

Paradise Reopened.

'I've got a piece of news for you, sis.' Tom vaulted over the veranda railing and joined Nancy in the hammock. 'I was out at the creek this afternoon, and on the way home stopped at the factory, Johnson told me Colonel Ames has sold the place to a man by the name of Thornton from New York. He's a queer old customer, so Johnson said, rich as cream and bound to turn everything into more cream. He is going to put up a new drying-shed where the playground is, so you will have to move or go out of business.'

'O Tom!' Nancy sat up and looked at him in horrified dismay. 'That is the only vacant one in the factory end of the city. He shan't have it!'

'Don't get excited, Nancy. You can't stop him if he has made up his mind. From what Johnson said, I should imagine the man was as hard as iron. He thinks more of dollars than of kids. He might move the factory, of course, and let you have that block for a playground for the ragamuffins.'

Nancy ignored her brother's sarcasm. She was already trying to devise some plan by which the playground might be retained for the use of the poor children of that busy factory neighborhood.

Nancy had left college in the middle of her sophomore year, summoned home on account of her mother's ill health. The girl's presence did Mrs. Bates more good than medicine, and although she would never be strong again, she was soon able to be about and to take up some of her duties.

This left Nancy with much leisure time. She would not leave her mother to go back to college, and she roamed restlessly about, trying to adjust herself to the old life.

'In my poor opinion, the trouble with college, said her father as he watched her 'is that it gives a girl too broad a view for the ordinary narrow life.'

'You mean, sir,' corrected his daughter as she ruffled his hair, 'that it makes life so very broad that the ordinary girl cannot see the horizon.'

During her first year at college Nancy had spent the spring vacation at the Rivington Street settlement in New York, and it had been her great desire to take up the settlement work after she received her diploma.

Now that she found time passing so slowly, she went out to the mission school at which she had once taught; perhaps there would be work for her. The gate was locked and the building closed. A woman explained that the old superintendent had moved away, and that no one had taken his place.

'It's too bad,' she said hopelessly. 'It was the only good influence the children had. They are in the street all the time now, and are like little animals.'

Nancy looked over the fence at the roomy yard overgrown with weeds, at the old-fashioned house half-hidden among the trees; and a thought flashed through her mind that made her clutch the gate and stare the harder.

'I really believe I could,' she said to herself. 'There is room for two swings and a sand pile, and the children could have a garden. Thank goodness, I didn't spend all my allowance last month! Why didn't I think of this before?'

That evening she addressed her father on the subject.

'Daddy,' she said, slipping her hand coaxingly into his, 'I'm going to have a playground for the poor little children up north. Isn't it dreadful to think they haven't any place but the streets? I spoke to Mr. Johnson, and he is going to put up two swings for me, and I'll order a load of sand in the morning. Oscar can cut the grass for me. You see mother doesn't need me all day, and I shall be so much happier if I feel that I am of some use to someone. I've planned to go to the old mission yard from ten to twelve o'clock every morning, and find one of the older girls to look after the to's in the afternoon. That is, if you don't mind.'

Judge Bates looked at her for a moment.

'Well,' he said, 'I've no objection, provided that you don't run in debt and don't shirk. If you promise those children to be there, you must not disappoint them. You will have to go, no matter how hot it is or how many pink teas you are invited to.'

'Judge Bates,' Nancy turned his face towards hers, 'do you think a daughter of yours could shirk?'

'You might inherit it from your mother, my dear,' laughed the judge.

'So the playground had been opened, and Nancy really never knew what it meant to the children. All of the fathers and many of the mothers worked in the factories, and the little ones had been running wild.

Nancy started a sewing class, in which boys as well as girls learned to use needles. She recalled the simple gymnasium games, and the children sang merrily as they marched around the yard. Along one side of the fence was a garden, and the growth of every plant was watched with breathless interest.

'Another piece of news, Nancy,' said Tom, one noon, as he walked home with his sister from the playground. 'Samuel Spencer Chute is going to spend to-morrow with the Masons. Mrs. Mason has planned a trolley ride to the Springs and has invited us. We start at nine, and will come home in time for the Thursday Club meeting.'

'O Tom!' Nancy clasped her hands in delight. Mr. Chute was a lecturer on sociology, and a man for whose work she had an intense admiration. She eagerly read all that he wrote, and she had always hoped that some day she would meet him and hear him talk about his methods.

But suddenly her face fell. 'I forgot the playground,' she said.

'Bother the playground!' said her brother. 'You've worked like a slave all summer. If the new man is going to shut it up, one day more or less won't make much difference. Think of Samuel Spencer Chute!'

'I promised daddy. If the place is to be closed so soon, one day means a lot to the children. No, Tom, I can't go.'

It was hard to trudge off the next day. She did not think so much of the drive over the mountains as of the opportunity she might have had to talk with Mr. Chute.

'It's just as well,' she tried to console herself. 'He probably would have no time for insignificant me.'

The children were more troublesome than usual that morning. It was very warm, and the heat made them restless. Some of them had heard that the playground was to be closed, and tormented her with questions that she could not answer. They did not want to sew, they would not swing, and they turned their backs on the sand pile.

At last she started a game of drop the handkerchief. She was running round the circle after an imp in a pink frock when she stumbled and would have fallen if she had not been caught by a gray-bearded man who came hurriedly through the open gate.

'I am not hurt, thank you,' she said, in answer to his inquiries.

As she looked at him she was puzzled. Surely she had seen this fine old man before. Then her face brightened and she held out her hand impulsively.

'Mr. Chute,' she said, 'I have wanted so much to meet you. But I did not expect to see you here. I thought you were going with the Masons. I recognized you at once from the picture in the Express.'

The stranger looked rather puzzled in his turn, but he shook hands and answered rather absently:

'The Express, yes. You are Miss Bates, the young girl who takes these children to Paradise every day?'

She colored. 'Unfortunately, Paradise will soon have to be closed. The mill has been sold, and the owner is going to take this lot, the only breathing-place in this end of the city, for a drying shed. It is a perfect shame! Of course, legally, he can build drying-sheds all over the place if he wants to, but don't you think the children should have some privileges? Don't you think he must be a grasping miser?'

The newcomer laughed a little uneasily at her girlish enthusiasm, and then began to question her as to what she had done and what she would like to do. She deplored the apathy with which people regarded the needs of the factory district.

'I wish they could hear you,' she said, with flattering although unconscious emphasis. 'A club is going to meet at our house this evening. I wish you would come and speak to us. It would be a great bore to you, I know,' she added, when she saw the bewildered expression on his face.

He hastened to reassure her, and it was finally arranged that he should talk to the club members very informally.

Nancy flew home that afternoon on wings of expectation. To her surprise

she found Tom in the hammock.

'You didn't miss much,' he said, lazily. 'The great reformer didn't come; missed his train.'

'He didn't,' contradicted Nancy. 'He has been down at the playground, and he is coming here to-night. Tom, he's magnificent, just like a prophet of old, with his white hair and beard.'

'You are romancing,' declared Tom. 'Mr. Chute is in New York.'

'Mr. Chute is in Euston,' repeated his sister. 'Wait and you'll see.'

Tom waited, and Nancy went to tell her mother and receive the approval that she never failed to find.

There was only a small group gathered in the drawing room when the stranger came in. He was late, and Nancy had only time to introduce him to her mother before she spoke the few words presenting him to the club.

Her father entered, and as he took the chair behind her, he gave a low whistle. Nancy patted his hand rebukingly, but was too much interested in Mr. Chute to ask the cause of the demonstration.

The visitor plunged at once into his subject. He spoke of the little children who were growing up in the neglect made necessary by circumstances, of the cares of the fathers and mothers, of the wants and needs of both.

Then he described what he had seen at the playground, and told what he believed would be the fine result of just such simple, well directed effort.

'I have never been much interested in work among the children,' he concluded. 'I have always taken a certain pride in having my factories built and operated with regard to the comfort of the workmen, and I have devoted much study to bettering their condition. But since I bought the mill in North Euston, my attention has been called to the needs of the little ones, and I want to tell you that I have decided to build a model building with a kindergarten room, a gymnasium and public baths. I frankly confess that I should not have thought of this if Miss Bates had not shown me the necessity. I do not believe we can properly estimate the results of her summer's work.'

Nancy never heard him after he spoke of having purchased the factory. She understood now why her father had whistled. She stared at the speaker in amazement until Tom pinched her ear.

'You goose!' he said. 'How did you manage to tangle Mr. Thornton with Samuel Spencer Chute?'

Mr. Thornton put him aside and smiled kindly at poor shamefaced Nancy.

'I did not want to deceive you this morning, Miss Bates, but you rather forced me to do so. It is not often that one has the opportunity to hear unprejudiced views. I hope you will forgive me, and that we shall be able to work together for the little ones.'

Nancy gasped. 'You look exactly like the picture of Mr. Chute!'

Mr. Thornton laughed. 'I believe a reporter mixed names and photographs that day, and forced me to masquerade as Mr. Chute. I am glad he did.'

A Privilege of Poet

The awakening of public interest in the personality of Sarah Flower Adams, the author of the hymn, 'Nearer, My God, To Thee,' had reminded the Pall Mall Magazine of the controversy started by Cardinal Newman's 'Lead Kindly Light.'

Probably no composition of the kind, it says, ever gave rise to so much discussion and more or less impertinent speculation. Readers between lines read into all sorts of doubts and fears, from which they were pleased to assume the author must have been suffering when he wrote it.

The controversy fairly raged and Newman let it rage. But at last the disputants insisted upon knowing what the poet meant from himself, and in the end they 'drew Newman. He wrote in 1879 to Doctor Greenhill, and he did not quote Byron, who had been in a similar position years before, but preferred to instance Keble.

'Keble, I think it was who said that poets were not bound to give a sense to what they had written. Though I am not a poet like Keble, I am not bound either to remember my own meaning, whatever it was, at the end of fifty years. It would be quite tyrannical if one were obliged to be ready for examination on the transient states of mind which come upon one when one is homesick or seasick, or in other ways sensitive or excited.'

As 'Lead Kindly Light' was supposed to have been written during a storm at sea, the reference to seasickness is not inapt.

He Said to Himself

Kansas enjoys the distinction, possibly, of being the only State in the Union where a man has been allowed by a court of inquiry to testify regarding what he said to himself.

A committee had been appointed by the legislature, says the Green Bag, to investigate the alleged bribery of certain members in connection with a defeated railroad bill. The first witness called testified that he saw one of the representatives late one night coming down the hotel stairs.

'I said to myself—'he went on, but a member on the side of the defense jumped to his feet.

'Hold on!' he shouted. 'You can't testify about what you said to yourself!'

The prosecutor retorted that there was no law to prohibit him from so testifying. A long argument ensued, but a majority of the committee agreed with the chairman that the testimony was admissible.

'I said to myself,' seriously proceeded the witness, 'that M. had been up to Billy's room to get his pay.'

The testimony was recorded and made a part of the official record.

Educate the Servant Girl

Students of the complex problem of domestic service are recognizing more and more that the real trouble lies in what we call the 'disposition,' and no multiplication of domestic labor unions or of training schools for service will set things right so far as they modify the deposition, says Mary Lowe Dickinson in Leslie's Weekly. The causes that create and bring together the undisciplined women we find in the relation of employer and employed need to be better understood by students eager for social betterment. Give us training schools, yes, but the lack of training in proper ideas as to what is a proper return for wages on the part of the servant accounts for much of our domestic trouble.

Our need, after all, is education. The one road out of present domestic conditions is the long and slow way of instruction until soul by soul mistress and maid learn the good old fashioned principle of mutual helpfulness and material forbearance—yes, we even dare to add mutual good will.

Sure Regulators.—Mandrake and Dandelion are known to exert a powerful influence on the liver and kidneys, restoring them to healthful action, inducing a regular flow of the secretions and imparting to the organs complete power to perform their functions. These valuable ingredients enter into the composition of Parmelee's Vegetable Pills, and serve to render them the agreeable and salutary medicine they are. There are few pills so effective as they in their action.

Too Late

The neatness of the New England house-keeper is a matter of common remark, and husbands in that part of the country are supposed to appreciate their advantages. A bit of dialogue reported by a New York paper shows, however, that there may be another side to the matter.

'Martha, have you wiped the sink dry yet?' asked the farmer, as he made the final preparations for the night.

'Yes, Josh,' she replied. 'Why do you ask?'

'Well, I did want a drink, but I guess I can get along till the morning.'

They Wake the Torpid Energies.—Machinery not properly supervised and left to run itself very soon shows fault in its working. It is the same with the digestive organs. Unchecked from time to time they are likely to become torpid and throw the whole system out of gear. Parmelee's Vegetable Pills were made to meet such cases. They restore to the full the flagging faculties, and bring into order all parts of the mechanism.

NEW YEAR'S OMENS.

Good and Bad Signs On January 1, strange Superstitions.

The calendar begins the year on Jan. 1, and it is not strange that in the beginning of the year men should find an augury for the future. Ever since the reckoning of time began the fortune of the new year's initial day has been regarded as in a measure indicative of what was to come during the twelve months succeeding. We no longer go to augurs to foretell the future—that is, most of us do not—for instead of being installed in temples and living in luxury the soothsayers now inhabit humble quarters in back streets and alleys. But the vein of superstition which runs through the human race is bound to manifest itself in some way, and, although we are prone to regard ourselves as quite above the foolish practices of our ancestors, we nevertheless, show that perhaps we are not so far advanced as we think ourselves.

This desire to peer into the future is the origin of not a few of the superstitions which we now openly deride, with a mental reservation that, perhaps, after all, it is just barely possible there may be something in them. In nearly all countries some form of divination is practiced, particularly by the young, on New Year's day to foretell the future. The Scottish people are fond of regarding themselves as highly intellectual, but in this matter they are as credulous as the peasant of the Sicilian mountains. He uses his beads, but the Scotchman employs his Bible which he places back down on the table, permits it to fall open of its own weight, then, without looking, he puts his finger on a page and reads the verse on which it rests,

and this is supposed to indicate his fortune for the year.

The world over cards and dice are in high favor as being supposed to indicate the decrees of fate. The cards and the throws are fortunate or the reverse in about equal numbers, so that every one has a fair chance of obtaining an omen for good. The actions and voices of the animal associates of man were formerly on this day above all others significant of good or evil to come. A dog's cheerful bark on New Year's morn was auspicious, his howl a very unfavorable sign. To meet a cat New Year's morning betokens ill for the future, as, curiously enough, it is regarded in the Latin countries as the sign of a coming change of residence. To see a snake is the worst possible omen, for it signifies death by violence. A few years ago an Italian living near Milan saw three snakes together on New Year's morning before breakfast and was so frightened that he fell ill, became despondent and did actually die. To see a pig is regarded throughout southern Europe as a fortunate omen, signifying plenty in the coming twelve months, while the sight of a crow, a magpie or a jackdaw probably from the thievish propensities of these birds is regarded as a sign that the beholder will be systematically swindled during the coming twelve months.

The Amateur Detective

The wisest person may sometimes make a serious mistake by judging entirely from appearances. Forward gives a case in point in which the enormity of the mistake contributes largely to the humor.

A careless young woman, in starting to leave a car, dropped her purse. A young man, who evidently intended to drop the car at the same time saw her drop the purse, picked it up and put it into his pocket.

But his action had not been unnoticed. Just as he stepped from the car an elderly man gripped him by the arm and whispered, 'If you don't give that purse to the lady this instant I'll expose you.'

'Yes, certainly!' gasped the astonished young man. Then, with a grin, 'I beg pardon, Elizabeth; you dropped your purse.'

'Oh, thank you, Jim,' she replied, as she took it.

'I hope you are satisfied, said Jim, turning to the elderly man. 'The lady is my sister.'

Home-Made.

If cold happiness be p'ss,
Within our breast this jewel lies.

1902

It is to be hoped, although it cannot be expected, that the whole of the twentieth century may pass without bringing forth any events more sensational than those which have marked the first year of the century. That country is happy, says an old proverb, which makes no history. The year is a prosperous year during which nothing startling occurs.

Looking over the world, how few events of the past year are to be noted that will find a prominent place in history! Capricious France has not even passed through a cabinet crisis, but has the same ministry which took office in 1899. Germany has suffered and is suffering from depression in business caused by too confident banking on the future by its commercial and industrial leaders. The rest of Europe has been quiet—one might almost say stagnant.

In a broad political sense, the creation of the great Australian commonwealth is the most important event of the year. There is a great future before the new republican and democratic dependency of the British crown, and the whole world wishes it a prosperous century.

Each of the two great English-speaking nations has been bereaved by the taking away of the head of the state—the venerable and venerated queen who had reigned so long that only the oldest of her subjects could remember any other sovereign; and the well-beloved President, whose four years of service had given him a permanent place in the affections of the people.

These are the chief things to remember about the year that is waning. Few as they are, they are more numerous than those which the meager pages of history record of many a year in past centuries during the stirring times when sovereigns intrigued to gain power, and went to war to snatch away the power of their rivals.

No one need fear cholera or any summer complaint if they have a bottle of Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Dysentery Cordial ready for use. It corrects all looseness of the bowels promptly and causes a healthy and natural action. This is a medicine adapted for the young and old, rich and poor, and rapidly coming the most popular medicine for cholera, dysentery, etc., in the market.

In Fields War Oil.—Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil is known in Australia, South and Central America as well as in Canada and the United States and its consumption increases each year. It has made its own way and all that needs to be done is to keep its name before the public. Everyone knows that it is to be had at any store, for all merchants keep it.