

RUTHVEN'S WARD

BY FLORENCE HARRIAT.



CHAPTER X.

AMILTON Shoro was a youth who to be remembered must be seen. He said witty and amusing things, and he could pay very pretty compliments, but he never expressed a sentiment that was worth recalling after he had passed out of sight.

Margaret had to supply memory for herself, and magnify meadows into mountains, in order to maintain an ordinary decent stock of sweet things to muse upon and weep over.

Meanwhile, Ruthven kept very much out of her way—a course of conduct which the girl misinterpreted into anger, and fretted about accordingly.

The real reason being that Ruthven did not dare trust himself in her presence. The love he had cherished when absent from her, and the dreams he had dreamed, had become twice as precious when he met her again, and he was too wary to cast himself headlong under the wheels of a Juggernaut which he knew would crush him.

In her want of companionship, Margaret's thoughts turned to her old school friend, Carmen Flower. The young ladies had, naturally, kept up a correspondence since leaving Blackbeath; but it had not been quite so confidential on Margaret's part as on that of Carmen.

She had not told her, in fact, of her love affair. The old habit of secrecy, instilled so early into her by Mrs. Garrett, had something, perhaps, to do with this, and natural timidity still bore. Carmen was such a quizz; she laughed at everybody and everything. Margaret felt sure she should never hear the last word of it were she rash enough to disclose her secret whilst it was in its infancy.

But she drooped visibly whilst dreaming. She had been used to the company of the young, and felt like a prisoner cooped up in that little noisily during the dry, hot, dusty London season.

At last Mrs. Garrett mentioned the girl's condition to her master, who immediately became absurdly excited and alarmed, cursing his own folly and selfishness in not having foreseen such a calamity, and proposing to call in the first physician in London to consult about her health.

It seemed to occupy his time to the exclusion of writing altogether.

Carmen's letters were a source of both comfort and amusement to Margaret at this period. She had also picked up an admirer on her travels, and was full of the beautiful presents of flowers he had made her, and the ceaseless adoration he displayed for her.

Unlike Margaret, Carmen's nature was too vain and self-conscious to permit her to keep such a circumstance to herself; but there was a mystery about her love-making, which was all carried on without the knowledge of Sir Frederic, that made Margaret feel it could neither be right nor modest, and Mrs. Garrett loudly denounced it as "altogether brazen and wicked."

Still, Carmen's accounts of her own escapades were very entertaining and often made Margaret laugh outright in the midst of her lamentation that no letter from Hamilton had arrived by the same post. It came, however, all too soon.

One day, Mrs. Garrett having made a little journey on behalf of her household, returned to their apartments to find Margaret dissolved in tears.

"Oh, Garrett!" she exclaimed, "he doesn't love me any longer! My heart is broken—I feel it. I shall die! I cannot live without his presence or his love."

"Bless my soul! Miss Margaret, what are you talking about?"

"I've had a letter from Hamilton, and he says—he says—that it was all a mistake—and we shall never be happy together—and that we'd better break it off, because it never was a proper engagement—and—here poor Margaret's sobs nearly choked her utterance—'he's been somebody he likes better than he does me.'"

"Well, if Mr. Hamilton writes that to you," exclaimed Mrs. Garrett, determinedly, "all I say is, that he's a scoundrel and a blackguard, and I'd like to have the faying of him alive. Seen some one he likes better, indeed! some stumpy French gal, I suppose, like Mrs. Fitter's maid—all eyes and cap and earrings—a stuck-up, impudent creature, as can't speak a Christian language. But it can't be true, Miss Margaret; it can't be true!"

"Read for yourself, Garrett," said the girl, pushing the letter toward her. It was all as true as Gospel.

Hamilton wrote to her in the same pretentious, high-handed way in which he spoke. His letter might have come from a man of fifty, in its narrow-minded, self-excusing acumen.

He reminded the girl that his uncle had disapproved of their engagement for several reasons, and as he was anxious to embrace every opportunity of furthering the wishes of the person to whom he owed every thing in the world (this last sentence was especially for Mr. Ruthven's benefit), he considered it most honorable and best to let her know his change of sentiment at once; but he trusted they should always continue friends, and that what had passed would make no difference to their intimacy. In short, he wrote like the young scoundrel Mrs. Garrett had called him; and the housekeeper was still deliberating in what words she should transmit the intelligence to her master, when Ruthven unexpectedly walked into their apartments.

He also had had a letter from his nephew on the subject, which though not more than he expected, had thoroughly disgusted him.

"Now, what am I to do for you, Margaret?" he said, when the tea had been broken between them. "Shall I compel the hound to keep his word? I can do it if you choose. He is completely dependent on me, and I have him in my power."

"Compel him to keep his word!" repeated the girl; "but, Mr. Ruthven, he has already broken it."

"I mean, shall I compel him to marry you?"

A deep crimson blush spread itself all over her neck and face, even up to the parting of her hair—and her eyes filled with tears of shame.

"Oh! how can you ask me such a question? Do you think I would marry him now—after he has sent me this letter?"

"You are quite determined not to have anything to say to him, then?"

"Quite! I would not marry him if he were to ask me from now till doomsday."

"I'm very glad to hear it," replied Ruthven, cheerfully. "I know what Hamilton is, and that you would find it out one day; but I wished you to discover it for yourself. He is utterly heartless—selfish and inconsiderate. He would have made you a very bad husband; and you are lucky to have got rid of him so easily."

But it was not yet time to console the girl for her disappointment. Her tears flowed freely whenever Hamilton's name was mentioned, and her guardian found it best not to allude to the subject at all. But he wrote his nephew a letter which the young man never forgot nor forgave, and which considerably opened his eyes as to the light in which, were he a few years older, society would view the act of which he had made so little.

and by day no grove ner out into the surrounding country, so that her youth and natural buoyancy soon enabled her to shake off the first effects of her trouble.

The thought that seemed to be deepest in Margaret's breast, and press hardest upon her heart at this crisis, was that of her origin. She had taken it into her head that it was for this reason alone that Hamilton had broken off their engagement, and she shrank visibly at any word or action of Ruthven's that was called forth by that to which she believed she had no right—her title to being a lady. One day, after much hesitation, she asked him if he would let her go into the world and earn her own living.

"My dear, where would you go? Not on the stage?" exclaimed Ruthven, who could only think of his own designs for her.

"Oh, no! I am not clever enough; but as a companion—quite young ladies sometimes have companions—and I think I should feel happier, perhaps, and more in my proper place if I could make some money to keep myself."

"I am sorry to hear you say that, Margaret. I know you are not very bright at present; but if change of scene will do you good, you shall have as much as you like. But why do you say you would be more in your proper place as a companion than here?"

"Because I have no right to be here—you forget what I am. You raised me from my natural position, and the first thing that came of it was harm."

"You mustn't speak like that, my dear. No one can forget what you are. In your natural position you might not have had the education I have been so pleased to give you; but all who see the advantage you have taken of it must agree that you have made yourself a gentleman, whatever Fate designed for you."

"You are so kind to me," murmured the girl, looking up at him gratefully, with her dreamy, limpid, blue eyes.

"Nonsense, child. The little I have been able to do you have repaid tenfold, and can repay still further if you choose."

"Tell me how, Mr. Ruthven."

"By never mentioning the idea of your earning your own living. I am not a rich man, but I have made sufficient provision for you in my will to prevent you from ever having the necessity to work. And nothing hurts me more than to hear you propose it."

Margaret answered her guardian's speech by raising her innocent lips to his.

Ruthven shrank from the contact as though they scorched him; but, fortunately, the girl saw nothing amiss in his greeting. He had not been in the habit of kissing his beautiful protegee, having left all that to his nephew, and now he wished he had not been quite so reserved with her. But a demon had sprung up between Margaret and himself, and the time of kissing was over for him, unless it might be continued forever.

"Come," he said, confusedly, on that occasion, "here are letters for us both. Let us see what their contents may hold for us."

Margaret took hers with a sigh. She believed she could never feel any interest in the post again now Hamilton's letters had ceased. But when she saw it was from Carmen Flower, and bore the English postmark, she became eager to peruse it.

The epistle proved to be more interesting than it promised, and contained an invitation for both Margaret and her guardian to go and spend a couple of months at Abbotville.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

ENVELOPE CLOSING.

If People Were Better Informed They Would Not Care to Moisten Them.

From the Oakland Echoes. Envelope lickens will do well to pause and ponder on the fact that a man has died in consequence of indulging in the popular but disgusting trick of moistening the adhesive envelope with the tongue.

Some say: "How can gum arabic poison any person?" Gum arabic? Are they so innocent as to believe that this article, raised to a prohibitive price by the Egyptian war and subsequent closure of the Soudan, is used on their envelopes? Do they see that ancient nag hobbling down the street? There is the parent of their gum arabic, and in a few weeks' time, when that decrepit animal has made his bow to the knocker and yielded up his hoofs to the gus boiler, perhaps they may have a lick at his remains on an envelope they are dispatching to a friend or sweetheart.

And should some taint of animal poison lurk amid that "gum" they may soon require other and black-bordered envelopes to be licked for them when their mourning cards are sent out. Perhaps no more unpleasant part of a visit to a stationer's shop is when, having folded the small purchase in a flimsy envelope, the tradesman raises it to his lips, opens a hippopotamus mouth, protrudes a tongue that looks at least two sizes too large for its habitation, and then, with a smirk, hands the dark delicacy to his customer. May he, of all men, be warned by the premature departure of a fellow lickor, and may all who send literary missives to their friends rest assured that the recipients of these envelopes would feel better pleased if these coverings had been inclosed without any exhibition of moist anatomy.

She Wanted to Know.

"What is that place down there?" asked she of one of the officers.

"Why, that is the steering," answered he.

"And does it take all those people to make the boat go straight?"—Tit Bits.

To clean a kettle fill it with potato peelings and then boil fast till clean.

BACK FROM THE TOMB.

IT WAS INDEED A MINISTER'S FAREWELL SERMON.

Says a Few Words and Falls Dead—He Got Out of a Coffin to Preach—The Congregation Starbled at His Appearance.



IN A SLOPE of the mountains, at the valley's edge, in the state of New Hampshire, stood the house of Rev. Hezekiah Hawkins. He was the pastor of a congregation in the vicinity that was composed mostly of farmers from the neighborhood. The reverend gentleman was going to preach his farewell sermon, and was preparing for it when he was taken ill. Everything was done for him, but his condition did not improve, and on Good Friday he apparently died and was placed in his coffin. Another minister was to occupy the pulpit in the church.

Old men and young men, mothers, wives, girls in their teens, the old people with that look which solitude and repression stamp on the human physiognomy; brown, furrowed faces, marked with ineffably mournful lines; the faces of children, almost, in that still look in their deep-set eyes, the faces of statues nearly in stony indifference of look. Peering from their queer, old-fashioned hats were the faces of the men. A little vague curiosity in the gaze, perhaps, and a great pathos in their seamed and sunburnt faces. The women were dressed generally in rusty black, with here and there an impossible looking flower-spray or a totally incredible representation of fruit. The little girls and



RETURNED TO LIFE TO PREACH A SERMON.

exercise his malevolent influence upon the jury system and the honest sport of the land of the free." At least fifty Chinese have been sent back to China within the past year as the result of their having served a term in state prison. Little Pete was convicted of jury bribing and sent to Folsom, and although he succeeded in securing his release before serving out his term, he is, nevertheless, an ex-convict. But the federal law has a loophole in it. Little Pete has escaped the deportation clause through a technicality. An amendment to the Geary act prohibits the issuance of laborers' certificates to convicts, and the lack of the certificate is the crime for which they are sent out of the country. Far from it. He has never been known to soil his hands with hard work, since the days when he was a small, cunning-looking Chinese youngster in Chinatown, being educated carefully by well-meaning Christians for a successful criminal career. He is a merchant and merchants are not required by law to have laborers' certificates. They are not required to register in this category and consequently a criminal record debarring them from registering does not affect their status. So little Pete is secure from deportation. He says he does not mind being excluded from the Bay District track. Perhaps not. He could well afford to rest on his oars.

The English Expletive. An intelligent Hindu has been heard to define billiards as a game in which two men, armed with long sticks, poke at a ball, while one player says: "Oh, —" and the other "Hard lines." Golf seems to have similarly impressed the native South African mind. A Kaffir warrior was observed attentively watching the efforts of certain unskillful players to extract their ball from one of those deep bunkers which greatly abound on African courses. The following day he was seen to be belaboring a great bowlder with a huge pole, shouting: "Goddam" the while. "This white man's game," said the dusky child of nature; "welly good game white man's game." The story has the merit of being true. All golf stories are.—Windsor Magazine.

Before and After. "I remember," said Mrs. Wickwire, impressively, "you once said if you had the world you would gladly lay it at my feet."

"Oh, did I?" asked Mr. Wickwire. "Yes, you did. And now I have to nag at you for three days to get you to lay a carpet."—Indianapolis Journal.

the well-remembered words came comfortingly and assuringly to the hearts of the listeners and dispelled for a moment their fears. The minister paused as the opening invocation was delivered, and, a rare thing with him, smiled. It was a quaint smile, holding within it suggestions of much knowledge, suffering, forbearance and sweetness; bringing charity with it and much humility. The smile that some of the disciples might have greeted the master with, so fraught it was with faith and love everlasting. Then he took up his well-beloved Bible, and, fixing his compelling gaze on the congregation, he again, though slower than before, commenced impassively: "I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he who believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and—" At this juncture his hand fell, he tottered, and this time, beyond all possibility of a trance, even past the questioning of his Maker, the old preacher fell back in the arms of the visiting minister, dead.

Wasp's Resort to Suicide. A short time ago M. Henry, being curious to see the effect of benzine on a wasp, put some of it under a glass in which one was imprisoned. The wasp immediately showed signs of great annoyance and anger, darting at a piece of paper which had introduced the benzine into his cell. By and by he seems to have given up the unequal struggle in despair, for he lay down on his back, and, bending up his abdomen, planted his sting thrice into his body and then died. M. Henry allowed his scientific interest to overcome his humanity so far as to repeat the experiment with three wasps, only to find that the other two did likewise. He is therefore of opinion that wasps, under desperate circumstances, commit suicide.—Popular Science News.

LITTLE PETE FROM CHINA.

Seems to Have Been the Most Successful Swindler on the Track.

It has been pertinently asked during the past few days why Little Pete, the corrupter of juries and of jockeys, has not been deported to the flowery kingdom long ere this, says the San Francisco Bulletin. Little Pete is an ex-convict and the federal authorities have sent many Chinese back to the "country whence they came" on that score. Therefore, when it was discovered last week that Pete had bribed several jockeys at the Bay District track to throw the races in which he was interested and had incidentally captured about \$100,000 of the money of the bookmakers the cry immediately went up, "Why hasn't the government sent this pestiferous, sleek, designing, slant-eyed rogue of a Chinaman back to the celestial empire, where he could no longer

Has found that her little ones are improved more by the pleasant Syrup of Figs, when in need of the laxative effect of a gentle remedy than by any other, and that it is more acceptable to them. Children enjoy it and it benefits them. The true remedy, Syrup of Figs, is manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Company only.

So Hard Worked. Mrs. A.—I am surprised that your husband earns so little if he works as hard as you say. What does he do? Mrs. B.—The last thing he did was to calculate how many times a clock ticked in the course of 1,000 years.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

The Modern Mother. Has found that her little ones are improved more by the pleasant Syrup of Figs, when in need of the laxative effect of a gentle remedy than by any other, and that it is more acceptable to them. Children enjoy it and it benefits them. The true remedy, Syrup of Figs, is manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Company only.

Interested. "My family," said Miss Antique, "came over with the Pilgrims on the Mayflower."

"Did they, really?" exclaimed Hicks. "How very interesting! And were you seasick?"—Harper's Bazar.

All About Western Farm Lands. The "Corn Belt" is the name of an illustrated monthly newspaper published by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy R. R. It aims to give information in an interesting way about the farm lands of the west. Send 25 cents in postage stamps to the Corn Belt, 209 Adams St., Chicago, and the paper will be sent to your address for one year.

Four, Indeed. Mrs. Crimmonbeak—"The gas is very poor tonight." Mr. Crimmonbeak (sniffling)—"Yes; it seems to have only a bad scent."—Yonkers Statesman.

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