The Power of Persuasion

Or Lady Caraven's Labor of Love.

CHAPTER VI.

The earl was at home expecting Sir Raoul. He was shown into the library, and there in a few moments he was found by his kinsman. They met with outstretched hands and warm words of greeting, but the earl looked sorrowfully into his kinsman's face.

"You have suffered very much, Raoul," he said, quietly.

"Yes, and never thought to see you again. You are changed too, Ulric—I feel inclined to ask where is the sunny faced boy whom I loved so dearly ?"

Lord Caraven laughed a little bitter laugh.

"The truth is, Raoul, I have not turned out very well. I may have been a good boy, but I have scarcely made a good man."

"A fault acknowledged is often half amended," said Sir Raoul.

"Yes," admitted the earl, carelessly ; "but I feel no great desire to amend—I half wish that I did."

I hear wondrous news, Ulric—that you are married. Is it true ?"

The earl's face darkened, as it generally did when any mention was made of his wife.

"Yes," he replied, gloomily. "I am married. The fact is, I feel quite certain that you will not like my wife, and it annoys me."

"Like her ?" echoed Sir Raoul. "How strangely you speak ! Certainly I shall do more than like her, your wife and my cousin. I tell you that the thought of seeing her is a positive pleasure to me."

With hasty steps Lord Caraven walked up and down the room. He seemed as though about to speak, but then stopped abruptly. He stood at last in front of his cousin.

"Raoul," he said, "I am not good at keeping a secret. The truth is, I do not like my wife."

"You were compelled to marry her, then ?" said Sir Raoul.

"It was either that or ruin—such ruin as would have left me penniless. I did hesitate, for some time, whether I should purchase a revolver or marry Miss Ransome."

"Was it as bad as that ?" asked Raoul.

"Yes, it could not have been worse. Do not let me be a hypocrite, Raoul. That lesson would have lasted some men their lives—it has not been sufficient for me. I do not think, honestly speaking, that I am one whit a wiser man than I was. The only thing is that fortune has been with instead of against me."

"Poor boy," said Sir Raoul, pityingly; "we must hope for better things. Shall I see your wife tonight ?"

"No, I think not. Lady Caraven has gone to Covent Garden—a favorite opera of hers is being played. She will not be home until late. You look very tired, Raoul—I should advise you to go to bed."

"I am rather disappointed," he said, at last. "I hoped that I should see my new kinswoman tonight."

He was disappointed. He fancied that Lord Caraven would never have spoken of her as he did if she had been what he had hoped to find her. Farewell to his idea of the sweet companionship of a delicate, refined woman ! Farewell to his idea of passing long, pleasant hours with the earl's young wife ! He remembered that as a boy Ulric had been devoted to the fair sex; he had often rallied him on it. He remembered a thousand and one scrapes into which the boy had fallen from his propensity to flirtation. He knew that his cousin had been called "the handsome earl," and the only satisfactory conclusion at which he could arrive was that the girl-wife must be displeasing in appearance.

Sir Raoul retired to his room, slightly disappointed and disenchanted. He could not sleep; bygone scenes in his own life rose before him. It was long after midnight when he heard the roll of a carriage and then the soft rustle of a silken dress, as light footsteps passed his door.

"That is the young countess," he said to himself—"my new cousin."

What was she like ? After being at the opera she would not rise until late, he felt sure. He himself went down-stairs early. Sir Raoul liked the fresh morning air.

The first sound that fell upon his ears was the singing of a bird, and the next the falling spray of a fountain. He looked around. He saw then what improvements had been made in Halby House. A conservatory had been built out from the breakfast-room, long and wide—a conservatory that was almost an aviary, so full was it of bright-plumaged birds; a fountain stood in the midst, masses of brilliant bloom glowed upon the walls.

"This was a welcome for the bride," thought Sir Raoul. "Perhaps, however, she has not much taste for flowers."

No one seemed to be about; the breakfast-table was prepared, but there was no one to preside. Sir Raoul looked round; he thought he would go through the conservatory, and perhaps by that time there would be some news of breakfast. He opened the glass door, and walked through a fairy-land of sweet blossoms; the spray of the fountain fell with melodious music into the clear basin below.

"How beautiful !" thought the simple soldier.

He walked on until he saw a vision that suddenly struck him dumb. At the end of the conservatory was a large vine-wreathed door; the green leaves formed a perfect screen, and against them stood a figure such as Sir Raoul had never seen before and never afterward forgot—a tall, graceful, girlish figure—a figure that was all symmetry, with a slender, graceful neck, white as snow, lovely shoulders, round, white arms, draped in an elegant morning dress.

The lady was standing with her face averted, so that he could not at first see it. He beheld a queenly head, covered with masses of black, shining hair. He stood for some few minutes lost in admiration; and then with a deep sigh she turned slowly round.

If he had thought the figure beautiful, he was even more enchanted with the face. That it was the money-lender's daughter never for a moment entered his mind—that he saw before him his cousin's wife never occurred to him. This beautiful girl was, of course, a visitor, like himself—one of Lady Caraven's friends, he thought to himself half sadly. It was not to be wondered at, with this glorious young beauty near to distract him, that the earl did not care for his wife.

He went forward to speak to her, and then for the first time she was conscious of his presence. She raised her dark eyes and looked at him. There are moments in life not to be forgotten—this was one. The dark eyes appeared to look right into his heart, and he seemed to recognize the soul that shone through them. She walked up to him, still looking at him, as though drawn by magic to him, his eyes half smiling into the depths of hers. He bowed at her approach.

She looked for one half-minute into the worn, scarred, noble face.

"I cannot be mistaken," she said, holding out both her hands in welcome. "You must be Sir Raoul Laureston ?"

"I am," he replied. "And you ?"

"And I ?" she said, with a charming smile and a look of pretty astonishment. "I am Lady Caraven."

The fair face was smiling at him, the lovely eyes were full of welcome, the ruby lips smiling kindly. It seemed to him that her whole heart was in the greeting she gave him. And Lord Caraven had said that he did not like this most charming and lovely girl !

"You are looking very ill, Sir Raoul," she said ; "you will want nursing and taking care of. You are going to remain here, to make your home with us ?"

"I hope so," he responded, heartily. "I have no other home. This would indeed be one."

She had drawn nearer to him—so near that the delicate lace on her dress touched him.

"I am so glad," she said, in her soft, caressing tones ; "and you will really let me take care of you, just as though you were my own brother come home from the wars ?"

"Have you a brother ?" he asked.

"No," she replied; "I am an only child."

"And I have no sister. I have always wished for one. When I was a strong man who did not know what aches and pains meant, I used to wish that I had a woman's gentle mind and heart to guide me ; when health and strength left me, when I became almost helpless, I longed for the gentle hands of a woman near me ; but my longing was never gratified."

"You must let me take a sister's place," she said, gently. "You do not know what your coming means to me. It will give me what I need so sorely—an occupation. You will let me nurse you when you are ill, wait upon you, read to you—tend you in all ways ?"

"I am afraid that you will spoil me, Lady Caraven."

"No; but I will try to make you well and strong again. Do you really promise me that I may do this ?"

His pale face flushed.

"Do you know," he said, "that you really embarrass me ? I feel as though some fair young princess were offering to take charge of me. How can I thank you ? It seems to me that the desire of my heart is gratified. I have a kinswoman to love at last."

She laid her hand on his arm and walked with him into the breakfast room.

"You ought not to have risen so early," she said ; "and, now you must atone for that by taking some of my tea. I pride myself on being a good tea-maker."

Looking at her he thought that, if she prided herself on her exquisite grace and her girlish loveliness, it would be only natural. He was perfectly charmed with her; she was modest and unaffected; there was a certain grace in her frank, kindly manner which made it impossible not to feel at home with her.

He was entirely so ; and he smiled to himself. They were seated at the table as though they had known each other for years.

"But surely," he said, "we are remiss. We are not waiting for Ulric."

Her expression changed slightly, as it always did at the mention of her husband's name.

"Lord Caraven never takes breakfast here," she said, slowly. "Our hours are not the same."

"Then he is a bad judge," remarked Sir Raoul. "I would far rather take breakfast here than anywhere else in the world."

She made him no answer, but the dark eyes drooped sadly. If he knew, if he only knew, the secret history of her life !

That day passed so quickly and so pleasantly to Sir Raoul that he could not realize his new existence.

She brought him books and photographs ; she talked to him and amused him ; she made the time pass so quickly that he marveled at her quick intelligence, her womanly wit. There was a touch even of genius in her noble, keen appreciation of art, in her passionate love of music. Then a dainty little luncheon was brought to him, after which she insisted on his driving out with her.

Sir Raoul laughed.

"I shall begin to think that I am a carpet knight," he said.

"The hard work went before it," rejoined Hildred. "You will enjoy a drive, Sir Raoul—the sun is warm and the air is mild."

He sat by the side of the beautiful, tender-hearted, graceful girl, and they found a hundred objects of conversation. The fragrant air, the warm sunbeams, the beautiful face, the sweet, caressing voice, all greatly affected Sir Raoul. Then, when they returned, she bade him adieu until dinner-time.

He thought long and anxiously after she had gone. How strange it was that Caraven, always delighted in beautiful women, could not care for her ! What a sad thing ! Both so young, with every fair gift of life before them, every gift the world could bestow lavished on them, yet miserable because they did not love each other—husband and wife, sworn to love and honor each other, yet further apart than strangers—even disliking each other ! It seemed to him pitiful.

"I wonder," he thought, "if I could do anything ? If I could only restore peace and harmony to them, I should not have lived in vain."

The first dinner-bell had rung when the earl returned, and Sir Raoul did not see him until dinner-time. Lady Caraven was the first to enter the drawing-room, where Sir Raoul awaited her. She looked very lovely in her evening dress. It was of white—white that shone and gleamed—with picturesque patches of scarlet. She wore scarlet and white flowers, with a suit of opals. He had thought her beautiful before, but now, with her white neck and shoulders and rounded arms all shown, she looked, he thought, magnificent.

Then the earl came in. He passed shown, she looked, he thought, mag- his wife with a silent bow, never once looking at her, and she drew aside the skirts of her robe to let him go by. Sir Raoul could not help noticing that she seemed to dread lest they should even touch him. There was not much hope of love or reconciliation there. Lord Caraven went over to him at once, shook hands with him warmly, and asked him how he had spent the day.

"Very happily, thanks to Lady Caraven," he replied—"she has been all kindness to me."

The earl looked both pleased and impatient.

"Ulric," said Sir Raoul, in a low voice, "what induced you to tell me that your wife was tall and dark—nothing more ?"

"So she is," he replied.

"Soldiers are pretty good judges—they see the women of many lands—believe me when I say that I have never met or seen a more beautiful woman than your wife."

" 'If she be not fair to me, what care I how fair she be ?' " quoted the earl. "I am glad you think so. I do not admire her style of beauty. If any one else does, so much the better—I do not object. There is the bell. Isn't it dreadful that the sound of the dinner-bell has a greater charm for me than the discussion of a lady's beauty ?"

Then he set to work resolutely to watch her, to see if in any respect she was deficient. He could not discover anything. She took her place with consummate grace. She was well versed in all the etiquette of the table ; she was a charming hostess. He saw, too, that, with all her wealth and all her beauty, she was an excellent mistress of the household ; her servants were well trained and obedient.

"I do not see myself," thought Sir Raoul, "what more Ulric can desire."

He could detect no fault in her ; but he did stop to wonder what their dinners must be like when they were quite alone.

The earl might have guessed the nature of his thoughts, for he said suddenly :

"We had some friends coming tonight, but I postponed their visit, thinking that you would be tired, Raoul. We never dine alone."

The young countess made no remark. Sir Raoul saw that she had plenty of self-control; no matter how sarcastic or bitter her husband was, she was never provoked to reply.

"She has that virtue," he said to himself, "self-control—and it is a sure foundation for many others."

(To Be Continued).

Piles To prove to you that Dr. Chase's Ointment is a certain and absolute cure for each and every form of itching, bleeding and protruding piles, the manufacturers have guaranteed it. See testimonials in the daily press and ask your neighbors what they think of it. You can use it and get your money back if not cured. 60c a box, at all dealers or EDMANSON, BATES & CO., Toronto.

Dr. Chase's Ointment

THE LOVE OF MOTHERS.

Among the lower animals the mother's love for her offspring lasts only until the offspring are able to shift for themselves. The hen will fret and fight for her downy chicks, but when they become feathered and commence to do their own foraging the mother hen becomes indifferent to them and thinks only of hatching another brood. The mare loves her foal and the cow her calf only during the suckling period. Canine dams cease to show affection to their progeny after the puppy age. So through the entire animal kingdom below the human species, the maternal instinct endures only while the young ones are helpless and ceases when they have grown up. How different is the love of a human mother for her children. That love never dies, and seems to grow more intense according as the children become less and less worthy of it. The black sheep is often the best beloved.

LADY CURZON.

Lady Curzon, vicereine of India, a Chicago woman, is actively engaged in promoting every sort of philanthropic work among the native women of the country. The Queen Victoria memorial, which she has undertaken to advance, is the outgrowth of the Lady Dufferin medical fund, which gives to the poor of India the attendance of doctors and nurses. Although vicereine in fact, that is not Lady Curzon's legal title. In the official records she is known only as "her excellency."

BULLER AND SURRENDER

TORONTO SOLDIER TELLS WHAT HE KNOWS.

He Says That Buller Did Not Advise the Surrender of Ladysmith.

General Redvers Buller has found another defender. The latest person to take up the cudgels in his behalf is William Carey, the son of John Carey, of Claremont street, Toronto, a youth of 22 years, who enlisted in the Second Rifle Brigade at Liverpool in 1899, and was hurried to the front with Buller.

"There were only four of us Canadians in the brigade," Carey says, "and I tell you we were proud of the way the troops from this country behaved themselves. With me were 'Dick' Richards and Ernest Pont, both of this city, and Jack Hoare, from Bolton, Ont. Both Pont and Hoare were killed in action, and Richards is now finishing his time with the brigade. I was with poor Jack Hoare when he passed away, after being shot, and his last words were, 'Well, Bill, I've done this for my Queen and country; we could not all go through—take this message to my mother.' As requested, I delivered the message given me. Out of about two hundred and fifty who started out in our company only about fifteen are now alive, the rest of them having been shot or having succumbed to sickness. We were with General Buller right through the different encounters to Pilgrim's Rest, where the general left the army, and I tell you that we were sorry when he went. We had lots of fighting, and I might say that only for our bayonets we would have been defeated. The Boers always gave us the worst of it at the start of the fights, but when they saw us advance with bayonets drawn they generally gave in."

THE SURRENDER HELIOGRAM.

But it is on the heliogram which Buller is understood to have sent to General White, advising him to surrender Ladysmith, that Carey comes out strong. "I was a signalist on the heliographs on the day the advice of surrender was said to have been transmitted, and, in spite of any statement to the contrary in the press or otherwise, I know that no such message ever was transmitted." He says: "I had to do with the heliographing on that memorable day, and if the particulars of the message are ever made known it will be shown that General Buller never even suggested surrender to General White.

"When General Joubert was attacking Ladysmith we were twelve miles away, and I took General White's message on the heliograph to General Buller, saying, 'I cannot hold out much longer.' General Buller almost cried when we gave him the message, and he immediately answered, 'Hold out as long as you can; I am only twelve miles away.' Then General White signalled that he thought it would be impossible for him to hold out, whereupon General Buller heliographed, 'If you must surrender get the best conditions possible for your men.' That is the only connection in which General Buller used the word 'surrender,' and every one of us with him commended him for good advice. In the opinion of all of us connected with the Second Rifle Brigade, he is the only man who could really get an army corps out of England to-day."

"NO."

On the corner-stone of that fabric which we entitle manhood is engraved the monosyllable "No." He who early learns the use of that invaluable word has already learned the way to peace, and comfort, and safety. An easy compliance frustrates everything. Respect for others need not degenerate into servitude ; but respect for oneself—that is the very alpha and omega of all inward command.

BABY'S OWN TABLETS.

For Weak, Sickly and Fretful Children of All Ages.

If the children's digestive organs are all right, the children are all right. They will be hearty, rosy, happy—and hungry. Get the little ones right, and keep them right by the use of Baby's Own Tablets. This medicine cures all stomach and bowel troubles, nervousness, irritation while teething, etc. These Tablets contain no opiate or poisonous drugs and mothers who try them once will not be without them while they have little ones. Mrs. D. E. Badgley, Woodmore, Man., says: "When our little girl was about six months old she caught a bad cold, and was much troubled with indigestion and constipation, and very restless both day and night. One of my neighbors brought me some Baby's Own Tablets and in a few days my little one was regular in her bowels and rested well. I found the Tablets so satisfactory that I now always keep them in the house and have since found them valuable when she was teething. I can truly recommend them for the ills of little ones."

Children take these Tablets readily, and crushed to a powder they can be given with absolute safety to the smallest infant. The Tablets can be obtained at all drug stores or you can get them post paid at 25 cents a box by writing direct to The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont., or Schenectady, N. Y.

Dreadful Case of Itching Piles

Doctor Wanted to Burn the Skin With a Red Hot Iron—Patient Was Cured by Dr. Chase's Ointment

Mr. Alex. McLean, Tarbot Vale, N.S., writes :—For two years I worked as sectionman on the Dominion Coal Company's Railroad between Sydney and Glace Bay, N.S., and during that time was exposed to all sorts of weather. Gradually my health failed, and I became a victim of protruding piles. At first I did not know what my ailment was, but consulted a doctor, and though he treated me for piles, they only grew worse.

"I was forced to give up work and return to my home. My suffering could scarcely be described. I could not walk or lie down, but while the rest of the family was sleeping I would be groaning and aching from the excruciating pains.

"Again I decided to consult a doctor. This one stripped me, and said the piles would have to be burned with a red hot iron. I shivered at the thought of burning the flesh, and told him I could not think of undergoing such an operation, so he gave me some salve, for which he charged me two dollars, but it did not do me any good.

"I was in a desperate condition and had given up hope of ever being freed from this dreadful suffering when a friend told me about Dr. Chase's Ointment. He said he had seen so many cases that it had cured that he would pay for it himself if it failed to cure.

"My experience with Dr. Chase's Ointment is that the first application did me more good than did the two doctors, and it has made me as well and as free from piles as any man. Since being cured I worked during the winter in the lumber woods and experienced no return of my old trouble. I am not putting it too strong when I say that Dr. Chase's Ointment was worth $100 a box to me. You are free to use my testimonial for the benefit of others, as I feel it my duty to make known this great ointment."

Dr. Chase's Ointment, 60 cents a box, at all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Toronto.