

Time Heals Most Wounds

A Tale of Love and Disappointment

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Earl was greatly fatigued after his long interview, and Lord Harecastle was very concerned at his weakness.

"I am afraid I was not too kind to that young woman," he remarked to his son, "but tell her not to mind. It was myself I was punishing. My lad, I have about reached the end of my tether. I shan't be sorry, Cyril."

"Try to rest, father. You will soon be strong again," Lord Harecastle said with a cheerfulness that he was little feeling.

Rebekah had spoken to him for a moment and had delivered Ethel's message. It was curious, but it was a relief that he had not seen her before her departure. The interview with the Earl must have shocked her, and it would be better that time should have an opportunity of applying its salve.

In the morning he received her letter, and he was wounded to the quick as he read her words of self-abasement; and his first impulse was to rush to her. But his father's condition kept him prisoner, for there was no question, but that his life was hanging by a thread. He telegraphed for Sir Francis Lockyer, who told them that there was no hope of the Earl's recovery.

"He may linger on for a week or two, but—"

He stopped expressively, and Lord Harecastle gathered the significance of his meaning. His manner to his father became even more tender, and the old Earl smiled his grateful thanks. He, too, knew that the end was near, but he did not flinch, for he no longer had a desire to live. His affection for Rebekah seemed to increase, and he was unhappy when she was absent.

Joel looked on at the approaching end of the man he had tortured so cruelly.

The Earl now and then asked for his presence, and he always went to see him, but his manner was constrained and he was ill at ease.

It was at one of these interviews, when Rebekah was present, that the Earl suddenly blurted out—

"Aren't you going to forgive your father, dear?"

Father and daughter looked at one another, and Rebekah stretched forth her hand. The Earl chuckled softly—

"And so I am to be a peacemaker, at the end. Treasure this child, Joel. She is one in a thousand. If I had her I shouldn't be anxious to marry her off."

They left him together, and Joel beckoned to her to follow him to the library. His manner was diffident, and he was evidently laboring under great emotion.

"I must have it out with you, Rebekah," he began nervously.

"I am going to try to explain myself to you. Don't think I am making excuses. That's impossible. But I want you to understand me, with all my fault. These last few weeks you have become a woman and you possess a woman's understanding. You should have known me in the days of my struggles when I was fighting my way in Africa. Every man's hand was against me. It is true that I was not a pauper, but I was dealing with men with millions. My God, how I fought. It was the joy of my life, and I grew to love it. Gradually it became part of my nature, and if your mother had been different I believe I should have fought her. It is not quarrelling that I mean. Not vulgar nagging. But a right down, naked to the waist, fight. It is the joy of overcoming difficulties that animated me. It obsessed me."

He paused for breath and she looked at him with wondering eyes.

"I was wealthy, but I was not content. I longed for more and I obtained it, by fighting. I longed for more and I obtained it, by fighting. But this pastime became too easy and lost its interest. My hands were idle and the devil found something to occupy them. At first, dear, it was the thought of you that moved me to work for this marriage. For a long time no other idea was in my mind. There were many difficulties in the way, and I overcame them all. Not by fair means, I know, but that has been my way. I always told myself that it was for you. But a time came when I could not make that excuse, for I was striving with you."

I was possessed with the lust for my own way, which is the most terrible of vices, and I swore that my will should prevail, be the evil what it may. I seemed to have lost all consideration for you. In my mad passion I could have coldly watched you go to the altar, even if I had known that it would entail upon you a life of misery."

He stopped and looked at her anxiously.

"This kind of man is your father," he wound up nervously.

"Was—father dear, for you are sorry?" she said tenderly, and her eyes filled with compassion at this confession of human weakness.

"I don't know, dear. I am truly sorry for what has happened. I regret it deeply, but the thing that terrifies me is that if the same position were to occur again, I do not know that I should not again act in the same way. These last few days I have been busy with my thoughts. You, dear, have taught me a lesson. And I am jealous, for I have begrudged the time that you have spent by the bedside of that dying old man. I feared that you were beginning to love him more than your father."

"I do love the Earl, father, and I pity him. But I am so glad you have spoken to me. I have been very miserable, and I cannot look forward to a life of love. Fate has not granted me that happiness. But after all love is not all that life contains. There is the pleasure of knowing that one is doing one's duty. Self-sacrifice is not all bitter pain."

Her eyes filled with tears and she threw her arms round her father's neck.

"I, too, want comfort. Let us go back to the old days. Noy, let us look forward to better days, for we are beginning to understand one another. We know our weaknesses and can fight against them. You and I will go away by our two selves. We will travel and see strange lands. Be sure that happiness will come to us."

"You put me to shame, dear. And so we will start afresh, and you are once more my dear little girl," he said quickly, but his voice was expressive of great content.

Rebekah, too, could see that the clouds were beginning to disperse. That holy joy which comes to one who gives up treasures to enrich another possessed her, and her eyes beamed forth a serenity that told of the battle bravely fought and won.

But she was not given much time for self-communion, for the Earl required her constant presence. He was rapidly growing weaker, and as she sat with Harecastle watching his life slowly passing from her, she felt that she was usurping another's place.

Mrs. Goldberg quickly noticed the improved relation between her brother and his daughter.

"I am so glad, my dear, that you and your father are friends again. I never thought that he would give in," she remarked one evening.

"He has told be a lot about himself, and I understand him better now," Rebekah replied. "I am glad to see that he and the Earl are better friends. It is a great relief to me. What is it, James?" she asked as a servant entered.

"The Earl is taken very bad and he wants to see Miss Rebekah."

She hastened upstairs; and she quickly saw that Lord Wolverholme had but little longer to live.

"You will stay with me to the last, Cyril," he asked, and his voice was becoming weaker. I wanted to see you once more, Rebekah, and to thank you for your kindness to an old man. You have made my last days less bitter, and I am almost happy. Dying gives one curious ideas, for I should like to see that girl Ethel. Do you think she would come? I did treat her rather roughly, and I don't want her to have too bad an opinion of the man who will be grandfather to her children."

"I will go and fetch her," Rebekah said eagerly. "I am sure she will regret it if she does not see you."

"Yes. Go, child. But do not be too long. Give me a kiss first."

It seemed a long and wearisome journey to Rebekah, but she grasped at the chance that might bring together Cyril and the woman he loved. To her joy she found that Ethel was at home.

"I want you to come at once,"

she said hurriedly. "We fear the Earl is dying and he wants to see you. You will come?"

"But why does he want to see me? I thought he hated me."

"No. You are mistaken. Do be quick or we shall be too late," Rebekah said impatiently, for she was consumed with an anxiety to be back in time.

No time was lost on the road, for they raced along as fast as the car could travel. Ethel remembered her last journey and the painful interview that followed it, and she wondered what fate now had in store for her. The passage of time had given her mind the chance of viewing her conduct more gently, but it had not brought her comfort. She still blamed herself severely, and without mercy, but the thought of once more seeing Cyril was not so terrifying as it had been.

At last Leighton Manor came in sight, and Rebekah gave a cry of joy, when she saw that the flag was still flying at the masthead. So they were to be in time. But the house seemed strangely hushed, as though it were already touched by the hand of death.

They made their way to the bedside, and Rebekah looked at the figure of the Earl lying there. But his eyes were glazed, and his breath came in pants. The doctor motioned her away, and she drew back for the end was near. What were the words falling brokenly from his lips?

"Christine—my beloved. I am coming to you." And then he was silent, but only for a moment.

"Yes. I am—guilty. Treason—and I have—suffered. But I am forgiven. Cyril forgives—and you—Christine. You will understand."

They stood around and watched his feeble struggle for life. Their eyes were wet with tears. Ethel found herself by Cyril's side, and she placed her hand in his.

Rebekah looked at them with shining eyes and then at the Earl. "Christine—my beloved—Christine."

And with his dead wife's name on his lips the seventh Earl of Wolverholme passed away.

They left Cyril to his grief, and the two girls went from the chamber of death.

"Good-bye, dear. I am going back. I shall be ever grateful that you brought me to him. It will be a comfort to know that he wanted to see me. Good-bye."

"But you must not go," Rebekah pleaded.

But Ethel shook her head and went downstairs. A car was soon ready and she started on the return journey.

She was clutched by a horrible fear that Cyril did not need her. Had she forfeited his love?

(To be continued.)

INDIANS GOOD FARMERS.

In Saskatchewan They Are Industrious and Prosperous.

The Indian of the great prairie province of Saskatchewan are disproving the theory that an Indian won't work unless he has to. They are becoming industrious and prosperous.

There are nearly 8,000 Indians in the province and last year they had about 9,000 acres under crops. They raised 150,572 bushels of grain and roots and 30,000 tons of hay, worth \$136,023.

The Department of Indian Affairs reports that the Indians are turning more and more to the soil for a living. The agent of the Assiniboine agency, which may be regarded as typical, writes:

"I was greatly pleased to find that the area under crop was almost double what it was the year before. The band had about 600 acres of wheat and 200 acres of oats. The Indians of this agency are beginning to farm on a large scale, and if they continue to do as well as they have in the last two years there will be some good sized farms among them. One man has 155 acres in crop and another 125 acres, and several had seventy acres each. There was a decided improvement in the way the land had been farmed."

FOLLOWING ORDERS.

"Now," said the magistrate, "you must testify only to what you know, no hearsay evidence. Understand?"

"Yes, sir," replied the female witness.

"Your name is Mary Bright, I believe. Now what's your age?"

"I won't tell you. I have only hearsay evidence on that point."

BLAME PLACED.

"Why don't yez grace our dances wid yer presence any more?"

"Sure, it's me mistress' fault. She is that dowdy and old-fashioned that not a single dress of hers kin I wear at all, at all!"

On the Farm

KEEPING MILK RECORDS.

In Great Britain, leading dairymen do not hesitate to point out the advantages of keeping regular milk records. At a Farmers' Club meeting, a short time ago, H. M. Everard, of Terling, Essex, dealt with the report fully. A report in the Agricultural Gazette states that, after referring to the importance of good breeding, and particularly the use of a sire of undoubted milking strain, he spoke as follows regarding his herd, composed largely of grade Short-horns:

"Our object is to provide as large a quantity of good-quality milk as possible, and, when we have obtained it, to have a record of whence it came. I fear a large majority of the dairy farmers of this country do not know which cows are paying their way and which are not. They have to depend on their head cowman for what answers are given to their questions, and it is not a very satisfactory position for any master to have to depend entirely on what is told him by his servants, without being able to verify it in any way himself. I have heard many farmers say that they quite agree in keeping milk records, but that they are rather reluctant to start owing to the labor which it entails. I think they would be greatly surprised at the little time and trouble it involves, and that they would be amply repaid by the pleasure they would obtain in looking through their book when the cows are doing well; and when they are not doing well, to be able to point out the individual cow to the responsible man, and obtain his reason for the difference. For any ordinary farmer, I think measuring the cow's milk one day in the week would be quite sufficient. Of course, this would not do where pedigree herds are kept, and where an accurate record is essential. On the estate with which I am connected upwards of 1,000 cows are kept, and their milk is all measured and recorded one day in the week. At the end of the year this is multiplied by seven, and the result is near enough for our purpose. Some other farmers I know of measure their milk (or weigh it) fortnightly, but I consider the weekly system the best. The time it would take (say for a herd of fifty cows) to measure and enter up in the milk-record book would not be more than three hours at the most, so the question of the time it takes ought not to be considered. I think the best way is for the farmer, his son, or the bailiff, to be present for the entire time of milking one morning and one evening every week, with a list of every cow's name, and, as the milk from each animal is measured, to record the quantity given; also a note taken at the time whether any animal has been bulled during the week. It can also be seen at the same time if any animal is off its feed, and a reason can be asked for and a note made of it. This list can be copied into a milk-record book, and, at the same time, any useful information respecting the individual cow noted."

"The average quantity of milk given by the cows here is about 650 gallons per annum. I suppose the quantity given by the cows of the country generally would be something under 600. When we realize the possibility of this being increased, by judicious management and breeding, to 700 and 800, we see the immense importance of this subject; and even when we have attained the 800 minimum, we must not stop there, as we know it is possible for cows to give 1,400 and 1,600 gallons in the year. The largest quantity of milk we have ever had from a cow in one year was from a Shorthorn cow, which calved on October 28th, was bulled on September 17th, and dried off on September 14th, during which period she gave 1,674 gallons, and averaged, for 30 weeks, no less than 24½ quarts daily."

ALFALFA POINTERS.

Among things to be avoided, if one expects to succeed with alfalfa, says Bulletin No. 305, of the Geneva, N. Y., Experiment Station, are wet soil, sour soil, shallow soil, adulterated seed, dodder-infested seed, seed of poor vitality; seed from warmer, irrigated lands, and weed seeds in the soil. Factors that aid in securing good yields are thorough preparation of the soil, usually best begun the year before by planting a cultivated crop to which a liberal application of

stable manure is made, and good dodder-free seed, usually sown without a nurse crop, and put in after weed seeds have been worked out of soil. In most cases, the use of half a ton to a ton of lime to the acre, and of 200 to 300 pounds to the acre of soil from a successful alfalfa field, will prove profitable, and one or the other often changes a failure to a success.

AS BEFORE THE WAR.

Reduction of the South African Garrison.

The strength of the regular troops in South Africa will be considerably reduced for the Government year 1909-1910, which commences on April 1. The strength is to return to the number stationed at the Cape prior to the war—about 9,000—although the Transvaal and Orange River Colony are additional territories. Since 1907 between five and six thousand men have been brought away. The comparative figures of strength by units are under:—

	1907.	1909.
Cavalry	5	4
Royal Horse Artillery ..	4	2
Royal Field Artillery ..	6	6
Royal Garrison Artillery ..	2	2
Royal Engineers	6	6
Infantry	10	6
Mounted Infantry	3	2

The A.S.C., R.A.M.C., A.V.O., A.O.C. detachments are additional and proportionate.

The reduced allotment will place two garrison artillery companies, one fortress company, and one battalion in the Cape district; one field battery, Middleburg, C. O.; one battalion at Martizburg, Natal; one cavalry regiment, three field batteries and two battalions at Bloemfontein, O. R. C.; one field battery and one mounted infantry battalion at Harrismith; one cavalry regiment, one horse artillery, one field battery, one R. E. company, and two battalions at Pretoria; and two cavalry regiments and one horse battery at Potchefstroom.

Four of the battalions, most of the batteries and the transport are to be detailed for service outside of South Africa as first troops for service, so that in time of war the Cape will be still further denuded of regular troops. The units named are to be included in the new Seventh Division, which is to be supplementary to the six divisions of the Expeditionary Army maintained at home for service abroad. Egypt and Malta will each find a brigade of four battalions as well as South Africa.

THE CULLINAN DIAMOND.

Queen Will Wear it Separate From Crown on State Occasions.

The King and Queen, anxious to make the fullest possible practical use of the Transvaal's magnificent gift, the Cullinan diamond, have consulted the court jewelers, Messrs. Gerrard, of London, as to whether it can be arranged that the splendid gem shall be so set in the Imperial Crown as to be detachable for wear by her Majesty on great state occasions, as it was at the recent opening of Parliament. The feasibility of the plan having been demonstrated, the jewelers have been honored with his Majesty's commands to carry out the work. Thus the Cullinan, while retaining a status of a crown jewel, will be available for wear by the Queen on occasions on which the Crown itself is not in actual use.

EARTHQUAKES AND WEATHER.

A writer in Nature calls attention to the peculiar weather which accompanied and followed the great Sicilian earthquake. The sudden fog which settled upon the Strait of Messina was paralleled by a heavy mist accompanying the Mexican earthquake of January, 1899, and the writer adds that rainfall is so frequently reported as the immediate successor of an earthquake that "we can no longer reject the hypothesis of a real connection between the two." Prof. Milne has suggested that the disturbance of the ground when transmitted to the overlying air may determine precipitation, thus explaining the apparent association of severe earthquakes with mist and rain.

Uncle—"Even though you are my brother's son I am obliged to discharge you. But I am sorry, for your mother's saks." Office-boy Nephew—"Oh, that's all right, sir. Mother says she don't see how I've put up with you as long as I have."