## PROGRESS, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1899.



I am standing alone at one of the open windows in the spacious and handsome drawing room at my Cousin Maude's in Belgravis, for my father has at length been prevailed upon by Lady Merton to allow me to taste, for a brief spell, the delights the door opens. Sir H of a London season.

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So I am standing with my lace trimmed silken skirt flowing around me, and the perfume of the lovely bouquet I hold in my hand making fragrant the air, while the moonlight floods the whole scene, and con verts it into a veritable fairy land.

And I do not know why, but it makes me think of Oakdene-my father's parish; and then I remember Roger Elston, the young doctor to whom I am engaged and whom I love passionately, and I fall to wondering what he would think of me could he but see me now, arrayed in all my pretty bravery of pale pink silk.

'I wish he could see me,' I tell myself, with a little pardonable vanity, for the long cheval glass in my room reflected a very pretty, flushed face and charming petite figure as I passed before it several times this evening before submitting my selt to my Cousin Maude's inspec tion

The latter is so severe respecting one's appearance, and she has determined, she tells me, that I shall make an early conquest of some one of the many aristocratic men who attend her receptions, balls, and so forth.

And I have listened to her ambitious vtews for myself, and laughed softly and secretly as I remembered Roger-my own true love-whom I have lett in dear Oakdene, and from whom I am hoping to receive a letter by the next post.

"I wonder what Roger is doing now ? I

It is a brilliant mocnlight night in May. | ated and rusticated, evidently, for we-But why describe the embracings, or repeat the sweet phrases that we employ?

> I am sorely puzzled how to reply, when the door opens. Sir Hugh himselt is an nounced by the tall footman in crimson plush.

Cousin Maude is addicted to bright and showy colours, and is herself this evening resplendent in old gold and crimson.

It is her reception, and Sir Hugh had hardly paid his homage to the handsome hostess ere others are announced.

The rooms fill fast, and I am soon the centre of a smiling and admiring group; still, Sir Hugh always contrives to place himselt at my side.

Cousin Maude's eyes fairly blaze with triumph and delight as she notes his presense in such continual proximity to myselt, as he from time to times passes in and out among her guests.

'The conservatory has but few occupants Elsie,' she murmurs once. Simple enough words, but I think I

understand their deeper meaning. A crimson flush of annoyance and shame flocds my face for an instant, and then I remember Roger.

All the hot and hasty anger dies away as I recollect that I have brought all this upon myself by not speaking of my engagement to him.

But, then, I would rather bear anything than see her scornful looks. I am so young and inexperienced.

'You find this room too warm, I fancy, Miss Travers ?'

'I believe I do, Sir Hugh,' I reply. 'I know of a delightfully cool spot, if

you will allow me to conduct you to it,' companion continues. 'I shall, indeed, be grateful for a little cool air,' I return. Placing my gloved hand within his arm, I let him lead me to an open window, and thence to a seat on the covered balcony. 'How deliciously cool and fresh it is here, Sir Hugh !' I exclaim, seating myself in one of the low chairs. 'I am very glad you approve of the change, Miss Travers,' he replies, gravely. And then, glancing up at the fine, tall figure of my escort, as he leans against the iron balustrade of the balcony, and noting the expression on bis face, became aware

pleadingly up into his face-Please do not let cousin Maud know. 'Miss Travers can trust me in all things,' comes the low-spoken reply as his dark eyes encounter my pleading gaze. •Ah ! here are the truants !' exclaims

Cousin Maude, as we re-enter. 'I feared a scolding, Lady Merton,'

says Sir Huge, glancing meanwhile at me. 'Shall I scold Sir Hugh, Elsie ?' whispers my cousin, and there is such a meaning look in her fine eyes, that I feel inclined to reply in like strain.

Not Sir Hugh, Cousin Maude. I deserve the scolding, if either; for I wished to quit these hot rooms for a time, and he was good enough to bear me company.'

'And now you must pay forfeit for your long absence, and favor my guests with a song. Sir Hugh, you would like some music ?'

'Lady Merton already knows my great penchant for music; and Miss Travers has so many times heard me express my admiration of her charming voice.'

\* 'You will spoil my little cousin with flattery, Sir Hugh,' laughingly exclaims Cousin Maude, as she accompaies him and myself to the grand piano at the futher end of the inner drawing room.

I sing repeatedly, song after song, Roger's favorites included—sing till Cousin Maude insists that I shall be asked for no more that evening.

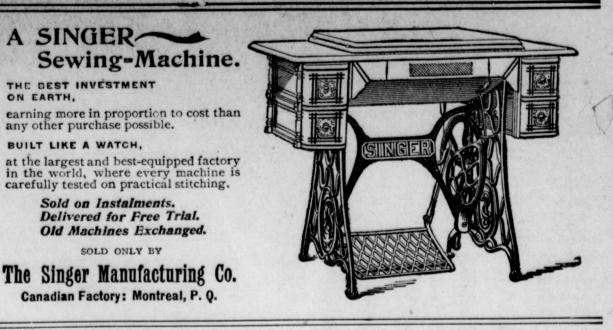
And so the hours sped by, fraught with many a triumph for the handsome hostess and much admiration and attention for myself.

But none of the brilliant throng would bave recognized the charming Elsie Travers in the poor tear stained faced girl, crouching by the side of the pretty French hed later on.

For now the excitement of the evening is fairly over, I realize full what I have done and tears and bitter repentance, mingled with longings for home and Roger burst from my full and burdened heart.

'Only a few more days and I shall once again see my dear father and Roger,' I murmured as I at length seek my pillow and I dreamed ontused dreams of Sir Hugh Staunton, and my affianced lover.

'Very glad indeed to see my little Elsie at home once more,' exclaims my father fairer," whispers my lover, as he holds open for the twentieth time, as he regards me the wicket gate leading into the orchard. across the small tea table with his dear, tender eyes.



art of flattering, then, from your town bred acquaintances!' laughingly retorts my lover Then he adds: 'I want you to come out with me to our favorite seat in the orchard, and then I must hear all particulars respecting this wonderful visit. Will you come. Elsie ?'

ON EARTH.

Before he has fairly concluded his request, I spring away and fetch hat and WISC.

A few minutes later, and we are treading the small gravel path which leads to the orchard.

"How sweet the roses are !" I exclaim, as side by side, we pass the small roserymy father's hobby-and the fragrance of the crimson, pink, and white petals is wafted to us by the gentle evening breeze.

The sun is setting, and leaving in his wake gorgeous streaks of crimson and

"You do not get such roses as these in London, I expect," replies Roger.

"I have had no roses this summer," ] "Then let me bear the blame of pluck.

ing one of Mr. Travers' especial 'beauties.' So saying Roger bends forward, and gathers a lovely deep-headed crimson bud

trom a neighboring bush-"What a beauty !" I exclaim. "And

how I shall treasure it, it being the first I the quaint old church. have received this season, and also because it was given me by you."

"Keep it, darling, till our wedding day, and I will replace it by others fresher and On through the long grass 'neath the trees, we stroll till our favorite spot is reached.

'You will come in. Roger?'

'N st to-night Elsie. My mother will be expecting me, and I promised her I would not be late.

"I have been so thoughtless land selfish, Roger! I have never once inquired for your mother.'

'I will excuse you to her dear, since I have so engrossed your attention,' Roger laughingly replies; then continues: 'My mother sent her kindest love, and she will be so glad to see you when you find time to call. She is very anxious to hear of your doings among the gay set you have been visiting in Belgravia.

'Please give her my love, Roger, and I will certainly come and see her as soon as possible.

'Thank you, Elsie. Now one more sweet good-night, and then we must part for the present.

'Good night, dear, dear, Roger!' I answer, standing on tip toe to kiss him.

One fond and lingering embrace, and then we part. I listen to his firm tread till it dies away in the distance.

Then the hall door closes on me.

'I will write to Cousin Maude tomorrow,' I tell myself, as I walk along towards

It is a lovely morning, and I do not hurry myself, even though the bell is giving notice by its slower and more fitful tones that it will soon stop and the service commence.

My father is already in the small vestry outting on his white robes, for I can see the same fluttering in the summer breeze through the partially open door. Still, I do not hurry; the spell of a perfect summer morn is on me, and I feel it is good to be sauntering slowly along in the sweet, pure sunshine. Aut the bell ceases presently and then I reflect how much averse my father is to my being late, so I quicken my steps and am soon within the cool church porch. One moment, to re-adjust and pull the ribbon which has gone fluttering astray, and then my hand is on the latch. 'Allow me,' says a voice close by, while a hand, cased in a delicate and wellfitting glove, is stretched forth from behind me. I drop my fingers, the door opens, and, without turning my head, but merely bowing in recognition of the service rendered me, I pass on into the church, and with heightened colour and downcast look, take my seat in the vicarage pew. As I do so, I become conscious that the owner of the delicate, kid gloved hand is being ushered by the old clerk into the Ellerton pew. Colonel Ellerton is the lord of the manor, and is looked up to with consider able awe and reverence by all my father's parisbioners. 'Some friend of the colonel's,' I mentally reflect, as I catch just one glimpse of the bowed head, as I rise from my knees and prepare to join in the singing of the first psalm.

wonder if he is thinking of me ?' I continue, unconsciously half aloud this time.

"Why, Elsie, whom are you addressing ?" breaks in Cousin Maude's voice, and then her hand is laid on mine as she adds: 'Come away from the open window at once, child. The nights are still chilly, and I mustn't allow you to run the risk of taking cold now, just when Sir Hugh is expected-and you know what he thinks of my little country cousin's singing !

And the clear tones are followed by a well satisfied laugh, as my cousin draws one of my hands within hers, and turns to lead me away.

At that instant a breeze springs up, and and the tresh air stealing in brings with it the scent of the fragrant flowers now lying at my feet, and wratts it upwards.

'Elsie, take care! Do you not see you have dropped your flowers? What would Sir Hugh think if he were to arrive at this moment, and find his gitt so neglected ?'

'I am very sorry, Cousin Maude; I had quite forgotten them, I believe, poor things! They are not much hurt, though, I returned, laughingly, as I stoop and pick up the bouquet I dropped in my fit of ab. straction when dwelling upon my absent lover.

'Elsie, I can't understand you !' exclaims my cousin, as she follows me across the room, and seats herself at my side on one of the satin-covered couches.

'In what particular respect, cousin Mauc?' I laughingly ask.

Why, you are so seemingly, perfectly indifferent to Sir Hugh Staunton's attentions, while most girls of your age would be nearly wild with pride and delight to think that they had secured the notice of the best parti of the season."

'But I have not yet secured him, Cousin Made,' I replied, mischievously.

'Not quite yet, certainly Elsie; but the chance is yours, just as though the actual words had been spoken. And it will be so nice for both of us, Elsie dear Sir Hugh's country seat is a splenhid old place, and I shall be so glad to join you there for a little spell of quiet and repose ; for really, Elsie, I find a season now quite tiring enough. It was so different when dear Merton was alive. He managed so many things for me but now I am quite alone.

As my cousin concludes, she draws forth a delicate lace handkerchief, and wipes carefully and cautiously, her fine eyes.

I am spared an answer to this speech, which I deem rather premature, consider ing Sir Hugh Staunton has not spoken a word to me that all the world might not hear.

But then of course, I argue, I am young and having been so country-bred what can I possibly know of the manner in which such as Sir Hugo, and his aristocratic and town-seasoned colleagues conduct their wooing of the fair Belgravian maidens? Again Roger and I are so unsophistic-

of what I have done in thus allowing him to lead me away from the crowded rooms. What shall I answer him when he-But he is speaking, even while I am

ruminating as to a suitable reply. 'Miss Travers, I cannot be sufficiently grateful to you for thus giving me the opportunity which I have sought in vain for the past week.'

I glance up again at the face bent to wards me, and read in the dark eyes what is to follow.

'Oh! Sir Hugh!' I exclaim, hastily, and letting his flowers, which I still hold, fall again to the ground. 'I have been very wrong ! I know it now! But I did not think.

Your flowers, Miss Travers. Allow me,' he replies, stooping low to pick them up as he speaks.

I bow, and receive them back, but I shiver perceptibly as I do so.

'Miss Travers,' continues my companion 'I should not have dared to take you away from the others had it not been for these,' touching with one hand the fair white blossoms lying in my lap.

I am silent. I feel how more than wrongly I have acted.

'But I must speak now, Miss Travers, and tell you how I admired you from the very first moment that I met you, now nearly six weeks ago. Dear Miss Travers gravia. will you not give me some little hope that you will accept me some day as your husband?'

My husband !

Do I hear the words aright?

I, who am already the affianced bride of another!

But it is all my own doing that this man now stands before me, declaring his love fer me-sll my own tault.

'Miss Travers, you are silent. I trust - I have not offended you ?'

What must I reply. Shall I tell him the whole truth ?

I am sadly puzzled. But my companion's next words aid me little.

'Don't give me an answer now if you do not wish to. I can wait for your decision. Only tell me that I have not offended you, Miss Travers. by speaking of my admira--of my love for you."

There is such humility in the tone-in the manner-that it stings me to the quick to think how I have deceived this man.

'And I am more than glad to be at home again,' I respond, warmly. 'But my little Elsie enjoyed her visit ?' questions my father anxiously.

'Very, very much dear father.' 'Ah! I do not expect there were many

who failed to recognize what a charming little creature Lady Metton's cousin is,' he says, fondly.

'Now, tather dear, no flattery, if you please; I have had quite enough of that commodity lately, so I am getting quite tired of it.'

Then, suddenly changing my tone I ask-

'And Roger, father ? Tell me again why he was not at the station to meet me searcely heard what you said about it just now, I was so taken up with you.'

'Roger was very disappointed and vexed not to be there to join his welcome with mine; but, unfortunately, he was sent for to a distant farmhouse to attend a case, and so could not be present; but he hopes to look in upon his return. to-but here he comes ! I am going out to visit poor Granny Hodge, she is failing fast.'

My father leaves the house as Roger enters it. And then-

Oh, the delight at once again finding my dear one's arms around me, and to have his kisses showered upon my lips !

'Oh, Roger, Roger !' I almost sob forth, 'I am so glad to be with you again !'

'And I have so longed for your return, Elsie !' comes the answer in earnest, pass. ionate tones.

Then I glance shyly up at my lover, and am struck with his handsome face and fine figure.

Of course, I have always considered him handsome, but now his good looks seem to be enhanced, as I mentally contrast him with Sir Hugh Staunton and others whom I have left behind me in aristocratic Bel-

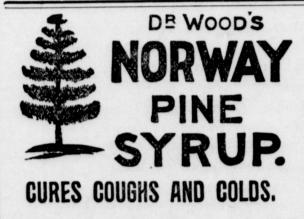
'What is it, Elsie ?' Roger asks presently, as, thinking out my own thoughts, continue to gaze absently at his face.

I lower my eyes then, ard blush. 'Tell me, Elsie,' he pleads, bending his

face down to mine.

'I did not realize before how good looking you are Roger !' I stammer forth.

'Ab, Elsie, Elsie, you have learnt the



says: "I had a severe attack of Grippe and a bad cough, with great difficulty in

Here is the "patriarch" of the orchard -an old gnarled, and hoary trunk, with branches bent and twisted' so as to form a sepcies of bower.

"Now for a nice quiet talk, Elsie," Roger says, as we seat ourselves on the lowest branch.

For all reply I lean back against the hoary trunk, and sigh-a sigh of pertct content and happiness

For, oh ! it is so grand to be once again at dear Oakdene, and in the presence of my lover !

"What a sigh, Elsie ! For which of your late admirers is that intended ?'

'Roger !' in surprised and indignant tones, but a blush suffuses my face as I remember Sir Hugh Staunton.

'My darling, I was only jesting. But I want you to tell me that you still love me as much as ever. I have never doubted you, Elsie, for one single moment, not even though your letters have been few and far between; but---

'Oh. Roger ! I meant to have written much oftener; but Cousin Maude-

'Never mind that now, darling. I am not going to find fault with my dear little Elsie ! only, I shall like to hear once again from her lips that she still loves me,' Roger continues, drawing me still nearer to him.

'Roger, I do love you, and more than ever, if that is possible,' I reply, in low earnest tones, glancing up meanwhile into my dear one's face. 'Are you satisfied

now ?' But he is silent, and looks fixedly down the green and leafy perspective.

'Roger, what is it,' I question anxiously. 'My darling, I was thinking over a dream I had lately. Nay, do not laugh, Elsie,' he protests gravely, noting the smile breaking over my face. 'Do not laugh, please. For, oh! it seemed so real -so terribly real ! And I had so longed to hear from your lips that you really and truly love me still. Will you repeat your words once again, dear ?'

I glance in surprise at my lover's face, but obediently repeat-

'Roger I do love you-and, if possible, more than ever.'

'Thank Heaven, it is only a dream !' issues from his lips, and he breathes a sigh of relief.

What was your dream, Roger ?' 'It is not worth relating now, my darling,' he replies.

'But I do so want to know.'

'And 1 so want to know how my darling has enjoyed her visit, and what she has seen and done during the time,' retorts my lover.

The words are lightly spoken, but the manner is decided.

And so I press my questioning no further, but comply with his wish, and an-

swer cheerfully-'Oh Cousin Maude was so kind to me and took me everywhere with her. That is why you got so few letters from me, because

And then my thoughts wander, and for the time, forgetful of everything, I give full compass to my voice, and, as I do so, I glance unconsciously in the direction of the colonel's pew.

One glance! Then, with crimsoning face, I break off abruptly, and drop my eyes quickly on my prayer-book, for the form standing so upright in old Colonel Ellerton's pew is that of Sir Hugh Staunton! And he has recognised me

Roger is sitting with his mother not many seats back, and he must have seen the exchanged glances.

Quick as lightning these thoughts flash through my brain.

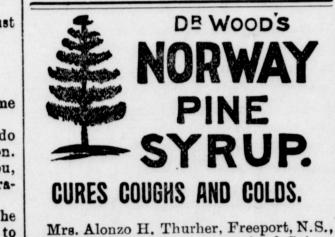
Still more and more crimson becomes my face as I wonder how I shall explain all satisfactorily to my two lovers.

How can I confess to the one that I have acted wrongly in allowing him to suppose for an instant that my decision might be in his favor, when all the time I am the promised bride of the other ?

Ah, me! Why did I not openly confess to cousin Maude my secret, and thus have secured freedom from the attention of othes-of such attentions as Sir Hugh Staunton showered upon me on every possible occasion?

But all this time the service is proceeding, and, fically, we rise from our knees and sing the hymn before the sermon.

And then there is a slight rustle from behind, a taint and subdued murmur of voices, followed by steps going down the





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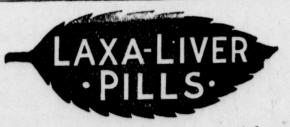
And yet I have told myself that he not care for me so much as cousin Maude declares, simply because his actions and speech are so different from-Roger's. I am inexperienced, truly, and he is a

man of forty five ! 'Offended, Sir Hugh !' I say. 'How

can I be. when it is all-And then I hesitate, and blush deeply. 'Thank you, Miss Elsie. I will not press you for an answer now, but will give you time for reflection. Should you not like to join the others again ? I shall get scolded if I monopolize thus the belle of Lady Merton's rooms.' I simply bow in response, and, rising, take his proffered arm in silence.

Just as my companion draws aside the curtain at the entrance to the gay and crowded rooms, I whisper, as I look

breathing. After taking two bottles of Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup I was completely cured."



Work while you sleep without a grip or gripe, curing Sick Headache, Dyspepsia and Constipation, and make you feel better in the morning.

there seemed something for every hournay, every moment of the day. And then in the evening, came theatres, balls, concerts. I never enjoyed my self so much in all my life before. But I always wished you were with me, dear.'

'To have one more admirer of you as you appeared in your sweet dresses, eh, Elsie?' my lover laughingly asks.

'How can you sir !' I retort. 'Ot course I missed you terribly."

'I know you did Elsie; and now one more kiss from your dear lips and then I will take you back to the house.' One more long passionate embrace and then Roger and I retrace our steps beneath the star-spangled sky, through the wicketgate, up the gravel path, till the hall door is reached.

aisle in the direction of the church door. I turn my head just in time to see one of my father's oldest parishioners being carried out, and Roger following in the wake of the bearers.

For a few seconds everyone's attention is taken up by this sudden illness of poor old Farmer George, then the door closes upon the small procession, and quiet being

(CONTINUED ON FIFTEENTH PAGE.)

