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The Canadian Post.

LINDSAY, FRIDAY, JUNE 8 1894.

A MEXICAN BELLE.

An Intensely Interesting Tale of Life in Austria and Mexico.

(Continued from last week.)

"Yes, you love me still—do not deny it." He sprang forward toward her, and would have seized her hands, but she snatched them away when his fingers had only touched the tips of hers.

"Don't touch me!—don't come near me!" she shrieked, in a voice so shrill that it hardly sounded like her own; and she started back, her proud eyes dilating with a sudden wrathful light, her proud lips quivering with passionate defiance. "No, I do not love you, Baron Otto Bodenbach. I am ashamed of ever having loved you. You are nothing to me but a miserable memory. How dare you approach me in that way? You are the bridegroom of Comtesse Halka Przeezechowska."

Otto shivered, as if on that warm spring day there could be any cold in the air. The recollection of his bethrothed touched him like an icicle in the very heat of his passion. He drew back and put up his hand.

"Do not mention her name, I will not hear it. I must have your love again. You must be mine, mine for ever. I will do anything to win it back. I will let fortune go to the winds," and he groaned, and struck his forehead again, talking like a man raving; the passion that was shaking him made him pitiful to behold. He really did believe, blinded as he was now by the glamour of her presence, that fortune and riches were nothing to him.

"You will not let your fortune go to the winds," she answered, still trembling with the vehemence of her words. "You love it too much; and even if you did, even if you gave up everything now, you would never gain me back again—never. I would not take your love again if it was the only love on earth, and if it was to make me the richest woman on earth. I want to cut away every memory of ever having loved you." She turned, as she spoke, to her desk on the table where she had been writing, and with quick, feverish fingers she opened it and took out some letters and his photograph, which she had long since torn from her diary. He stood by watching her in sullen anger. From the height of excited raving he had fallen to dogged quietude. He believed now that she did not love him.

"There—there—there!" she cried, and threw them on the floor at his feet. The white paper fluttered down and lay unstirred on the ground. "I have nothing more to do with them; and you will send mine back to me; they cannot stay in your hands when you are a married man."

"Oh, you want to taunt me with my hateful marriage. Do you imagine that there will be anything but wretchedness for me in it? I shall be miserable as a married man."

"But you will be happy as a rich one; you will have fortune, and that is all you want."

"Fortune is nothing without you," he said, but he felt the sting of truth in her words. Fortune was very much to him, but not as much as her love—just then.

"It will give you happiness," she said, more quietly, but with a passing look of scorn; "the sort of happiness you care for."

"But I love you," he said, with a gasp that was almost a sob, and he looked at her again with haggard eyes, knowing that his chance was gone, that his suit was hopeless.

"And you have lost me," she answered, not proudly this time, but sadly; and then in pity for him she turned to go.

"Do not go without saying you forgive me. Can you forgive me, Reata?"

"Yes, I forgive you," she said slowly, stopping and turning at the door. "It was not your fault if the trial was greater than your strength;" and then lower, half to herself, she added, "I have not forgiven myself for having ever fancied that I loved you."

As she ran down the rickety wooden steps with swift feet, pushing back her hair to cool her face, she saw Arnold not far off. He was walking towards the house. He had been pacing up and down, half on guard, half in waiting; he had not told his father of the unexpected arrival. Reata ran past with her head averted, that he might not read the trouble in her face; but he glanced at her sharply as she passed him, and stood still a minute on the gravel looking after her flying figure till she vanished among the trees. He did not know what had passed within in the sitting room, but an outline of it he could form in his mind.

The warm May day was dying off into coolness; there were no more checkered lights on the lawn, and only the topmost flowers of the horse-chestnut trees were golden under the last rays of the setting sun. Not even one little sparrow was about now—the top of the garden wall was deserted and silent; they had all off to bed, and tucked their heads under their brown wings; they would need to begin their night's rest early, so as to be waking and up next morning betimes, ready to welcome the sun when he came over the distant hills to look at the world again.

Arnold found his brother in the sitting-room, standing near the table, and stuffing away something in the pockets of his uniform—something that rustled like paper.

"Look here, Arnold," said Otto, in a still deeply agitated voice; "I want you to do something for me. I will send you a sealed up packet as soon as I get back to Rzeszolow; will you gave it to—to her?" he stammered, and looked at his brother.

"To Fraulein Lackenegg?" completed Arnold; "yes, I understand."

"To her, yes: but don't let anybody see it; it would not—not do."

"Make your mind easy," said Arnold, much as Reata said to him five minutes before, and much in the same tone; "nobody shall see it."

"Thank you," said Otto, huskily; then a second after he looked up at his brother, "I suppose there is no hope for me?"

He had not taken Arnold into his confidence before about this matter; he had deceived him along with the others, and as good as told him lies on the subject; but just at this moment an old instinct of boyhood grew alive again. He had always asked Arnold for advice in his scraps, sometimes not till the last moment, when it was too late to mend, for it was Otto's way to go on neglecting people and leaving them aside when he did not want them, and then, when the need came, to turn to them and throw himself upon them with trusting confidence; and when Otto asked for help in that utter abandonment of pride and obstinacay, then he usually got it, even from those he had offended most. Arnold could not help him now, but looking at his younger brother, as he stood there before him, every inch a man, but almost a child in the helpless confidence of his eyes, the elder and stronger man felt himself stirred with a great depth of brotherly affection, and by a keen pity, which was hardly contempt.

"I cannot do anything for you, Otto. You don't want me to advise you to break off your engagement? Surely she did not ask you to do so?"

"No, no, she has not, though I would have done it; I told her so."

"You offered to break it off?"

"Yes, I did."

"And you would have married her?"

"Oh, I would do anything to get her back," he said recklessly; "I was engaged to her before, you know."

"I suspected as much; and she refused now when you offered again?"

"She says she does not love me any more; but I cannot believe, I will not believe it. She used to love me, she told me so often; it must be her pride which will not let me see it. Arnold, what am I to do?"

"It is no use asking me," said Arnold, his face growing clouded. "If you had been open with me long ago, I should never have pressed you about your marriage, much as I should have regretted your losing your fortune through a mesalliance; you should have spoken to me sooner, Otto."

Otto made no denial; he looked at his brother with an air of deprecation, which was the same as saying, "Don't scold me!"

Arnold found it was no use trying to harden his heart against him. "I would help you now if I could, but I cannot advise you to break your word a second time."

"One thing I must tell you," said Otto, looking up again, "I am not as bad as you think me; I did not break my word to her; she set me free herself because of the conditions of the will."

"She was quite right," said Arnold, gravely.

"And I was a fool to take her at her word, was I not?"

"I cannot say," said Arnold, and he turned away.

CHAPEER XXXV.—FOX-HUNTING.

The shock ot discovering that her heart was not broken, that her life was not blighted, and that she did not love Otto, was a severe one to Reata; but she got over it as one gets over worse shocks in life. She was puzzled and horrfied at herself; she took long walks alone, as she had done in the first days of her sorrow; and she wrote many entries in her diary. One of these was as follows:—"I am not going into a convent; I am not going to cut of my hair, nor to dig my grave, nor to keep silence for the rest of my life. Where shall I go? I do not know, but I must go before they find out. I cannot go while Gabrielle is so weak, and I do not want to make any disturbance. . .

"She will be here, I hope, in July, and everything will be right then.

"It is dreadful to think that after all I have gone through, my heart is not broken; but there is no use in denying that I still care about some things, about hearing the birds sing, and about gathering flowers; and I often laugh and feel amused, really amused.

"How can people talk and write such rubbish about broken hearts and being miserable for life? How easy it is, after all, to get over a disappointment in love! Why should everything turn bitter because one man has prove faithless?"

Two days later came another entry, written in another mode. The battle of Malplaquet was recorded on the same page as defaite affreuse, with a flourish at the end of the second word.

"It is very difficult to believe that it is my own self who was so unhappy six weeks ago; six weeks are nothing at all really, and they have been enough to console me. I won er if other women would have been so quickly consoled in my place? Perhaps it is because I am different from them, that I am shallow and have not got the power of loving truly. They say Mexicans are shallow; I said so long ago, although I never rather suffer a great deal more, and go on suffering all my life, to that I have got heart like other women. Hermine has got a heart, I am sure—I saw it in her eyes—and it would break if she lost her love. But she will never lose him, there is no fear of that. Arnold is not a man to change when he once loves; and he loves her, of course, I suppose, though he is always so grave and quiet; if he did not love her he would not be going to marry her.

"I would rather be heavy and stupid like Hermine (for she really is stupid), if only I could have a heart like hers."

The date of this last entry was May 20, more than a fortnight after that visit of Otto's. It had been a very short visit, for Otto had started again next morning at sunrise, instead of remaining over the day as he had intended to do. He had not seen Reata from the moment that they had parted in the sitting-room, she flying out through the balcony-door, and he standing with his own letters lying at his feet on the floor. There was no peace for him under the same roof with her; ae was quite unable to conceal his agitation even from his father and sister, and it taxed all Arnold's ingenuity to screen him to some extent, and invent a tolerably plausible excuse for his sudden departure. A few days after this a thick packet had come addressed to Arnold; and that same day, when Reata was alone Arnold came in and handed her over the packet, or rather laid it down on the table before her, and then turned to go, without a word, thinking that he was doing best by being silent; no word of his could do any good.

"What is that?" Reata said, looking up from her book, and not understanding the drift of this pantomime. And Arnold turned again to answer her.

"It is something of yours, I believe," he said, making a not very successful attempt to pass over the matter lightly. "You will see when you open the paper."

But Reata had opened the parcel already; it was not the brown sealed packet she had seeen that morning in Arnold's hand; the ouner wrapper had been taken off, and this was a packet in white paper, but also sealed at each end, not bearing any address. She had torn through the paper at one corner, and within she had caught sight of something in her own writing, and she knew now that these were her letters to Otto, which he was returning to her according to her wish. She had not thought much about the matter since, and she had never speculated upon whether Otto would do as she desired him, nor in what way he would do so. Certainly she had not thought that they would come to her through Arnold's hands. It was not a pleasant sensation to know that all her lively expressions of affections to Otto (and the liveliest of them recurred to her mind at that moment) had been lying in Arnold's hands, and they had been in his power for the last few hours, ever since post-time. Of course the packet was sealed, and even had it not been sealed she could have trusted implicitly in his honor; but yet the sensation was not a pleasant one, and the thought made her redden. If there had been a fire there, she would have liked best to fling the packet in before Arnold's eyes, but unfortunately one has not often got fires in May, especially in a warm May like this; so, as the next best thing to do, she opened the paper and began taking out the letters and tearing them up one by one.

"You know what they are?" she said thoughtlessly, looking at Arnold with some defiance.

"I did not open the paper," he answered, scowling slightly.

"Of course not; but you know what it is?"

"Yes, I do."

"And you think that—that it is very lucky that everything came to nothing?" she went on, tearing up the paper faster, and growing more furiously scarlet, with her words—drawn on to speak in spite of her shyness.

It was a very puzzling question to put, and Arnold seemed to think it so, for he was silent.

"And you think, of course, it would have been a great pity, a great misfortune, if your brother had—had—done it?" She was aghast at her own boldness in speaking, but something was pushing her on to the words—some feeling of soreness perhaps. I did not say, "If your brother had married me," but Arnold understood it that way.

"I should have thought it a great pity, certainly, that Otto should lose his fortune by going against the conditions of the will."

"It is not the fortune you are thinking of, it is the—the—"

"The family name; yes, I was thinking of that too."

"And is it your opinion that everything ought to be sacrificed to that, invariably? You said so."

"Yes, I said so;" Arnold was on his mettle now. "Whoever bears the Bodenbach name should be ready to sacrifice everything to keep it intact. You do not know, perhaps that our family is one of the oldest in Germany, and that our blood is among the purest—or was so," he added with a frown, "till within the last thirty years," and then he stopped; this was not a point he could well discuss with a stranger. It was his mother who had brought the first taint of plebeian blood into the family, and, prejudiced aristrocrat as he was, he could not bear to breathe a word which would seem to lower his mother's memory. This was his most vulnerable point; it had always been so with him from boyhood, since he was old enough to understand the distinctions of birth and rank. He had loved his mother, though he had never been her favorite; he had been dutiful and gentle to her during his intervals of vacation-time at home, and he had felt her death deeply, though he had not shed as many tears as Otto. The thought had never crossed his mind that he should have wished to have had another mother; but that his mother having been banker's daughter, that he himself had had a parvenu grandfather, and that the blood in his veins was no longer quite the blue blood of his ancestors, rankled in his mind very sorely, and this soreness made him cling all the more to the tradition of nobility. There was no one there to foster these feelings, for his father's odinions were too undecided; and Otto, with his radical turn of mind, openly scoffed at all distinctions which had nothing better to show than a name and a coat of arms (possibly if a name and coat of arms had invariably brought in their train fine old family estates and unimpaired family fortunes, Otto might have been a conservative) So Arnold could vent his feelings to no one; and even had there been anybody of his own mind, he was too proud to display his

Reata interrupted the breaking off of his phrase aright, and rerd the thought that lay behind.

"And why should you have blamed your brother for doing as his father had done?" She did not mean to wound him, but curiosity pushed her to test the differences of opinion between Otto and his brother, or rather, between Otto and other men. Any man's opinion on any subject was new to her, and this subject had a particular and strange fascination about it, which led her to return to, and linger near, and talk about it, even though the ground was dangerous.

"Perhaps I should have had no right to blame him," and Arnold frowned again, "but you will acknowledge that there is some difference between marrying beneath one's rank in order to gain a fortune, and marrying in the same way when by doing so you lose a fortune."

This was rather a concession for Arnold to make; for not to gain the largest fortune in the world would have sacrificed his family pride. There was some sense in his words, proved by the fact alone that Reata did not attempt to contradict him again, at least not just at that moment.

Before this giving back of letters, the Bodenbach plans for the summer had undergone a change, and the change was dictated by Dr. K——, the physician whom Arnold in his fit of penitence had summoned. He seems to think more seriously of the case than the country doctor had done. Gabrielle was to be taken next month to D—— bad, a watering place a few hours' distance from Steinbuhl. Dr. K—— did not promise that any immediate good would result from the waters at D—— bad, but he thought they afforded the best chance for strengthening her and arresting the progress of the illness. The greatest stress was laid upon the necessity of humoring Gabrielle's fancies, and sparing her any needless agitation or excitement; her nervous irritability was great, and required most considerate care.

The 25th of May was the day fixed for Otto's wedding, and the next thing of importance that occurred was Arnold's departure for Poland to assist at the ceremony. He was not away more than five days altogether, but during those five days the house at Steinbuhl seemed unusually quiet. It was not that Arnold was accustomed to talk much when at home, but his presence would make itself felt; he was always going and coming, seeing and directing everything—was, in fact, far more the real master of the house than the old baron.

(To be continued.)

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A great many medicines "relieve" Catarrh in the Head. That means that it's driven from the head into the throat and lungs. But, by its mild, soothing, cleansing and healing properties, Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy perfectly and permanently *cures*.

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Lindsay, May 23rd, 1894.—11-ecw.

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Lindsay, May 16th, 1894.—62.

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Artificial Flowers.
Novelties in Trimmings.

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