect as Antony and Cleopatra, or Epictetus and Luella!"

We also experimented with lilies—lemon lilies for the shady north side of the house, tigers for the border beyond the pool, and two or three of the expensive Myriophyllums, just to show that we, too, could go in for the exotic, like our neighbors on the big estates. When the bulbs came, in October, we looked at the boxes sadly.

"Whew!" said Stella, "you can't be lazy and have a garden, can you?"

"I don't work tomorrow, I guess," said I. "Shall we ask Mike's Joe to help us?"

"Never!" said my wife. "We'll put these bulbs in ourselves. If I had any help, I should feel like the Eckstroms, which God forbid!"

So the next day at seven-thirty we began. We ringed the pool with Ger-

man and Japanese iris, alternated for succession, and planted a few Japanese both below and above the pool, close to the brook. We set the Narcissus poeticus-bulbs where, if they grew, the flowers could look at themselves in the mirror below the dam. The Empress narcissus we placed on both sides of the pool just beyond the iris. On each side of the bench we placed a bulb of our precious Myriophyllums, and put the tigers into the borders close to the shrubbery on both sides. The hyacinths went into the sundial beds, the Darwins into the beds at the base of the rose aqueduct, a few crocuses into the sundial lawn, and the daffodils here and there all over the place, where the fancy struck us and the ground invited.

"Now, I'm going to label everything, and put it on a map besides," cried Stella, "except the daffodils. I want to forget where they are. I want surprises in the spring. Oh, John, do you suppose they'll come up?"

"Yes, I suppose they will," I laughed, "some of them. But do you suppose we'll ever get the kinks out of our backs?"

"I'm willing to go doubled up all the rest of my life for a garden of daffodils all my own," she cried.

And then my heart with pleasure thrilled—And dances with the daffodils—

"It was very thoughtful of old Wordsworth, and Shakespeare, and Masefield, and all the rest to write nice things about daffodils, wasn't it, John? I wonder if gardens would be so wonderful if it weren't for all their literary suggestions, and the lovely things they remind you of? Gardens have so much atmosphere! Oh, spring, spring, hurry and come!"

I forgot my lame back in her enthusiasm, and later, when the apples were gathered, the potatoes dug, the beets and carrots in the root cellar, our own sweet cider foamed in a glass pitcher on our table, and the first snow spits of December whistled across the fields, we put a little long manure on the irises and other bulbs, and pine boughs over the remaining perennials, and wrapped the ramblers in straw, with almost as much laughing tenderness as you would put a child to bed.

The cows were back in the stable,

and Mike had revised his opinion of cork-asphalt floors when he learned the ease of cleaning with a hose; the potatoes and apples and onions and beets and carrots for our family use were stored in barrels and bins in the cellar, or spread on shelves, or buried in sand. The vegetable garden was newly plowed, and manure spread on the hayfield. Antony and Cleopatra had been captured and brought into the dining room, where they were to spend the winter in a glass bowl. Epictetus and Luella and Gladys and Gaynor had all burrowed out of sight into the ground. The pageant of autumn on our hills was over, only an amethyst haze succeeding at sunset time. Wood fires sparkled in our twin hearths. The summer residents had departed. Our first Thanksgiving turkey had been eaten, though a great stone crock of Mrs. Pillig's incomparable mincemeat still yielded up its treasures for ambrosial pies.

"And now," said Stella, "I'm going to find out at last what a country winter is like!"

"And your friends are pitying you down in town," said I. "Don't you want to go back to them till spring?"

Stella looked at the fires, she looked out over the bare garden and the plowed fields to the dun hillsides, she listened a moment to the whistle of the bleak December wind, she looked at me.

In her eyes I read her answer.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Horas Non Numeri Nisi Serena.

NAS reads the ancient motto on our dial plate, and as I look back on the years of Twin Fires' genesis, or forward into the future, the hours that are not sunny are indeed not marked for me. I am writing now at a table beneath the pergola. The floor is of brick, laid (somewhat irregularly) by Stella and me, for we still are poor, as the Eckstroms would reckon poverty, and none of what Mrs. Delandon has called "the grim inhibitions of wealth" prevents us from doing whatever we can with our own hands, and finding therein a double satisfaction. Over my head rustle the thick vines—a wistaria among them, which may or may not survive another winter.

It is June again. I know that a path now wanders up the brook almost to the road, amid the wild tangle, and ends suddenly in the most unexpected nook beneath a willow tree, where irises fringe a second tiny pool.

I know that the path still wanders the other way into the pines—pines larger now and more murmurous of the sea—past beds of ferns and a lone cardinal flower that will bloom in a shaft of sunlight. Somewhere down that path my wife is wandering, and she is not alone.

A little form (at least she says it has form) sleeps beside her, while she sits, perhaps, with a book, or more likely with sewing in her busy fingers, or more likely still with hands that stray toward the sleeping child and ears that listen to the seashell murmur of the pines whispering secrets of the future. Is he to be a Napoleon or a Pasteur? No less a genius, surely, the prophetic pines whisper to the listening mother!

My own pen halts in its progress and the ink dries on the point. And hark, from the pines a tiny cry! Can he want his father?

THE END.

Fit for the Part.

Wifey—What do you think baby will become when he grows up?

Hubby—Well, he's had experience enough to be a towncrier.—Town Top-

ica.

Good Cheer, Order, Beauty Prevailed in Home of the Southern Woman Long Ago

In her social progresses she rode in a velvet-lined coach drawn by four or six horses—not one too many for the mud holes to be pulled through in those brave times, writes Octavia Zollcoff Bond in *Southern Woman*. Her negro coachman, in cloth coat and brass buttons, who could be trusted to drive her a hundred miles in safety, skillfully handled the lines, while livered footmen swung jauntily to the carriage straps behind, ready to spring to the ground, open the door and let down the folding steps at the will of the mistress. As to her wholesome life at home, Thomas Nelson Page has covered the case in asserting that "the system of living in the South made the domestic virtues as common as light and air." Housewifey thrift and executive ability of a high order made the home of the Southern woman who was true to the type an Eden for all who partook of her hospitality. Good cheer, order and beauty prevailed from the entrance hall, impressive with its array of ancestral portraits, to the clean and ample kitchen and servants' quarters. The well-filled smokehouse, the poultry yard astir with fowls, the pantry supply of jelly, pickle, cordial, "bounce" and preserves, the cellar stocked with the choicest vintages of the old world, and the garden growing with every herb, vegetable and flower known to the new, were results of the industry of the lady bountiful of yesteryear. And, withal, the "swept and garnished" guest rooms, as rarely unoccupied as vacuums occur in nature, were dainty with lavender scented linens, waxed doors and polished mahogany.

Tortoise Shell

Now that tortoise shell has once more come into public favor it is well to know a way in which to clean and polish it. When tortoise shell loses its luster from wear the polished surface may be restored to its original condition by carefully rubbing it with powdered rottenstone and oil. The rottenstone should be very carefully sifted through the finest muslin. When all scratches on the surface of the tortoise shell are thus removed, a brilliant polish may be given it by applying gentle friction with a piece of soft leather to which some jeweler's rouge has been applied.

There's Room in Western
United States for People
Of All European Countries

The United States can swallow all of Europe—area, population and all. The entire combined-computed area of the foreign countries and the area of the western United States is very nearly the same, says *Popular Science Monthly*. The discrepancy is 15,000 square miles on Europe's side. At the same time, however, Russia in Europe would spread over the whole western part of our country, crowding it to the doors with its 111,000,000 of people,

GRIFF RECALLS HOW TRICK
PEEVED VETERAN BATTER

HORAS NON NUMERO NISI SERENA.

Senators' Manager Maintains That
Tommy Tucker Was Maddest Man
He Ever Saw on Ball Field.

"It has been my luck," says Clark Griffith, "to see a large number of peeved and angry people in this old game of baseball, particularly gentlemen against whom I have been lucky enough to do some successful pitching."

"I still think, however, that the maddest man I ever did behold was that grand old Monolith of the old Boston team—Mr. Thomas Tucker. The occasion on which I beheld the fury of this famous warrior is still green in my memory, and can never forsake me."

"Old Tommy Tucker was pretty nearly on his last legs so far as big league baseball was concerned, and hits to him were more precious than rubies and diamonds when we bumped together one summer afternoon. It was a big game, a most important game, and I really had to win it. I loved Tom Tucker very much, but I loved my salary more."

"The battle was a hot one, running along on pretty even terms till near

the close, when we managed to get a couple on the bases and good old Uncle Anson did the rest with one of those murderous hits that they don't make now, the old man not being there to soak them. That Boston bunch was never whipped till the last man was counted out, and they went after me strong in the death rally. First thing I knew they had the cushions populous, two down, and old Tom Tucker standing firmly at the plate. I worked him into biting at two wide ones, then fed him two more, which he refused to take after. It was coming down to cases and no mistake."

"Just at this juncture I happened to remember a trick of indoor baseball—the enormous upshot which is put on an indoor ball by swinging it underhand, with the knuckles uppermost and the ball rolling off the palm.

"It causes a huge upshot ball, but is not practicable for outdoor ball because, at the greater pitching distance,

MAN MUST LABOR AND LOVE HIS WORK TO BE HEALTHY AND HAPPY

By DR. SAMUEL G. DIXON, Commissioner of Health of Pennsylvania.

Man was intended to labor by the Allwise Creator. Our mental and physical make-up is such that occupation is essential to continued well-being.

From the hunter, the fisherman and the rude agriculturist, man has evolved a complicated civilization. There are thousands of occupations today in place of the few primitive ones, but still the majority of these center about the fulfilling of the primary necessities, feeding and clothing mankind.

It has become impossible for the laborer to work under the conditions which originally obtained. Besides the fields and forests, we have mine, mill and mart.

Man has progressed mentally to a remarkable degree, but we cannot say that of his physical development. However, his requirements are much the same as those of our remote ancestors. Sunlight, fresh air, pure water and physical exercise are absolutely essential to the maintenance of health.

If the conditions under which men and women labor do not make this possible, they are detrimental to the individual and to society at large, for upon the health of its people depends the ultimate future of any nation. No machinery can entirely replace the sinews of labor.

To be healthy and happy, one must love his work.

A Few Smiles.

Convincing Hard-Luck Story.

"I thought you said you were going to have the \$100 you lent Jibway, or know the reason why?"

"I didn't get it, and I know the reason why."

"What is it?"

"Jibway took me to one side and showed me by the tailor's label inside his coat that he was wearing a suit made in 1912."

Wise and Otherwise.

Misery loves company—and she usually has plenty of it.

Too much of the noise in this world tries to pass itself off as music.

It's better to be wrong at the right time than right at the wrong time.

Any man who can catch a flea in the dark can hoe his own row in politics.

There is no hope for the man who acts the hypocrite even when he is alone.

A woman who is a has-been beauty is as fussy as a man who has lost his hair.

Many a man's love for his club is due to the fact that his wife never gives her tongue a rest.

Give a man his choice of making friends or money and he'll not hesitate more than a second.

Few men have will power enough to do the things they don't want to do and don't have to, but should do.

Books are desirable companions; when they bore you it is an easy matter to shut them up without giving offense.

His Specialty.

"Haven't you any trade or profession?" inquired the kind lady, as she handed the husky hobo a hunk of home-grown pie and a sandwich.

"I usher be a understudy for a professional boxer, ma'am," answered the h. h.

"Professional boxer!" echoed the k. l.

"Yes, ma'am," he replied. "He was a undertaker."

A Rare Spectacle.

"You say that campaign for sheriff of this county is being conducted on a high plane?"

"It couldn't be more genteel if the rival candidates were seeking the presidency of a young ladies' seminary."

Looking Ahead.

"Now, this is the kind of movie I like. It's educational."

"Why, it's all about a vampire."

"Just so, I may meet a vampire some of these days and then I'll know how to protect myself."

Speedy Effect.

"It's remarkable how liquor loosens Bibbles' tongue."

"Oh, a great many men are affected that way."

"But Bibbles begins to get loquacious before the cork is out."

More Goats Than Sheep.

"The pastor and his flock."

"Rather a pretty idea, eh?"

"Yes, but while our pastor call himself a