

LYNDON OF HIGH CLIFFE.

AN OLD SOLDIER'S LOVE STORY.

By C. DESPARD, Author of "When the Tide was High," "The Artist and the Man," "Into a Larger Room," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW THE CURE WORKED.

The drawing-room party broke up early that night. Lady Flora seemed tired and out of sorts, and she was glad to escape from the task of entertaining, which, during these past days, had been a heavy burden to her. Hoping to see something of Colonel Lyndon and Letty, she stood out on the terrace for a few minutes after her guests had gone; then, hearing and seeing nothing, she went to her own room. She had not been there for more than a few moments before there came a knock at her door. Guessing who the intruder was, she cried to her to come in, and a little white-robed figure, with a curiously rapturous expression in its eyes, stood before her. "Lady Flora smiled. 'Ah! Letty, my darling!' she said. 'I was expecting to see you. Here, you shall take down my hair, and bring me my dressing-gown, and then we can sit down together and have a talk.' Silently Letty obeyed. In a few moments Lady Flora was in her favourite arm-chair, and she was curled up on the rug at her feet. 'I have a confession to make,' she said tremulously, taking one of Lady Flora's hands, and clasping it in both hers. 'I thought so,' answered her friend, upon which Letty coloured and faltered, for how could Lady Flora know unless her son had told her? 'Then you are not angry with me?' she murmured. 'Angry! my child! how could I be angry? I knew, of course, that this would happen some day, and with my great interest in you—' 'But,' broke in Letty, to whom all this was very perplexing, 'it has nothing to do with me. I want nothing except—except—to see you all happy. Why do you look at me so, dear Lady Flora? I believe it is all right. I think he sees how foolish he has been. I do not think he will go to Turkey or Russia now.'

who were about the Castle, knew, or even guessed, whether things were leading. Once Lady Flora ventured to hint at her surprise that he took no decided step, and then he told her gravely that they had both been mistaken. Yet he and Letty were constantly together, and he admired her more than ever, and she showed, in a hundred ways, her confidence in him and her regard for his opinion. 'Men are perverse—wilfully perverse,' said Lady Flora to herself. 'There is no doing anything with them.' All her people were disappointing her, and all her schemes were coming to nothing, and she felt, naturally, a little indignant with the world in general for not submitting itself to management. Some of this irritability may have been apparent in her manner to Colonel Lyndon, or, possibly, he was over-sensitive. He came to feel presently that he had worn out his welcome, and that it was time he should leave Castle Ettrick. On the day before his departure he made an opportunity for speaking to Letty alone. It was not to tell her he loved her, or to bid her an impassioned farewell. That was not the colonel's way. He left it, as he would have said, to boys and weaklings to blazon out their want of self-control to the universe. He was a man, and he was able to hold himself in check. They met in the garden early in the afternoon. Milly was with them; but she ran off after the dogs, and for a few moments they were left alone. 'Do you remember,' said the colonel, looking down at Letty with grave, kind eyes, 'a talk we had one night coming home from Deep Deane?' 'Oh! yes, yes; you were so kind; you helped me so much by what you said,' answered Letty very earnestly. 'Did I help you? I am very glad,' said the colonel. 'And you made me a promise. Do you remember that?' 'You asked me to look upon you as my friend.'

shall have plenty of time for rest. You know I need never do anything else,' said Veronica, with a forced smile. Veronica's visit, and the change in her appearance and manner, made hope revive in Lady Flora's breast. Girls—especially rich girls—are whimsical. It might be that Percy had not taken quite the right way with her. Or perhaps she expected him to persevere in the teeth of refusal. A sprained ankle, Lady Flora was convinced, could not have caused so great a change. Percy, who had rejoined his regiment, was away from home when Miss Browne paid her farewell visit to the Castle. On his return for one of those brief leaves which he often took now, his mother spoke of it, hinting at her suspicion; but the contradictory young fellow did not take the hint kindly. 'I have done with rich girls,' he said; 'they think too much of themselves. And I don't believe, under any circumstances, I should have cared to owe my fortune to a woman.' 'But I thought there was no question of money,' said Lady Flora. 'I thought—' He interrupted her: 'Yes, mother, and so did I think; but we are all liable to error. I admire Miss Browne; I shall always admire her; but I shall never again ask her to be my wife. And you may be sure,' he added, with a laugh, in which there was nothing forced, 'that she would never have me.'

Throughout that winter, for the sake of economy, Mr. Winstanley and Lady Flora had decided to spend in the country. Percy was constantly flying backwards and forwards between his regiment and his home. Ettrick seemed never to have been so delightful to him, and certainly he had never been more delightful to his family. Gentle, kind, considerate, full of fun, and ready to take a part in everything that was going on, his frequent visits made the life of the solitary country-house, when the sharp, bleak winter days frightened its other guests away. None of them knew—and least of all she who had wrought the miracle—to what influence this happy change was due. None of them could have suspected that his chief attraction to Castle Ettrick that winter was the slight, fair girl, with the heart of a lion, who had gone out of her way to reproach him for his selfishness. As for Letty, it was natural that she should be interested in him. He did not mean it subtly, but if he had artfully calculated his conduct beforehand, he could not have adopted a course more certain to win her. And when his manner towards her began to be marked by a peculiar gentleness: when she saw in the eyes that on rare occasions sought hers a sunny brightness, for which nothing but the sympathy between their unspoken thoughts could account, a new feeling, one of which she did not try to understand, took possession of her. He became her hero. She set him up on a pedestal of her own, and her innocent girlish heart bowed down before him. This was the condition of things when one evening, early in December, after an unusually long absence, Captain Winstanley appeared suddenly at the Castle. He looked much paler than was ordinary with him, and there was an agitation in his manner which aroused his mother's anxiety. After they had dined, she called him into her boudoir, and for more than an hour they were shut up together. It was a painful interview to both of them. When Lady Flora heard of her son's latest fancy: heard that his love had passed from a rich girl, who had all the world at her feet, to a poor little nobody, her indignation knew no bounds. 'It is impossible, Percy,' she cried; 'impossible! This is a mad freak. The girl—' 'Not a single word against her, mother, please!' he said angrily; 'she is perfectly innocent of this. She does not even know how I feel. For all I can tell, she may refuse me.'



WITHOUT SO MUCH AS SITTING DOWN, THE GIRL SAID WHAT SHE HAD TO SAY.

'He will go—who will go?' asked Lady Flora, who was now as much perplexed as Letty. 'I mean Captain Winstanley,' said Letty, blushing up to the roots of her hair. 'Captain Winstanley?' cried Lady Flora, in great astonishment. 'What have his affairs to do with you?' She had drawn herself up in her chair, and loosened the clasp of Letty's hands upon her own. 'I do not understand,' she said coldly. 'There must be some mistake.' In a voice choked with sobs—for she began to fear that she had done something really unnatural and forward—Letty began to explain what had happened. 'I met Captain Winstanley in the garden,' she said, 'and it had been on my mind all day to tell him how cruel it was of him to make you unhappy because he was unhappy himself, and so—' 'And so you told him?' 'Yes, I told him.' 'In those very words?' Letty hung her head. 'I am afraid I told him that he was selfish,' she faltered. To her surprise and relief Lady Flora began to smile. 'Well,' she said, in a voice from which the sternness had gone, 'and what did Captain Winstanley say to your sermon? Did he promise to be a good boy?' 'He said I was quite right, and promised to think over what I had said. Was I very impudent?' said poor Letty. 'No, not impudent, dear; impertinence it is in the intention. A little foolish, perhaps. You meant well, so I will say no more about it. But another time you must consult me before you give way to your rather Quixotic impulses. Will you promise me this?' 'Oh, yes, yes!' answered Letty readily, and then Lady Flora kissed her, and bade her good night; but ever after Letty retained an uneasy feeling about her bold proceeding that evening. There was still some interchange of courtesies between the Castle and Deep Deane, where Veronica remained, her foot not being sufficiently recovered to allow of her travelling; but Colonel Lyndon, was now a more frequent visitor than Percy, and Lady Flora paid no more attention calls at the farm. The little hoop of pearls was still where Colonel Lyndon had placed it on the night of his arrival. For he alone, of all those

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That is very likely indeed!' said Lady Flora, satirically. 'I think it is,' answered Percy; 'I know she is too good for me, far.' Lady Flora laughed. In her anger and disappointment she was scarcely mistress of herself. 'If you take it in this way—' said Percy, rising. 'Oh! stay a moment, stay a moment!' she cried. 'Have a little consideration for me, Percy.' 'If you will consider me, mother, I will consider you,' said the young man. 'You ought to treat me seriously—to treat me as a man. Do you think I would have come to you before any one else—even her—if it was not a very serious matter with me? Can't we speak of it quietly?' 'I will try,' she answered; 'but you must have patience with me.' There followed a long discussion. Lady Flora tried her hardest to dissuade her son from his purpose. She pointed out what

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A singular fatality was reported to the Blackburn coroner on Saturday. A little boy of five, named Thomas Bonner, came home from play and told his stepmother that his playmate had rammed a piece of an old billycock hat into his mouth. She ran to a doctor with him, and he found that a piece of felt had stuck crosswise in the boy's throat. On the way to the infirmary the boy suddenly died.

"August Flower"

There is a gentleman at Malden-on-the-Hudson, N. Y., named Captain A. G. Pareis, who has written us a letter in which it is evident that he has made up his mind concerning some things, and this is what he says:

"I have used your preparation called August Flower in my family for seven or eight years. It is constantly in my house, and we consider it the best remedy for Indigestion, Constipation and Constipation we have ever used or known. My wife is troubled with Dyspepsia, and at times suffers very much after eating. The August Flower, however, relieves the difficulty. My wife frequently says to me when I am going to town, 'We are out of August Flower, and I think you had better get another bottle.' I am also troubled with Indigestion, and whenever I am, I take one or two teaspoonfuls before eating, for a day or two, and all trouble is removed."

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He (suddenly)—"Do you think the minister will want to kiss you, dear?" She (pleadingly)—"Let him if he wants to, Harry. He's just grown a beautiful mustache."

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