

A MAN'S REVENGE;

OR, THE CONVICT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXII.

As Sunbeam emerged from the wood she came face to face with Eileen, and stopped with a feeling of alarm.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, confused; "are you better? I thought you were in the house, or I should—"

"I have been out an hour, and the air has done wonders for me. What would you have done had you known I had left my room—kept me company?" asked Eileen, her eyes intent on the girl's face.

Sunbeam hesitated. Her mind was busy reviewing the meeting with her father. Could Eileen have overheard them? She looked up anxiously. But Eileen's face was a mask.

"Yes—if you had wished me to do so," she murmured. "I should not have rushed off by myself at all events, in case—in case you fell lonely."

She stammered somewhat, for the words she spoke struck her as being ridiculous from her to Eileen. Confusion, however, had lamed her tongue, and made her say what at any other time she would have held back.

But Eileen was in a gentle mood, and therefore refrained from showing her habitual disdain. She smiled, and turning towards the terrace, exclaimed brightly—

"That was nice of you, Sunbeam. For we are not the best of friends as a rule. And I do not deserve much consideration from you. But we will forget all disagreeables and be friends, that is if you are willing."

Sunbeam flushed hotly. Her generous heart expanded to the touch of sympathy; in that moment she forgot all Eileen's past unkindnesses and was ready to forgive at once.

"Of course I am!" she ejaculated. "I always wanted that from the first, I think, because—"

She paused, intimidated by Eileen's laughing, questioning eyes.

"Because what, Sunbeam?"

"Because—you belong to Mr. Sinclair—and he has always been so good to me—I owe him more than I can tell."

"Really!" exclaimed Eileen, her face growing grave. "I don't think he has done more for you than any one could have done—more than he would do for any girl he found in trouble. He is very tender-hearted, and apt to make mountains out of mole-hills when dealing with another's woes. Besides, he does not require any return for what he does. He would feel quite vexed if he thought you magnified his very ordinary doings into the deeds of a demi-god."

Sunbeam colored vividly. Eileen's tone reminded her of their past encounters. Besides, she had certainly not said enough to justify such an elaborate reply.

"No one had ever been angry with me before—except once," she faltered, "and I could not understand your being so. You are so beautiful that I wanted you to like me, more for that than for any other reason, I think."

Eileen laughed.

"Thank you, Sunbeam! You are a graceful flatterer! But has it not occurred to you that your own pretiness might make other girls dislike you?"

"Oh, Miss Riviere, not you, at all events. I cannot believe that!"

"And you are right. Nor will we try to solve the mystery of the sudden wave of dislike that surged between us. For we are going to be friends," repeated Eileen, laying her hand on Sunbeam's arm and leading her into the house.

"Now I am going back to my room to rest," she continued, "but we shall meet at dinner time. I feel that the worst of my attack is over and shall be able to resume my duties as hostess to-night, thanks to the walk and your cheering company."

Still wondering at her changed manner, Sunbeam left her at the top of the stairs and went to her own room. She was glad to be alone. For she wanted to think over the meeting with her father and Eileen's words. Both had behaved so differently to what she had expected.

She was pleased that Eileen had offered to be friends, but she could not understand why she had done so. As for her father, his behaviour was even more inexplicable. Why had he changed his mind and called her back to tell her so? And did he mean to leave her alone after all? Or, now he had discovered her hiding-place, would he try to get her to go back to him? Besides, now his anger against her had vanished, and he no longer wished her to marry Gentleman Dan—wasn't it her duty to go to him and Aunt Hetty?

She paced the room with a restless step. What could she do? She did not want to go back. She was much happier in her present position—the position her father had trained her for. That was what Mr. Sinclair had said. The thought of cottage life filled her with dismay. She could not resume it. Then the remembrance that the aunt who had been so devoted to her, was perhaps in misery and starving, as her father had hinted, brought the tears to her eyes and hot remorse to her heart. How wicked she was to feel like this after all they had done for her! Besides, they were her people. Nothing could alter that. She had no right here, acting the lady and shrinking from illiterate poverty as from a thing unknown.

To-morrow she would tell Lady Cruse that she must soon leave her. How thankful she was that she had not to tell her worse! The mere fact of her father saying he would not break into the house showed he still cared for her; perhaps in time he would become quite honest. She shivered as she thought how terrible it would have been if he had persisted in his determination. She would have had to warn Eileen and betray him. She was indeed thankful that such a dire calamity was averted. The relief she felt effaced all forebodings for the future now she thought about it, and recalled her horror on hearing his intentions.

She dressed for the evening in the simple dinner gown Lady Cruse had given her, and looked at herself thoughtfully in the long glass. She was a burglar's daughter still, as much now as when the village children taunted her, and yet she looked so different—just like those others about her, those women of high birth and culture. What would they say if they knew that she had just saved their jewels for them all—if they knew that her father was a convict and a thief? And yet Lady Cruse and Lady Larkin both knew that and kept her with them, and Mr. Sinclair had known it from the first and yet befriended her.

The color flooded her sweet face as she thought of him, and she caught her hands to her breast, murmuring—

"And I love him! Heaven, how I love him!"

Then, shocked at the words, she covered her lips with her fingers, and turned away from her blushing reflection.

Movements on the landing without made her conclude that the pleasure-makers had returned earlier than they intended, and she opened her door intent on seeking Lady Cruse. Her room was not far from the door Bill had asked her to unlock. As she passed it she glanced at it with a feeling of relief, then started. For it stood open. And yet Bill had told her it was unlocked, and neither she nor Eileen had used it.

Though she checked her fear at once, by reflecting that one of the house-party had gone through it to the garden below, she hurried back to Lady Cruse's room, and knocked loudly at the door.

Receiving no answer, she turned the handle and entered. No one was there. She walked across the room timidly and knocked at the dressing-room door, which stood open. Then drew back with a low cry of horror. For her eyes had fallen on the crouching figure of her father. He had lied to her and entered the house after all!

For a second or so terror kept her silent, then her anger broke the spell, and in a low voice she exclaimed—

"Father, you promised not to, you said you would go away, and—"

He sprang towards her, his face full of warning.

"Hush!" he whispered. "This ain't no time for talkin'. I'm here, and I'd my reasons for tellin' you I wasn't coming after all. But now I'd your noise and let me get away quiet. You gave me a fright knockin' at the door. I thought it was someone else. I have only one more room to visit I think, an' then I'll sneak out and you need be none the wiser."

"But you mustn't! Oh, don't you see that I can't let you go with their things after all they have done for me? Besides, you said you would leave Lady Cruse's alone, and yet these are her rooms. Oh, father, if you love me, give them up, for my sake and Aunt Hetty's."

"You've shown so much love yerself to your pore father, haven't you?" he muttered, shaking off her detaining hand. "As for your aunt, it's for her sake I'm here. Now stand aside and let me pass. You aren't going to betray him what's done all for you, are you?"

"I don't know what to do," she moaned, the tears streaming from her eyes. "I can't let you go with their things. Oh, dear, if only I knew what is right."

"Garn. Right is towards me, first, at all events," he exclaimed roughly, picking up a colored handkerchief, in which he had evidently stored most of his ill-gotten goods and pushing her aside.

"No, no," she cried, throwing herself upon him, "I cannot let you do that, father. Oh, give them up and go—the door is open—you can get to it at once, and no one need know you have been here. Whilst if you go with these—"

"Let me pass," he interrupted roughly, anger leaping to his eyes. "Or you'll get more'n you bargained for."

"No, no," she reiterated, laying her hand on the bundle and tugging at it. "You must leave this. Oh, do, father—for the sake of whatever is good in you—for my dead mother's sake!"

He pushed her back, then laughed.

"The dead—such dead as her, ain't no good to me. I've to live, my gal. An' we've wasted enough time. I'll be copped as sure as I stand ere if you don't leave me alone. I don't want to 'urt you, but see, my fist is strong, and liberly is too precious to waste. Now, I'm goin'; let go o' this, or—"

A volley of oaths poured from his lips. For the handkerchief had come untied and the trinkets rolled out on to the floor. What had looked like a working man's dinner was, as she suspected, most of Lady Cruse's jewellery with that

of other guests. With a low cry she fell on her knees, thus escaping the blow he aimed at her.

"Oh, father, father, how could you!" she sobbed, spreading her hands over the glittering mass as though to ward him off. Then, astonished at his apparent indifference, especially after his violence of a few seconds ago, she raised her head to look at him. Was he really repenting? Was that why he did not pick up the things?

The answer met her full in the face. Bill had gone, and Eileen stood in front of her, her eyes full of inquiry, her face pale and severe.

"Sunbeam, what are you doing in here? What are these?" she asked, pointing to the ground.

Sunbeam gasped, her eyes widened with fear. What could she say? How account for this confusion? How shield her father?

"What are you doing?" continued Eileen, pushing the door wide open and entering the dressing-room. "Jewels!—Lady Anne's tiara—Adele's diamonds!—and Lady Cruse's! Sunbeam, speak! What does this mean? Where did you get these? What are you doing with them?"

Sunbeam threw a despairing glance behind her at the further dressing-room door which led to the landing. Until she had entered the room it was hidden from Eileen's view, therefore, she probably had not seen Bill escaping through it. His quick ears had heard her enter and cross the bedroom. He had escaped, probably he had reached the wilderness. And yet she could not betray him now the things were no longer in his possession. But what could she say?

"I found them here. They have fallen down. Some one must have left them—or—"

She paused, conscious that she was talking stupidly, and alarmed at the look on Eileen's face.

"Oh, Miss Riviere," she broke out passionately, "won't you trust me and let me explain later? At present I am too—"

"Too startled to tell the truth," interrupted Eileen, as she stooped and began picking up the things. "You must confess this looks serious to me, Sunbeam. Have you been visiting the different bedrooms? Come, tell me exactly what this means, and then perhaps I shall know what to do."

Sunbeam wrung her hands despairingly.

"What can I do? You promised to be friends, Miss Riviere. Oh, if you will remember that promise and act on it, perhaps—"

"I withdraw it," interposed Eileen, tossing her head. "I offered friendship to a girl I thought worthy of it. But now it is out of the question. I have found you in a visitor's room with various ornaments culled from different jewel boxes. How can I be your friend with such evidence of dishonesty against you?"

Sunbeam raised a flaming face to hers. "Do you mean that you think that I was stealing these?" she asked.

Eileen shrugged her shoulders.

"What else can I think?" she replied coldly, rising and carrying the objects she had picked up to the table. "You can explain nothing, therefore you admit your guilt."

Sunbeam's heart sank. In shielding her father she took the blame upon herself. And yet, surely, no one would believe anything so dreadful—no one who really wished her welfare!

"No," she stammered, "I cannot explain exactly. But there was some one in here—a man—and, oh, you don't believe that?" she added, pleadingly, as Eileen smiled.

"How can I? If there had been a man I should have seen him. I am quite willing to believe you have an accomplice. But, with you in the house, it is not likely that he would risk an entrance. I am sorry. But you see things are quite against you. It was unfortunate for you that I fancied I heard movements in here and entered, for no one in the world would have suspected you of taking the things, and we might have believed that burglars had ransacked the rooms. I told you that had been done once, this afternoon. And I don't mind telling you now that I heard you speaking to someone in the wilderness, the accomplice, no doubt. Also, if what you say is true, about a man being here, you will be proved innocent, for I have given orders for some of the men to watch in the wilderness for trespassers, and any one coming from the house must be caught at once."

Sunbeam turned whiter as she listened. All her fears for her father revived, and yet, if he had been captured, she might tell the entire truth. Eileen would surely believe her now? But loyalty to the rascal held her back. If by chance he had escaped she would betray him by speaking. She must say nothing. And after all it was not so dreadful to bear this suspicion, for the things were safe, and Lady Larkin and Lady Cruse would believe in her. As for Duncan—ah, he would know she was honest!

Courage returned to her as she watched Eileen's white fingers collecting the various articles of jewellery.

"As you say," she murmured quietly, "time will prove my innocence. I am sorry that you will not believe me, but I can bear injustice better than false friendship."

Eileen flashed around upon her, indignantly.

"How dare you speak to me like that?" she demanded.

"I am sorry," replied Sunbeam quietly. "But friendship does not die so quickly as yours towards me has died. I trust. You will see that those who know me will trust and believe in me. Besides, now these things are safe, I do not care much what you say."

"We may still find something missing," replied Eileen with an ominous smile. "And then you will not be so sure of the friendship of others. Trust can, if abused, be shaken. And besides, your antecedents are against you. Everyone will remember them, as well as the saying 'What's bred in the

bone—' But now I must ask you to go to your room. You will see that, until Lady Cruse returns, it is wiser for you to remain there."

She rang the bell as she spoke. "I am sending for the village policeman, so—if he comes to you—you must understand that until this is cleared, my duty to my guests is—"

"You are going to arrest me?" cried Sunbeam, her eyes dilating with horror. "I must sift this matter to the bottom," replied Eileen in so cold a tone that Sunbeam turned away in silence. For she now saw that the enmity between them was as great as before, and knew that it was no good prolonging the conversation.

"She hates me," she mused. "Her offer of friendship was false—for she has always hated me! She is glad this terrible affair has happened. And he, Mr. Sinclair—will he believe me guilty?"

(To be continued.)

ON THE FARM

FEEDING THE WASTE POTATOES.

Pigs are, of all animals, the best for converting unsaleable tubers into money, and potatoes are among the valuable of vegetable foods for porcine stock. But even pigs cannot be kept entirely on potatoes, while very often the quantity to be consumed is too small to make it profitable to buy a pig on purpose to eat them. If the area under potatoes is large there is of necessity a considerable quantity of small ones, or if not quite deserving of this designation many that have to be picked out to make a marketable sample of the remainder when potatoes are worth only low price per bushel, which, from the grower's point of view, seems to be almost every year. In bad seasons there is always a large quantity unsaleable because diseased, as in northern Maine the present season; but even these, if not badly affected, may be consumed by pigs if boiled or steamed, though they may not be given to either cattle or horses without caution.

It is sometimes said that there is danger in feeding uncooked potatoes to cattle, but this is quite a mistake, the only danger lying in their too free use before the digestive organs of the animal have become accustomed to them. Cattle are sometimes slow in taking to potatoes, and if a moderate quantity be given to a dozen or more beasts, and only two or three take an early liking to them there will be great danger of digestive disturbance to those individual beasts, for they may get a much greater quantity than was ever intended for them. When potatoes are being fed instead of roots they should be cautiously introduced and every care taken that no introduced animal gets more than twelve or fourteen pounds a day, but this quantity may be gradually increased up to six or eight pounds in fact, the tubers may be used almost as freely as swedes or mangels when the cattle have become quite accustomed to them. The extensive grower, of course, provides for the consumption of his unsaleable potatoes, but what of the man who has a plethora of tubers who keeps neither pigs nor cows, and perchance has only a horse or two? May they be given to horses with safety or advantage? Certainly. Potatoes are not an ideal food for horses that have to work hard or at a fast pace, but judiciously fed they are very useful and should by no means be wasted.

In considering potatoes as an article of food for horses, Prof. Low says that fifteen pounds of potatoes yield as much nourishment as four and one-half pounds of oats; Von Thayer asserts that three bushels of potatoes are equal to one hundred and twelve pounds of hay; Mr. Curwen, who tried potatoes extensively in the feeding of horses, says that an acre goes as far as four acres of hay. Foods cannot, of course, be compared in this way since potatoes cannot replace hay, we take very little stock of what chemists tell us about feeding horses, because if we blindly followed analysis of food stuffs we should believe that bran was a better food than oats and fall into all sorts of errors as to what is suitable for working horses; but there is very little doubt that potatoes are more nutritious than the roots—carrots, swedes and mangels—commonly given to farm horses, and that with care and judgment they may be suitably employed.

NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR GRAIN.

The worst feature about them is that raw potatoes in any quantity relax the bowels too much, the horse coming perilously near to scouring, and that unless special convenience exists or the quantity to be dealt with is large, it does not pay to cook them. Purging rarely follows when the tubers are steamed or boiled, but neither does it with raw ones if gradually introduced and given in such quantities as a working horse ought to receive. We may calculate the proportion of carbohydrates and fat and fix up the albuminoid ratio to a fraction, but we cannot get good work on potatoes alone, nor will the horse be maintained in hard condition if many potatoes are given in substitution for oats or corn. Therefore, when unsaleable potatoes are given to working animals it must not be expected that they will replace anything like a considerable quantity of the regular corn allowance. Compared with cereals they are deficient in albuminoids and although life may be

sustained on them efficient work cannot be obtained any more than on roots or grass. The chemist may show that there is as much feeding matter in three pounds of potatoes as in one pound of mixed grain food, but as in the case with hay the horse has to take an enormous bulk of food in order to obtain the necessary nourishing constituents, and this is injurious. The tubers must not be given whole to either horses or cattle for the smaller they are the greater the risk of choking. All animals are much less likely to choke on big roots, at which they must bite than on small ones which may be taken into the mouth and greedily bolted without mastication. A small round potato lends itself admirably to choking purposes and probably gives rise to more cases when it is presented whole than any other root. If there is a pulper or slicer, small potatoes should be put through the machine, but where there is nothing of the kind available the tedious process of slicing with a knife may be obviated by hitting each tuber a smashing blow with a mallet. A good plan is to sprinkle plenty of chaff on the floor and then bruise each tuber in the quantity allowed in the manner indicated. Potatoes, especially for horses, should be washed or otherwise rendered tolerably free from dirt—indeed, adhering soil which is sometimes plentiful when the tubers are lifted during or after wet weather, should be removed before they are given to any animal. The dirt may have no very remote connection with the relaxation of the bowels when horses are first given potatoes—indeed, it is certainly that or some constituent in the rind, since pared potatoes do not seem to have such a marked relaxing effect on the bowels. Crushed potatoes should be fed mixed with the oats and chaff. Youatt recommends as the desired proportion, one pound of potatoes to 2 and one-half pounds of other ingredients, but this, seeing that heavy horses need from thirty-six to forty pounds of food per day is far too much for working horses and is should only be allowed to idle horses or those doing next to nothing at a walk.

COOKED OR RAW.

With reference to the relative advantage of feeding cooked and raw potatoes it is generally conceded that potatoes are best cooked for pigs—indeed there are many who affirm that it is only potatoes that pay for cooking where pig feeding is concerned. Long mentions a number of experiments conducted in Denmark with a view of ascertaining whether a better return could be obtained by the use of boiled or raw potatoes. Ten young pigs of the same litter were put into two lots at the age of ten weeks, one lot being fed upon boiled and the other upon raw potatoes. Each lot received in addition two and one-half pounds of barley meal which in one instance was given in a boiled state while in the other the barley was only bruised. In four weeks the increase in the weight of the pigs which had been fed upon boiled food was found to be 173 pounds whereas in the other case it was only 115 pounds. It must not be forgotten, however, that against the fifty-eight pounds of increase must be put the trouble of cooking, cost of fuel, wear and tear of plants, etc. With reference to cooking potatoes for animals other than pigs—for which they are no doubt, improved and especially in winter when warf food is advantageous—there are objections to feeding cooked food to horses, while cattle thrive just as well on potatoes given pulped.

CHINA'S FOREIGN DEBT.

Startling Increase During the Last Fourteen Years.

Before the outbreak of the war with Japan, 1894-95, the foreign debt incurred by China was insignificant in amount, the only loan of which any portion now remains outstanding being a small one of £115,080 at 7 per cent., issued in 1886. Of this amount £61,980 has been redeemed (to December 31, 1906), leaving £53,100 still to be redeemed.

The Government had some knowledge of the financial history of Turkey and of Egypt, writes a correspondent of the London Times, and it steadily resisted all blandishments to "improve its estate" on borrowed money.

But the thirty years of peace from 1864 to 1894 were followed by some very expensive events. First the war with Japan, with its resulting indemnity and the necessity of rearmament.

Next came the midsummer madness of 1900, which was punished by the various Powers with the infliction of an indemnity demand footing up about £67,000,000. At the time of the Russo-Japanese war another loan of £1,000,000 was floated. In addition there are the railway loans all with a Government guarantee.

The total amount of the foreign debt constituting an obligation of the Imperial Government and secured on its revenues, including Government loans not yet paid off, indemnity (1901) and railway loans is as follows:

Total amount of original issue, £135,270,080; charge in 1906 for interest and sinking fund (including one redemption in January, 1907), £7,433,749; paid off to January 31, 1907, £9,974,241; outstanding January 31, 1907, £125,295,839.

HER LIMITATIONS.

"These pianos look too cheap," said the young woman with the picture hat, her brows contracting slightly. "Show me some of the best you've got."