

# FOR A WOMAN'S SAKE.

IN TWO INSTALMENTS.

## CHAPTER I.

AT THE GARDEN GATE.

It was market-day at Podley Royal, and the one long street and market-place of the little town were full of carts, gigs, lowing cattle, and bleating sheep.

The doors of Witcherley's Bank were constantly on the swing, and more money was paid in and drawn out on that day than during the other five of the working week.

It was a cloudless day in early summer, and outside the town the villa and cottage gardens were bright with flowers.

Here there was little sign of the bustle and excitement associated with the market—a farmer jogging contentedly homeward, having sold his stock profitably, a woman driving a cow, and a few children on their way from school.

On the station road however, there was more life, for a train had just come in, and a score of passengers were making their way on foot homeward; whilst a solitary cab, with a portmanteau on the roof, was proceeding leisurely towards the town.

As it gained the London road, which divided the borough in two under the name of High Street, it passed two young ladies who were walking away from the town.

They both turned their heads to look after it.

'Why, I declare, it's empty!' exclaimed the taller, a sunny-haired, grey-eyed, girl of nineteen or twenty. 'How odd!'

'And it turned up Love Lane,' said the other, who was darker, and perhaps a year or two the elder. 'It must be going to Midhall. Does Ralph Witcherley expect any guests, Edith, do you know?'

'How should I? Though he is my trustee aunt and I seldom see him; not that I want to. I hate going to his dinner-parties, and he never gives a dance. I declare I quite hate old Witcherley!'

A tall, broad-shouldered, dark-bearded man, who was swinging past at the moment turned, with an amused smile, and looked at the speaker.

The girl's face was a very pretty one, and he seemed to think so, for, after giving a few yards, he turned to look at it again. 'Who can he be?' whispered the shorter of the girls. 'How rudely he stared at you, dear!'

'I know no more than you do, Nelly, who he is. He must be a stranger here. See! he is crossing the road, and I believe is going up Love Lane.'

Then the luggage on the cab must belong to him, and he is going to the Hall. I wonder who he can be—Mr. Witcherley has so few friends to see him.'

'He never has any that I know of' returned the fairer of the girls, 'and I don't believe he has a friend in the world, if it comes to that.'

'Poor old man, he must be very lovely!' sighed the other. 'Did he not have a son who ran away, or was turned out of doors, or something of the sort? I think I have heard Frank say so.'

'Yes, he had a son who went wrong, it is said, but it must have been a long time ago, and I have never heard him speak of him. But what did Frank say?'

'Not very much. One day he mentioned that old Antony Patch, the cashier at the bank, had let drop a word about the young master, as he called him. It seemed to Frank that they thought he must be dead, nothing having been heard of him for so long.'

'Mr. Patch must be very old,' observed Edith.

Her friend laughed.

'That's what Frank is always saying,' she exclaimed. 'He gets quite despondent, and declares that he believes the old man will see his master out, and then carry on the business on his own account. I am sorry for both you and Frank, Edith, but I am afraid I shall be too old for a bridesmaid if you wait to be married till old Patch dies.'

'We don't want him to die,' Edith returned, blushing brightly; 'but he might retire, and let Frank take his place. Poor fellow, he has waited quite long enough, I am sure.'

'For you? Oh! Edith, I'll tell him what you say.'

'Nelly, if you do, I shall be dreadfully angry. I did not mean that. I meant that he had waited a long time for the post of cashier. How could you think I meant anything else?'

'You should explain yourself more clearly, my dear; but, after all, it comes to the same thing, for I suppose that, when he does get the place, you will marry him.'

Edith shook her head despondently.

'I don't see how we shall ever marry,' she answered. 'I dare not say a word about our engagement to Aunt Jane—I think she would have a fit if I did. She is always lecturing me about making a good marriage, by which she means my marrying someone rich, so that I can give her all she wants.'

'I think she would sell me to anyone who would promise unlimited sweetbreads and champagne, if she could. And then, old Mr. Witcherley, my trustee, would never consent to my marrying one of his clerks.'

'But you will be of age in less than two years, Edith, and then you can do what you like.'

'Yes; but Frank declares that he won't ask me to marry him till he is making as much as I have got,' answered Edith, laughing and blushing. 'So you see,

Nelly, it all hangs on old Patch retiring, for, as for his dying, I don't believe he ever will. But here we are at home—You will come in, Nelly?'

'No, dear, your aunt does not look upon me with favor. She snubbed me dreadfully last time I ventured in. Good-bye. Shall I give you love to Frank?'

Edith nodded, and pushing open the swing gate, entered the grounds of her aunt's old-fashioned cottage.

It was quite a small place, to look at it from the road.

But it ran back some way, and behind it was a large old-fashioned garden and orchard, which, however, was a good deal neglected. Mrs. Penmore declaring that she could not afford a gardener to come in more than once a month.

She was a shrivelled, dried-up lady of fifty or so, looking older than her age, and, as she sat stiffly erect in a straight-backed arm-chair, she offered as stony a contrast as was possible to the bright, pretty girl, with sunny brown hair and shy grey-blue eyes, her face flushed from her walk, who entered the room.

'My dear, how late you are!' she said, peevishly. 'If you will ring the bell, Martha will bring the tea. It is twenty minutes past the usual time.'

'Dear auntie, your watch must be fast,' returned the girl, doing as she was asked. The church clock was chiming after we passed the station road.'

'And who may we be, Edith, may I ask?'

'Only Nelly Amyard, aunt. I met her, and she walked back with me.'

'I do not approve of you, Edith, making such a great friend of Miss Amyard; and the aunt drew herself, it possible, a little more stiffly upright. 'She is very well in her place, but please remember that you are a general's daughter.'

The girl laughed as she unpinned her hat.

'The Amyards are all right, aunt,' she answered, 'and I have no doubt their father was of as good birth as mine. But it is all nonsense. No one cares for that sort of thing now, as long as one is ladylike and properly educated.'

Mrs. Penmore shut her eyes, and raised her hands in horror.

'Where you get your dreadful radical sentiments from, Edith, I cannot tell,' she said, with a sort of whine. 'Not from our side of the family, I am sure. And your mother, though hardly a proper match for my brother—'

'Now, aunt; I am not going to hear my mother run down. It does not matter that I cannot remember her—she was my mother just the same. But here is Martha with the tea. I will wheel the little table up to your chair so that you won't have to move.'

But Mrs. Penmore preferred to be independent and insisted on pouring out the tea herself, a thing which she, being naturally indolent, hated doing.

Tea was generally accompanied by a holding forth on the demerits of her neighbours, and today was no exception to the rule.

The subject selected was the Amyards, and Edith had to listen with what patience she might, knowing all the time that, whilst her aunt ostensibly spoke of Nelly, she in reality was striking at Frank.

However, all lectures come to an end in time, and after an hour even Mrs. Penmore could hold forth no longer.

So, Edith being free to do what she liked, she put on her hat again and declared her intention of doing some gardening.

It must be confessed, however, that this partook of the nature of a fib, for, after picking an early rose to stick in her waistband, she did no further gardening, but strolled leisurely on till a thick high hedge which shut off the kitchen garden, hid her from sight of the back windows of the cottage; then she ran lightly down a path and through a little copse, which brought her to a gate opening into a lane.

'Oh, Frank!' she exclaimed breathlessly, to a good-looking young fellow who was leaning with his arms on the gate. 'I am sorry if I have kept you waiting, but aunt was more tiresomely talkative than ever to day.'

'Never mind the waiting,' he said. 'I'd wait, as you know, hours, just for five minutes with you. Have you seen Nelly to day?'

'Yes; have not you been home? I met her in the town, and we walked back together.'

'No. I have come straight from the bank. We are always late market day.'

'Do you know if Mr. Witcherley expected a guest to arrive? Nelly and I saw a cab go towards the park gates with some luggage, and a gentleman, who was walking, followed it.'

'No. I have heard nothing of any visitor being expected. What was he like?'

'Oh, a big, broad shouldered man—very handsome.'

'You seem to have looked at him well, Edith.'

'Of course, I did. Did not I say he was handsome?'

'I am not going to be made jealous; in fact, I came to tell you to day, dear, that I release you from your engagement.'

'Frank!'

'My darling, it is for your sake. I see no prospect of getting on. If working would do it, I would slave like any convict; but what chance have I? If I left the

bank and searched for a fresh situation I could hope for no better salary than I am getting. In fact, Mr. Witcherley pays me handsomely, as salaries go in the banking business.'

'I spoke to the cashier yesterday, or rather hinted, about his retiring. It has not entered his head. I am not good for anything else,' he said, 'but I'm good for another twenty years at this desk.' Think of that! Twenty years! And what can I save out of a hundred and forty pounds a year?'

'Not much, dear,' she said. 'But something will turn up. I won't speak about my coming of age. You are so proud, but I mean to speculate with my money when I get it, and when I have lost it all, perhaps then you will listen to reason and common sense.'

'You shall do nothing of the sort, Edith, if you listen to me. Being poor yourself would not bring us nearer together.'

'Oh, yes, it would! When I have not a shilling, I shall have to go out and work; and perhaps, when you see me a nursery governess, mending frocks and washing children, you will take pity on me, and make me Mrs. Frank Amyard.'

He laughed in spite of himself.

'I wish you would be serious, Edith,' he said. 'Really, it is my duty to think of your future happiness if you will not think for yourself.'

'My future happiness is with you, Frank.'

'When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out of the window.'

'There is no question of poverty, for you will have a hundred and fifty or sixty pounds per annum in two years, and I shall have three hundred; so we shall be very comfortably off.'

'But I can't live on your money, dear.'

'You silly boy! We will only spend each the same amount, and the surplus of my income we will put in the bank.'

'But, Edith—'

'That's quite settled, so we will talk about something else. Tell me—tell me 'That I love you?'

'You have told me that so often, Frank.'

'Well, then, tell me that you love me, for a change; but, Edith, really I wish you would think seriously about releasing your self from this engagement, which I feel—'

She placed her fingers on his lips.

'Another word on that subject, and I shall go in,' she said imperiously.

And as it was fully half an hour before they parted, it is to be supposed that the threat had due effect, and that nothing more was said about the breaking off of the engagement.

## CHAPTER II.

THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN.

The broad-shouldered man who had stared at Edith in passing was, indeed, as she and Nelly Amyard had guessed, bound for Midhall, the residence of Ralph Witcherley, the banker of Podley Royal.

His father had, finding himself growing rich, built the place, removing from the bank premises to dwell in it.

It was a commodious stone-built house of two stories, built on three sides of a courtyard, but the two wings were rarely used, the banker having led a retired life ever since a quarrel with his son, the rights which were only known by the two parties most concerned in it.

Having followed the cab, through the lodge-gates, and taken a short cut across the park, the stranger found himself at the front door, just as a servant, out of livery, had opened it in answer to the driver's ring.

Before the servant could ask any questions, the visitor pushed him on one side, and entered the hall.

'You can leave my luggage here for the present,' he said. 'I will go into the smoking-room, and wait for your master. You can bring me a bottle of soda water and some whisky; and here, pay the cabman, and he placed a couple of half-crowns in the servant's hand.'

The latter, too astonished to speak, followed the stranger with his eyes as he crossed the hall, and, going down a passage opened the door of the smoking-room.

He had been addressed with such an air of authority that he dared not offer any opposition, so he turned to the driver of the cab and asked who the strange visitor was.

The cabman, however, could tell him nothing further than that he had come by the three-fifty train.

This was not much, but as three-fifty came from London, James considered it likely that the high-banded stranger was some city man come down on business with the bank.

Having satisfied his mind as to this he proceeded to take in the whisky-and-soda as ordered.

'And he do take it strong,' as he informed the cook. 'My eye! if I took such a dose, I should never be able to wait at dinner, dash my buttons if I should!'

Like his clerk, the banker was detained later than usual on market-day and the church clock was chiming six as he walked leisurely across the park.

A spare, slight man was this banker, looked upon as the richest on that side of the county.

A man whose age it was hard to guess; but who, according to the local records must be nearer seventy than sixty.

He did not enter the house by the hall door but passed in through the conservatory, and then, as his cigar was still alight, went into the smoking-room.

As he opened the door, the stranger rose from the easy chair in which he had been lounging and advanced with outstretched hand.

'How are you, dad?' he said. 'By Jove! you wear well.'

The old man staggered back as if he had been struck.

'Raymond! Alive!'

'Quite, my dear father. I am not my own ghost, I assure you. It is peace between us? Won't you shake hands?'

Feebly, uncertainly, as if doubting whether it would encounter real flesh and bone, the banker put out his trembling hand, which was seized and shaken with a

vigor that proved it was no ghost that pressed it.

'Sit down, dad, you look a bit upset,' exclaimed the returned prodigal. 'Here take a drink from my glass. It's good stuff, I'll say that for it, and will pull you together. There, you look twenty per cent better. You have not changed as much as I. Not been knocking about the world as I have—taking things easier. Well, I am glad to see to see you—it's like old times. I suppose you won't turn me out?'

'Turn you out, Raymond, my dear boy! Why, there has not been a day this ten years that I would not have given thousands to hear you were alive and well. But why did you never write?'

'My dear dad, half my time I have been in places where postmen and posts are unknown, and then I made up my mind not to send news of myself till I had secured a fortune. When I had, I came back. The ship got into the Thames yesterday. I slept in town, got up late—for a regular hotel bed was a luxury—and came straight here.'

'And you won't want to go away again, Raymond? All the past is forgotten. I am an old man, and I don't think I could get over parting with you again.'

'No; I shant want to budge, except for a short cruise now and then. I shall settle down and marry; and by Jupiter! I saw as pretty a girl, as I came up from the station, as I have set eyes on since I left England.'

'That's right, Raymond. We will find you a good wife. I know of several nice girls with money.'

'Hang the money! I have enough to last a spell, and I suppose the bank is still flourishing.'

'Yes, my boy, we do pretty well; but never despise money. It is the foundation stone of happiness and our national prosperity. I am glad you came home rich, Raymond. Not that I have not enough for both of us, but it shows that you have been industrious.'

'I don't know what you call rich, and I can't say much about industry, but I struck oil at last, or, rather gold. Made a good haul, sold out, and have come home with bills, notes and gold for thirty-five thousand, besides a little sack of stones I have picked up at different places.'

'Not have you, Raymond? Well done, my boy! I'll invest it for you, and get you good interest. You shall be my partner, Raymond. I'll have the deed drawn out, and we will drink success tonight to Witcherley and Witcherley.'

'So we will, dad, and that reminds me I've had nothing but a little drop of whiskey since I came here. Where do you keep your liquor?'

'There is a spirit stand in the dining-room, or sherry if you prefer it.'

'Well, a couple of glasses of sherry will give one an appetite, though I am usually ready enough for my dinner.'

And, thrusting his arm through his father's he dragged him off to the dining-room.

The news soon spread far and wide that the banker's long absent son had unexpectedly returned.

Frank came home the next day brimful of excitement.

Mr. Witcherley had called the bank staff into his private room that morning, and had announced to them that he was about to take his son into partnership, and that in honor of the occasion, the salary of each, from the head cashier to the office-boy, would be raised ten per cent.

It was not long before Edith, in her turn, heard the news, for Ralph Witcherley was so elated that, not content with telling everyone he met that his son had returned, after making his fortune, he paid a special call on his ward and her aunt to acquaint them with the fact.

More than that, he brought Raymond with him, and the latter and Edith recognised one another at once, the girl blushing crimson as she read the open admiration expressed in the young man's eyes.

'Miss Forsyth was the first person I saw when I arrived,' Raymond said; 'and I am afraid that I stared rather rudely, but I trust I may be forgiven, for I have been so long in burning countries that the freshness of English beauty quite overpowers me.'

'Ha, ha!' chuckled the banker, 'My dear Edith, I assure you that almost the first words he spoke were about you. He has travelled all over the world, and he declares there is no beauty like English beauty. What do you say to that, eh? And now, my dear Mrs. Penmore, I want you and Edith to dine with me tomorrow. Just ourselves and the vicar.'

'Next week I will have some nice people

# One Hen One Day One Mill

It costs a mill a day—one cent every ten days—to make a hen a lively layer when eggs are high, with SHERIDAN'S CONDITION POWDER. Calculate the profit. It helps young pullets to laying maturity; makes the plumage glossy; makes combs bright red.

## Sheridan's CONDITION Powder

fed to fowls once daily, in a hot mash, will make all their food doubly effective and make the flock doubly profitable. If you can't buy it we send one pack, 25 cts.; five, \$1. A two pound can, \$1.20. Sample poultry paper free. I. S. JOHNSON & CO., BOSTON, MASS.

# TAKES THE CAKE



... DOES ...

## PACKARD'S Ladies' Special Dressing

GIVES THE BEST  
SHINE.  
CLEANS AND PRE-  
SERVES  
THE LEATHER.

AND CAN BE  
PURCHASED  
AT ALL  
SHOE STORES  
25c. L. H. Packard  
& Co.  
MONTREAL.

to meet you. Lord Sinfain, I know is at the Towers, and there are a few others who are not in London. We are going to be gay now Raymond has come back. A little later, and we'll have a ball and show him the beauty of the county. More in your line, Miss Edith, than dinners, eh? Fortunately for Edith the banker never wanted for an answer.

It seemed that his son's arrival had knocked twenty years off his age.

He was young again, and when at length he took his leave, he left Mrs. Penmore with the blisful impression that it only rested with herself whether or not she should be the second Mrs. Witcherley.

With a sigh, however, she signified to her niece that she would retire in her favour.

'For there can be no doubt, my dear, that young Mr. Witcherley fell in love with you the first moment he saw you. All the time he was here, he could hardly take his eyes off you. A very handsome man, and still young. Now, my dear, you see how wise I have been. How often have I said to you, "Wait, and I will find you a husband in every way suitable?"'

'But for me, you might have engaged yourself to some low-bred clerk, and never risen above decent poverty. Why, all people say that the father is worth a quarter of a million, it not more, besides what the bank brings him. Really, Edith, you might look a little more pleased, considering what I have done for you.'

And that night Edith went to bed with a great fear at her heart.

'More trouble,' she muttered to herself; 'more trouble, as if Frank and I had not enough! Aunt will give me no peace, and Frank will have a new—oh, dear! supposing that he is spiteful, and now that he is partner in the bank, turns round on Frank—perhaps gets his father to send him away. But he would not be as mean as that, and, after all, it may be only a sudden fancy on his part; when it has passed, he may be a good friend to Frank.'

So, a little more comforted by these reflections, she fell asleep.

Whether Edith was right or wrong in her foreshadowing of the future, there was no doubt at all about the present. Raymond Witcherley took no pains to conceal the fact that he had fallen desperately in love with her.

He had been a wanderer over the face of the earth for years, and, struck at first by the soft beauty of the English girl's face, he now found an irresistible attraction in her society.

Edith liked him, too, and liked to hear his stories of wild countries he had been in, and the desperadoes with whom he had mixed.

'If he only would be sensible and fall in love with Nelly,' she thought, 'how happy we might all be together.'

And visions of having old Antony Patch pensioned off and Frank installed in his place flitted through her brain.

In furtherance to this wise purpose she managed more than once that Nelly and Raymond should meet; but though the latter was quite ready to admire and chat with Edith's friend, he showed no disposition to shift his affections.

As Edith had foreseen, Aunt Jane never ceased singing the praises of the rich young Mr. Witcherley, and, which exasperated her niece nearly to a pitch of down-right rebellion, was for ever ostentatiously leaving them alone together.

When Raymond, in his free-and-easy way, dropped into the cottage after the bank was closed, the aunt had always the flimsiest of excuses ready for leaving the room; and when they met at the Hall or at garden-parties, she hovered about, and pounced upon and dragged off any third party who dared approach.

To make Edith more miserable, everyone in the town looked upon her coming engagement to Raymond Witcherley as a forgone conclusion, and she had the greatest difficulty in soothing Frank's jealousy.

They met now less frequently than before, and Edith had been unable to keep certain appointments on account of Raymond having called and lingered on in spite of every hint.

This state of affairs had lasted about three weeks when one evening the denou-

(CONTINUED ON FIFTYFIFTH PAGE.)

# CANCER

For Canadian testimonials & 130-page book—free, write Dept. 11, Mason Manufacturing Co., 577 Sherbourne Street, Toronto Ontario.