

The Strength of the Hills.

My thoughts go home to that old brown house, with its low roof sloping down to the east.

And its garden fragrant with roses and thyme. That is home to me, and I am sure of it.

After the West the great hills rise, silent and staid and gloomy and old.

I thought they were giants, and doomed to keep their watch, while the world would wake or sleep.

Till the trumpet should sound on the judgment day.

I used to wonder of what they dreamed, As they brooded there in their silent night.

While March winds smote them, or June rains fell, Or the snows of winter their ghostly spell.

And the winds of spring, when the world began to stir, And the birds in their hearts began to sing.

They remembered a younger world than ours, Before the trees on their tops were born.

When the soil was new, and the world was young, And the winds were fresh, and the world was young.

And I was as young as the hills were old, And the world was warm with the breath of spring.

And the roses red and the lilies white, Budded and bloomed for my heart's delight.

And the birds in their hearts began to sing, And the winds were fresh, and the world was young.

They will brood, and dream, and be silent as now, When the youngest children alive to-day

Have grown to be women and men, grown old, And gone from the world like a tale that is told.

And even those who forget to stay, — Louise Chandler Moulton, in Harper's Magazine for September.

A DESIRABLE HOUSE.

Mr. and Mrs. Laurence Franklyn had got tired of life in the country.

Of course, wild roses, strawberries and cream, and the song of blackbirds and larks before dawn were very en-

chanting, but they had their balancing drawbacks. The garden was full of weeds, and the kitchen stood an inch deep in water whenever

there was a trifle heavier rain than usual, and the half-mile walk from the

depoth, however convenient in flowery time, gave Mr. Franklyn the jumping

neuralgia when traversed in a grizzly equivalent. The butcher forgot to call

just when his wares were needed most, the next-door neighbor charged a little

more than city prices for his milk, eggs, and butter, and the cook and the

chambermaid left at the end of the first month.

So that life in the rural districts was not altogether without trials to Mrs.

Laurence Franklyn, and about the time that New York houses break out

into a hundred varieties of bills having the legends, "In Let," and "For Sale," she said to her husband:

"Don't you think, dear, it would be well enough for us to return to the city?"

"Yes, I do," said Mr. Franklyn.

"Miss Julia Lesardi, Mrs. Franklyn's pre-tye-old sister, clapped her hands.

"Good! good!" cried she. "Now I shall have some sort of chance at

morning concerts and the opera again!"

And house-hunting commenced in good earnest. But it flared after the

first edge of enthusiastic enterprise was worn off. None of the houses suited

exactly. Mrs. Franklyn declared that it was of no use wearing out one's shoe-

leather and temper looking for what didn't be found. Mr. Franklyn said it was a pity they hadn't found that

out before. Mrs. Franklyn said that as far as she was concerned, she would

just as soon stay where they were. Mr. Franklyn retorted that anything

was better than an insolent woman, Mrs. Franklyn said she was tired. Mr.

Franklyn went out of the room, bang-

ing the door behind him. Miss Lesardi, who sat at the end of the sofa, and

that she for one never intended to be married.

"I don't care," sobbed Mrs. Franklyn. "It was my husband's fault, taking this horrible fault-hound."

"Oh, Bee, how can you say so?" said Miss Lesardi (Mrs. Laurence Franklyn's baptismal appellation was Beatrice).

"You were as wild after it as he was."

"And," added Bee, ignoring this interruption, "if we have lived on the grass under an umbrella I shall make no further efforts."

Mr. Franklyn said the same thing, and Miss Lesardi was just making up her mind to another season of frogs, damp kitchen, and fresh eggs at eight cents, when her eye caught a notice in the paper.

"Oh, Julia," cried she, "I've seen the sweetest little gem of a house!"

"Been house-hunting, eh?" asked Miss Lesardi.

"Well, no, not exactly house-hunting, you know. I wouldn't do that after Laurence's shameful behavior! But I saw the bill and I went in. Double parlors, and frescoed dining-room in the rear; hot and cold water, gas, range, bath—everything, in short, and the hall floor inlaid with those delightful mosaic patterns of tessellated marble. The neighborhood delightful, the park handy—"

"And the rent?" eagerly demanded Miss Lesardi, with eyes like blue moons.

"Only eighteen hundred a year."

"Oh, said Julia, "but isn't that a great deal?"

"Not when you consider the prices of houses in general. I'll go back to-morrow and secure it; but mind, it's a secret. I don't want Laurence to know that I have taken any trouble, after his hateful words."

"I don't quite believe in secrets between husbands and wives," said Julia Lesardi. "But, of course, I'll keep your secret!"

Mrs. Franklyn had retired to bed when her husband came home. Miss Lesardi, however, was up to pour his tea.

"Well, Julia," said Mr. Franklyn, triumphantly, "I've found the very house we want."

"You haven't taken it, Laurence?"

"No, but I shall to-morrow."

"I wouldn't do anything without consulting Bee," pleaded Julia.

"I shall give her a pleasant surprise," said Mr. Franklyn, buttering a muffin.

"Remember, Julia, this is between you and me."

"Oh, of course," said Julia, beginning to feel a little embarrassed by the amount of confidence reposed in her.

Early next morning Mr. Franklyn went to New York. Bee followed in the next train, where Miss Lesardi bravely awaited the crisis.

"We shall have to live in two houses as sure as the world," said she to herself. "What idiots these young people are!"

Mrs. Franklyn returned rather earlier than her sister expected her, with a bright, flushed face, and a very

"Well," said Julia, breathlessly.

I've agreed to pay \$2,000 a year for it," said Mrs. Franklyn.

"Two thousand!" echoed Miss Lesardi. "I thought it was only 1,800!"

"Well, so it was, but there's another part of the house, very anxious to secure the house, and—"

"Oh, nonsense!" exclaimed Julia. "That's only the professional land-lady's ruse."

"Oh, but it's true," persisted Bee. "For I saw his hat on the sideboard, and I saw the pattern of his legs

walking about in the upper story to see if the paint was in good order on the second floor. So I said I'd give her 2,000."

"But I really think, Bee, darling, you'd better stop to Laurence."

"So I will," said Bee, "this evening. He will see that his wife is something more than a dead letter in the family. But I want you to go and see the house this afternoon, Julia."

"This afternoon?" cried Miss Lesardi. "We've no time."

"Yes we have," said Beatrice, "just exactly time enough, if we hurry down to the cars and return in the last train."

The level rays of the soft April sunset were shining into the pretty little double drawing-rooms of the house on Millard square as Bee led her sister exultantly.

"Just look at those marble mantels," said she, "and the pattern of the cornices. And the pier glasses and the gas fixtures go with the house—"

"Oh, I beg your pardon, ma'am, I'm sure," said a fawn-colored, elderly lady who advanced bearing with her a small deye bombazine. "I'm sorry to dis-

appoint you, but—"

Beatrice Franklyn looked aghast. "You have not let the house?"

"Yes, ma'am, I have. A poor lone widow like me has her own interests to look to, and the gentleman offered \$2,000 a year. I'd sign the papers at once, which, with a reflective look at her pocket-handkerchief, I did."

"I told you so," said Julia, sotto voce.

Mrs. Franklyn rose in great indignation, her voice rising accordingly.

"I really think," said she, "I should be justified in placing this matter in the hands of the lawyers, and—"

"Why, Bee, my darling?"

"Laurence!"

The folding-doors slid back, and Mrs. Franklyn, and behind herself vice-versa with her husband.

"Here's the gent himself," said the ancient female, who smelled as if she had stepped out of a dye-tub. "Which he can explain!"

"You have never taken this house, Laurence?" almost shrieked Mrs. Franklyn.

"Yes, I have, my dear."

"But I offered \$2,000 for it!"

"And I have signed a three-years' lease at \$2,500," said the husband, somewhat sheepishly.

Miss Lesardi burst out laughing.

"So," said she, "your profound secrecy has cost you just \$500 per annum."

Mrs. Franklyn began to cry—the elderly female looked as if she thought the least might be a good thing.

Julia, meanwhile, was vitiated by this matrimonial squabble. Julia's eyes sparkled merrily.

"Never mind, Bee," said Mr. Franklyn, soothingly. "It's a gem of a house anyway, and we'll be as happy as a day in long in it. I only wish I had owned it for you about it."

"And I wish I hadn't been so obstinate and hateful," whimpered Bee.

"Come," said Miss Lesardi, "let's make haste, or we shall lose the 7:50 way train."

Oxygen and Pith.

The gaseous and other products of decomposition of sewage vary greatly according to the amount of free oxygen present, for upon this depends largely the character of the micro-

organisms which are at work. Some of these can only exist in the presence of free oxygen, others only in its absence, and thus two very different

kinds may be at work in the same sewage, for upon this depends largely the character of the micro-

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