Time Heals Most Wounds

A Tale of Love and Disappointment

CHAPTER X.

Ackroyd left the Castle with Joel's cheque in his pocket, but he did not feel altogether comfortable. He could not arrive in London in time to be able to pay the cheque into his bank. He could not cash it at Joel's bank, for it had naturally been crossed. He therefore had a restless night, but as soon as his bank opened its door he entered and asked to see the manager.

"I want this cheque to be specially cleared," he said as he handed it over.

The manager looked up in surprise as he read the amount.

"Rather a large cheque, but the drawer is good for it," he said with a smile. "I can clear it by noon to-morrow if that will do?"

"Yes. That will be satisfactory. I suppose you don't mind if I draw a few hundred in the meantime."

"I am afraid I can't do that," the manager replied, after a moment's hesitation. "If a hundred will do?"

"Yes, that will be sufficient. Good morning."

The notes once in his pocket, Ackroyd's spirits rose in a wonderful degree, but his mind was not quite easy. He bought an evening paper in which he found a mention of Lord Wolverholme's illness; to his relief it was stated that he was a little better.

Then came a disquieting idea. What if the Earl were to confide in Joel and get him to stop the cheque, for he may have discovered that he (Ackroyd) had succeeded in regaining possession of the cipher letters during the time that he was unconscious. Ackroyd comforted himself with the thought that the Earl would not dare to tell of his treachery to Joel. No, he felt he was safe.

But he found that he could not rest, so he proceeded to amuse himself by spending the hundred pounds. The luxuries, that poverty had compelled him to deny himself, he immediately indulged in to the full. The finest cigars that money could buy, expensive jewellery, and a visit to a Bond Street tailor, where he gave orders that astonished the tradesman.

"I shall pay half when I try on and the balance on delivery," he said curtly.

"No necessity for that, sir," was the respectful reply, but the tailor would probably have required it if it had not been suggested, and Ackroyd smiled grimly.

He determined to have a night's enjoyment for he was sure that he would be unable to sleep so he movd his trunk to the Carlton Hotel and engaged a table for dinner in the restaurant. He required every delicacy in and out of season, and his choice of wine was made with much deliberation and a keen anticipation of enjoyment.

He had no intention of hoarding his ill-gotten gains, for he was already making plans for increasing them by speculation. To his joy he found that the cheque was duly cleared, and that the sum of nearly twenty-five thousand pounds stood to his credit. He revelled in its possession.

To do Ackroyd justice he was not in the least mean, for one of the first things that he did was to hire a motor-car and drive to a little cottage a few miles from London. There he was received by a white-haired woman, with every sign of evident joy in his presence.

"Well, Nan, how are you getting on?" he asked cheerily.

"Sadly, sadly, Master Julian," she replied with a shake of her head.

"Sorry to hear it, but things will be better now. I am arranging that you shall have thirty shillings a week for the rest of your life."

"God bless you, Master Julian; You have been so kind to an old woman," she said sobbingly.

And inded he had been kind. She was his old nurse who had fallen on evil days, and in spite of his poverty, Ackroyd had managed to give her sufficient money to keep her out of the workhouse.

He left with her blessings ringing in his ears, and this in a manner served to soothe the qualms of conscience that had been pricking him.

Now he launched forth into every kind of extravagance. He took chambers in St. James' and purchased a motor-car; each morning he drove into the City and speculated on the Stock Exchange. A rage for riches had seized him; he was not content with the thousands that he had, he dreamt of becoming a financial magnate.

From the outset ill luck followed him in his speculations. This only involved him the more, for he now began to plunge heavily to recoup himself for his losses. The usual result ensued, and in a very short time he found that his fat balance at the bank was well night depleted. He did not stop to consider his position, for he was governed by the gambling fever that possessed him, but the time quickly came when he had but a few hundreds left. Then he stood aghast at his unwise conduct.

"If I had but invested the money at four per cent. I could have lived in comfort for the rest of my life, while now I am nearly as badly off as I was before I got the cheque," he growled to himself.

He had just risen after a late night. His breakfast lay untasted on the table; around him was every sign of wealth; his room was lavishly furnished, and the dressing-gown he wore was of silk.

His servant entered quietly.

"Mr. Joel Josephs wishes to see you," he said respectfully.

"Not at home, not at home," he cried hurriedly.

But Joel had anticipated such a move, and he had followed closely on the servant's heels.

"I won't detain you a minute," he said as he pushed open the door.

Ackroyd rose and angrily told the servant to leave the room.

"What is the meaning of this intrusion?" he demanded curtly.

"Simply that I desire to see you, Mr. Ackroyd."

Joel laid emphasis on the name.

"What do you want?"

"May I sit down? Thanks. I see that I stated your correct name when we met at Wolverholme Castle. I rarely make a mistake," Joel said, as he took a seat and made himself comfortable.

"I think we can do business together," he continued genially. "I have use for you, and I am prepared to pay handsomely," he went on. "Please understand that I come in a perfectly friendly spirit."

"On that own account, or that of another?" Ackroyd asked with a keen look.

"My own, absolutely, but my business does not concern another."

"Come to the point then," Ackroyd cried impatiently.

"With pleasure. How much do you want for your hold over Lord Wolverholme?" he replied coolly.

Ackroyd started violently as the words reached his ears.

"I don't understand you," he blurted out as soon as he had recovered his self-possession.

"You understand me perfectly. How much do you want?"

"What hold have I over Lord Wolverholme?" Ackroyd began cautiously.

"I am asking you a question, Mr. Ackroyd. How much do you want?"

"Don't you think you had better be frank, Mr. Joel? It will shorten our interview considerably."

"I am perfectly open with you. I want to know how much you want."

"Do you know what you want to buy?" Ackroyd asked slily.

Joel thought for a moment.

"No, I do not," he rapped out at last.

"I thought so. What if I say I have nothing to sell?"

"You will be a liar, Ackroyd," Joel said genially.

"How do you know that I have any connexion with Lord Wolverholme?"

Joel did not speak, but took a cheque from his pocket.

"This endorsement speaks for itself. The Earl handed my cheque over to you. What was the consideration?" Joel demanded. His lazy manner had disappeared and there was menace in his voice.

Ackroyd changed color. For a few minutes he paced to and fro, deep in thought. He had great admiration for Joel's astutement, and he wanted to ascertain his motive in thus approaching him. Was it on behalf of the Earl, or was there something behind it that he did not know?

"That was a private business transaction between the Earl and myself," he said firmly.

"Yes, I have heard it termed business," Joel said musingly. "I have also heard it called by a harsher word," he added emphatically; "you had much better be frank, for it will pay you."

"If I understood your object?"

"I do not see how that concerns you as long as you get the money. You are 'broke,' and in confidence you won't get another penny out of the Earl, he hasn't got it."

"But he could find it," Ackroyd said astutely.

"Not so easily as I can. I will pay handsomely."

"First you must tell me what makes you think that I know anything."

"With pleasure. It is really very simple. I knew you lied in saying you were not Ackroyd when we met at the Castle; that was suspicious. Then I am pretty well informed as to what goes on in the City; I heard of your sudden accession to wealth and of your gambling. I took a hand in that myself, and I think I accounted for a number of your bad investments, for I can move the market when I choose. Finally, I obtained my cheque back from the bank. Your endorsement was sufficient to tell its own tale. I repeat, how much?"

"What will you pay?"

"Now you are talking business. What have you to sell? I can't fix an amount till I know; I don't want details, you needn't show your hand too much, but I must know if it makes a powerful lever."

"Yes, it's a weighty weapon," Ackroyd said with a smile.

"It must have been to enable you to get that cheque. What is it? A woman?"

Ackroyd shook his head.

"I'm glad. That wouldn't have been much use to me. What would be the effect of the use of this information you possess?"

"Immediate and irretrievable ruin to the Earl," Ackroyd replied.

"How would it affect Lord Harecastle?" he asked. "Is he concerned directly?"

"No, but he would naturally suffer with his father."

"That is so. If this information is of the nature you say I will pay you——"

Ackroyd leant forward expectantly. Joel eyed him keenly, and finally came to the conclusion that no small sum would tempt this man.

"I will give you a similar cheque to this," he said at last.

"Twenty-five thousand pounds?" he said breathlessly.

"Yes."

"It's a bargain."

Ackroyd impetuously jumped to his feet and held out his hand. Joel looked at it contemptuously and he shook his head.

"This is a business transaction, Mr. Ackroyd," he said grimly.

Ackroyd's face flushed hotly, and for a moment he was about to speak angrily, but he quickly changed his mind. He went to a safe and took out the cipher letters. He then resumed his seat.

"Some thirty years ago," he began gravely, "Lord Wolverholme was sent by the Prime Minister to St. Petersburg on a delicate negotiation with the Russian Government. It appears that the Earl was heavily in debt and he was just about to marry. Unless he could find a large sum of money the marriage would be broken off. The lady to whom he was engaged was of high rank and possessed a good deal of money. The Earl did not know which way to turn. To cut the story short, a Russian official got into communication with him and offered him a large bribe to sell his country. The Earl accepted the bribe——"

Joel rose to his feet, and his face plainly showed the pleasure which this statement gave him.

"Can you prove it?" he demanded hoarsely.

"The evidence is here," Ackroyd said, placing his hand on the letters.

"Let me see it."

"It's a cipher, but a simple one. I will explain it to you."

For a moment Ackroyd hesitated to let the papers out of his possession, but he now felt that he could trust Joel, for he had come to the conclusion that he was not acting on behalf of the Earl, so there was no danger of his destroying them.

"Can you make it out?" he asked.

"Yes, yes," Joel cried impatiently.

For a while all was silence only broken by the heavy breathing of the two men. At last Joel looked up, and his face glowed with triumph.

"This was written by the late Prime Minister?"

Ackroyd nodded.

"It must be true or the Earl would not have let you blackmail him. I will keep these letters, Mr. Ackroyd."

Joel took out his cheque-book and filled in a form.

"I will retain the letters, if you don't mind, Mr. Joel. You go to your bank and bring the notes here," Ackroyd said suavely.

As he spoke he laid his hand on the letters which Joel still grasped, and the two men faced one another.

"As you like," Joel said indifferently, "I will be back in a quarter of an hour. Don't go out."

An unholy joy seized Ackroyd when he was alone. A fortune was once more in his grasp and this time he would not dissipate it. A quarter of an hour passed and he looked impatiently at the clock. He was beginning to grow nervous when to his relief Joel bustled into the room.

He pulled a bundle of crisp notes from his pocket and flung them down on the table.

"The letters, please," he said curtly.

Ackroyd took up the notes and methodically counted them, while Joel watched him with a grim smile.

"They're right, I suppose," he said caustically. "I thought so. Now let me have the letters."

He took out his pocket-book and placed them carefully in one of the compartments.

"Good morning, Mr. Ackroyd. Let me give you a word of warning. Blackmailing is a dangerous game to play. You have twice been successful, but be careful of the third attempt. It's an unlucky number."

Joel nodded curtly and then a thought seemed to strike him.

"By the by, why did the Earl part with the cheque before he got the letters?" he asked.

Ackroyd's face flushed, and he hesitated to reply.

"Oh, I understand," Joel continued. "You did give them up and got them back again when he fainted. Thief as well as blackmailer, Mr. Ackroyd."

He hastened from the room and entered his motor-car which was waiting below.

"Now, my Lord Harecastle, I think you will sing to a different tune. I hold the whip hand," he cried triumphantly.

(To be continued.)

ON THE FARM

FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

The present outbreak of this disease in the United States, and the blocking of all shipments of live stock from certain States of the Union into Canada, has attracted the attention of the agricultural community, and has resulted in several inquiries as to the nature of this disease.

Foot-and-mouth disease, also called Aphthous Fever, is a virulent and contagious disease of cattle, sheep and swine, young animals being particularly susceptible.

Symptoms.—The general symptoms are usually slight fever and lack of appetite, and in milch cattle there may be some diminution of the milk flow. These troubles are quickly followed by eruptions of the muscous membrane of the mouth, the skin between the toes, and of the skin of the udder and teats. The eruptions or pustules in the mouth may be on the lips, palate or tongue, and they soon burst exposing a red, inflamed area, and profuse and continued salivation follows, often glairy—like white of egg—and sometimes bloody. The animal finds much difficulty and pain in eating, rumination is impeded, and the breath becomes fetid.

The pustules on the feet and udder are usually smaller than those of the mouth, and, on breaking, ulcers usually form, and, in the case of the feet, extend under the horn. From exposure to mud and filth, further infection occurs, and the hoof may be entirely shed. Sheep in such a condition will often walk on their knees. In acute cases the disease extends to the respiratory and digestive tracts, and death occurs in five to six days. The majority of cases, however, are mild, and respond to proper treatment, and the animals recover in about two weeks.

Infection in Man.—The disease attacks man, and there are many cases of such infection taking place. Such cases usually occur from drinking the milk of infected animals, and the symptoms are somewhat similar in man to those of animals. A very good example may be instanced during the prevalence of foot-and-mouth disease in Berlin, Germany, in 1895. A considerable number of milk consumers in that city suffered from fever, with the characteristic eruption on the tongue and mucous membranes of the mouth, which, on bursting, left very painful ulcerations. The acute disease lasted for five days, and left a sense of great weakness for a time. The celebrated pathologist, Virchow, who made an investigation, unhesitatingly pronounced it to be foot-and-mouth disease.

Cases of infection through butter, buttermilk and cheese made from infected milk, are also on record.

Few affections have been the object of so much bacteriological research, but so far the organism which causes the disease has not been found. In 1896 the German Government appointed a commission to investigate the causes of the disease. In 1897 they reported that they were unable to find any casual organism, but from their experiments they were of the opinion that the disease was caused by an invisible microbe, or, in other words, the organism was so minute that even the most powerful microscopes could not reveal its presence. Since this discovery, a number of investigators have reported on certain other diseases produced by invisible microbes.

Prevention.—The usual measures taken to prevent the spread of the disease is to arrest all movements of stock in the affected districts, to exclude all visitors, and quarantine all who attend or are brought into contact with the infected animals.

In Europe such measures are rigorously enforced by the sanitary police. The writer remembers, on one occasion, whilst taking a walk in the vicinity of Berne, Switzerland, being stopped by a policeman, who informed him that should he pass a certain point, he would have to remain in the district for ten days, as foot-and-mouth disease was present in that locality.

Disinfection must be carried out thoroughly. Many Governments endeavor to stamp out the disease by the slaughter of all infected animals, paying the owners some compensation. This is the method the United States Government are carrying out. All infected herds are slaughtered, and the owners are indemnified to the extent of two-thirds of the appraised value of the cattle, in some cases the State paying the rest. The cost of disinfection is also paid by the Federal Government. Naturally, the cost of dealing with such an epidemic is enormous, and the Secretary of Agriculture is asking for an emergency appropriation of $500,000 for this work.

The last epidemic in the States occurred in 1902, when 4,461 animals were killed, and the owners compensated to the amount of $128,908.57. This outbreak lasted eleven months.—Prof. F. C. Harrison, Macdonald College, in Farmer's Advocate.

HOW JAPS FIGHT A FIRE

FLIMSY STRUCTURES MENACE TO CITIES' SAFETY.

An Antiquated Hand Engine Manned by Chanting Firemen.

Travelling in the Island Empire, one sees the old, mud-walled, thatched-roofed houses of ten centuries ago. But in the cities they are giving place rapidly to a more modern form of architecture. The tile roofing has superseded the thatching, and the mud walls are covered with black plaster. Tin and copper are seen in place of the ancient and crude eaves of bamboo.

These changes, however, have not been effected so much by foreign influences as might be supposed, but rather because of their better protection against fire. Earthquakes and wind-storms (typhoons) are a constant source of danger to the Japanese but fire is their greatest menace. Enough to fill the stoutest heart with dread are those frequent conflagrations that utterly destroy hundreds, and often thousands of homes. Tokio, the capital, has been partly reduced to ashes on several occasions. The method of construction insures their dwellings against all except the most severe seismic disturbances and wind-storms; but the use of candles and poor oil-lamps, resting on uneven floors, for lighting, and small hibachi (fire-boxes) filled with glowing charcoal, for heating purposes, make danger from fire doubly probable.

As most Japanese houses are of only one storey, and built close together, a fire in one may burn down a street, or an entire district. A large fire in a Japanese city is a sight

NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN.

The writer remembers one he saw in a small northern town, far from the beaten track of tourists. I was staying at a small native inn, and at the time of the first alarm was reading by the light of a tallow candle.

The landlord came in with many low bows and apologies for interrupting the honorable foreigner's learned meditation on subjects which no doubt his (the landlord's) ignorant mind could not even imagine, and finally begged to state that the house next door but one was on fire. By the time that the ceremonious host finished his harangue I had gathered up my loose belongings, dumped them into my two travelling cases, and had them ready to move.

At the entrance to the courtyard I met my servant, who, with others of his class attached to the inn, was loudly lamenting, but making no effort to help put out the fire, now raging with fury. I pulled my factotum inside the door of my apartment, and pushed him down on my luggage, told him that he could bemoan his fate or pray to his fox-god of fire as much as he wished, but that if he raised his low-born person from those chattels until ordered to do so he would be skinned alive by his most indulgent and kind-hearted master.

Then I ran out of the gate into the street, and a moment later was being literally carried toward the fire. I don't think my feet touched the ground more than two or three times. Every one was bearing a red-paper lantern, with his name and address on it. This human cyclone at last deposited me up against an antiquated hand-engine, just in time to get the full benefit of

A BREAK IN THE HOSE.

But I was too much interested in the proceedings to mind my drenching. At each end of the engine long bamboo poles, with red-paper lanterns fastened to the top, were set into the ground. The men who were pumping water from the well sang, or rather chanted, a dismal appeal to the gods of fire and wind. Men, women and children rushed into the burning building, and came out again with whatever they could lay their hands on; but, as far as I could see, they put everything in a safe place.

Tourists in Japan up to 1898, wondered why the following clause was inserted in their passports: "It is forbidden to attend a fire on horseback." The reason for this restriction was that only the President of the town was permitted to go to a fire on horseback, so that he might better direct the work of the firemen, and be recognized more easily as the chief.

The sixth house from the one afire was torn down rapidly. Firemen stood on the roofs of the adjoining houses and threw large stones, passed to them by men on ladders, the more quickly to raze the burning dwellings. All the friends and neighbors of people living in the immediate vicinity called at their houses, and left cards on which were written offers of protection to them, should their homes be endangered or consumed. These calls usually are returned the next morning by the recipients of this kindness.

At the fire, which was considered a small one, eighty-nine houses were destroyed. After a fire, nearly every near-by house not burned sets out a large cask of saki (rice wine) from which friends and acquaintances help themselves. A good time, bordering upon revelry, is kept up till the next morning. It is rather singular that, with so many strangers about, and rough men freely entering different houses and shops,

THINGS ARE RARELY STOLEN.

One reason for this is that an article stolen from a burning house, or from one in danger of burning, is thought to bring down the curse of the fox-god upon the culprits.

After the fire was conquered I returned to the inn, which had been in no peril, as the wind was blowing in another direction, and found my servant where I had left him. The "boy," as male servants, no matter how old, always are addressed in Japan, seemed to think that his master's possessions, and even the inn itself, had been saved through his pagan prayers.

At the present time, in large Japanese cities, ordinances and regulations to a certain extent govern the form of construction of houses. Nearly the whole house is built at the carpenter shop, and taken to the site and set up. Few nails are used, but the posts and dovetailing are ingenious and effective. The roof is first built, with a large beam for the ridge-pole, so fashioned as to enable the house to sway and give in time of earthquakes. Supporting the roof are upright posts set six feet apart, and joined by split-bamboo latticework tied with rice-straw ropes and fielled in with plaster. These uprights rest on four-by-fours, so that the heavy part of the house is at the top; and during an earthquake or windstorm the house is able to give, which would be impossible if it was on a solid foundation. At the back of every large store, and also in homes of rich men, a fire-proof warehouse, called a go-down, is built, in which are kept merchandise or family treasures. Foreign rooms are being added to the homes of the rich, rather in the form of reception than every-day living rooms.

Some of the nobles have built beautiful palaces; but it is to be noted that usually they live in their attached Japanese suite. All the new Government buildings are of foreign architecture, and as the Japanese rarely entertain at their own homes it was found necessary for the Government to erect official residences after the foreign style of construction.

The native houses, I should have remarked, have no cellars, and are built a little above ground, on an average of about two feet. It may be added that the Japanese carpenters prepare a superior kind of scaffolding. The roof once up, the entire house is surrounded with poles tied together and protected from bad weather by straw awnings. Timbers, plaster and other materials are not carried from one place to another, but passed from hand to hand from the ground.

"The physician attending me prescribed, on my rallying from an attack of rheumatism, your *Scott's Emulsion*, which I have been taking every winter since. I find it most valuable in strengthening and building up one after a severe illness. I have not had rheumatism since the time mentioned above and I owe it to your most valuable *Emulsion*. It is my life now, and makes me strong and healthy."—R. PICARD, Grand Ligne, Quebec.

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ALL DRUGGISTS

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