Time Heals Most Wounds

A Tale of Love and Disappointment

CHAPTER XX.—(Cont'd)

"Engagements have been broken before, even at so late an hour," Harecastle said vigorously.

"And a pretty scandal they make. I am not going to have one in my family," he answered grimly.

"We are here to appeal to you, but you must understand that I have made up my mind," Rebekah said tenaciously. "Father, I can be as obstinate as you. Do you think I should ever have consented if I had known that Cyril was engaged to Miss Fetherston? You have played an iniquitous part, and if you were not my father I could curse you."

"No melodrama, please, Rebekah. Cursing is out of date; besides, I can do all that is necessary. Have you explained to him what will be the result of your refusing to marry?" he demanded sternly.

"I told him what you said, but no one could believe that you were serious. You only said it in your anger," she cried tremulously.

"I repeat it now, in cold blood. If you refuse to do my bidding, I will tell the world why the marriage does not take place. It shall know of the Earl's treachery. Does that move you?" Joel cried jeeringly.

The younger man rose to his feet with clenched fists.

"Don't answer him, Cyril. He has no cause for anger with you. It is I that refuse, not you," she cried, and she placed her hand on his arm to restrain him.

He quickly recognized the wisdom of her words, and held his rage in check.

"I don't believe you could do it, Mr. Josephs," he said gravely. "I do not credit you with being so low."

"Don't rely on that, Lord Harecastle," he said grimly. "You don't know me. Ask any one in the city if Joel Josephs has ever been known to go back on his word. I repeat to you most solemnly that if you two people break off this marriage, I will give out the reason I have told you. I am sorry that you two children should drive me to take up this attitude, but I think you will thank me a few years hence. You are made for one another; every one says so. There is no reason why you should not look forward to a long life of happiness. It is not reasonable to expect me to consent to a course that will raise a hornet's nest of gossip. Then, too, you forget that Royalty is to honor us with its presence. How can I put them off? The idea is absurd, so dismiss it from your minds at once."

His earnestness made a deep impression upon them both, but Rebekah did not waver for a moment.

"You are depriving yourself of a daughter's love. I shall never forgive, if you do what you say. Indeed, I will leave you, and never again call you father."

Joel watched her admiringly, and he saw in her his own fighting spirit, but it o ly rendered him all the more desirous of conquering it.

"Make up your minds," he said sharply. "If you so desire it, I will make the announcement to our guests in the morning, that the marriage is postponed."

"And you will say nothing?" Rebekah asked eagerly.

"I shall speak, and to the point," he said sharply. "Have you decided? You are a pair of simpletons. Run along and play and let's have no more of this nonsense. I am really very fond of you both if you will only be sensible."

It was more than Rebekah could bear, and she burst forth into passionate tears. But on Joel it had not the slightest effect.

"You need not think that tears will make me alter my mind," he began in an even, cold voice. "Perhaps you had better go to bed. A night's rest may enable you to view things sensibly. You are overtired."

"I shall never rest while you are so cruel," she cried piteously. "Will nothing change you?"

"It is useless," Harecastle said, for hope had left him. "After all my father must suffer. No good can come by prolonging this interview."

"Yes. Your father will suffer, and you too," Joel crid angrily. "Do you think that any decent woman will be anxious to marry you if she knows the truth? The name of Wolverholme will be a byeword."

"I will leave you, father," Rebekah said as she rose. "And I make one final appeal for mercy. I have decided, and unless you agree I shall leave this house in the morning. I am of age and you cannot control me. Good-night."

Joel felt that he was losing and an uncontrollable rage consumed him.

"You are an unnatural daughter and I shall be well rid of you. Not a desire of your life have I allowed to go unsatisfied. I have lived but for your happiness, and you repay me by this ingratitude."

"Good-night, father," she said wistfully.

"You realize what you are doing?" he cried fiercely.

"Let the child go," Harecastle said sternly. "Are you not satisfied with your cruelty? Do you wish to prolong her torment?"

The door closed softly and the two men faced one another.

"I should like to give you my opinion of your conduct now that we are alone," Harecastle said quietly. "My hands have been tied and I have been compelled to see a brave young girl bear the brunt of a coward's bullying. It is your own blood that you are torturing. I do not appeal for myself, for I am prepared to suffer the ignominy that you can pour on my head. But I ask you to think of my father. He is an old man, and near to his grave. He has done wrong, but it was in the days of his youth. He must have suffered bitterly for that one act. Before it, his life had been full of promise, and he had to sink his ambition. His career was wasted."

Joel puffed vigorously once or twice at his cigar, and then laid it down on an ash tray. He raised his head quickly.

"We will see the Earl. Perhaps he will have something to say on the matter," he said with a malignant look.

CHAPTER XXI.

Joel led the way to the smoking-room, and they found that Lord Wolverholme had not yet gone to bed.

The three men were alone. Harecastle was acutely feeling his position. His father looked so happy and contented, and little dreamt of what was awaiting him.

"I suppose it is nearly time for bed," the Earl remarked with a yawn.

"It is only eleven o'clock," Joel said quickly, "and I fear we must have a little talk. I want you to use your influence with your son. They tell me that their engagement is broken off," he wound up grimly.

"What madness is this?" the Earl cried agitatedly. "It is quite impossible."

"Let the matter rest; you can do no good, Joel," Harecastle said appealingly. "You must remember that the decision does not rest with me."

"Perhaps the Earl will be able to persuade Rebekah. He has every reason to use the persuasive powers for which he is famed," Joel said threateningly.

"What does it all mean?" the Earl asked of his son. "Is it a joke? If so, it is in very bad taste."

"It is grim earnest, Lord Wolverholme. You may as well understand that we all know of that little affair at St. Petersburg."

The words came as a thunderclap. Cyril instinctively moved to his father's side, and it was well that he did so, for the Earl required a steadying hand.

"My sin has found me out, and after these long years," the Earl moaned feebly. He sank back into his chair, and his body trembled violently.

"Who knows?" he asked quaveringly.

"Rebekah, Harecastle, Ackroyd, and myself," Joel answered quickly.

"No one else?" the Earl asked eagerly.

"No one."

"Thank God," he whispered hoarsely.

"Then I am safe. Did Ackroyd tell you?"

"Yes," Joel replied.

"The blackguard! And I paid him too."

Harecastle rested his hand affectionately on his father's shoulder, for he was filled with anxiety for him.

"It was so long ago, father. Don't think about it!" he said soothingly.

"But how does this affect the marriage? Joel knows of it, Rebekah also. Who else is there to be considered, if they do not mind?" he asked wonderingly.

"Your past appears to have had but little to do with the rupture of the marriage. It is incomprehensible to me. They don't give any reason. Rebekah merely says that she cannot be happy with Harecastle. He keeps silent, and says that he leaves himself in Rebekah's hands. I have done my utmost to persuade her to change her decision. She absolutely refuses to do so. Now you must take a hand."

"I will do my best, but I cannot hope to succeed where her father has failed," the Earl said hopelessly.

"You must go down on your knees to her. Pray to her as if you were praying for your life, for it means more than that to you," Joel said fiercely.

He had no pity for the broken man who sat shivering at the menace in his voice.

"I am bewildered. I can do nothing. We must accept the position. But it is very sad; we were all so happy. What reason is animating her?" he asked Harecastle.

"She will not make a loveless marriage," he replied dully.

"I see," he cried quickly. "You low Jewish blackguard. So you have threatened my son with my shame to encompass your ends! Cyril, can you forgive me?" he asked appealingly.

"I do, father, with all my heart; but you don't yet realize the capabilities of this man," Harecastle cried excitedly.

"What more can he do?"

"A reason must be given to the world for the breaking off of the marriage."

"I do not see the necessity for it; the announcement is sufficient."

"But Joel sees the necessity. He will give the reason," Harecastle cried impetuously.

"Well?" the Earl said inquiringly.

"He will say that he discovered this thing of your past, and that he himself broke off the marriage on account of it," Harecastle said simply.

"Then he must do so," the Earl said with simple dignity. "I committed the crime, and I must pay the penalty. I have played the coward too long. But you share in the punishment, Cyril. It is more than I can bear. 'Be sure thy sins will find thee out!'" he wound up miserably.

By some miracle the Earl seemed to have thrown aside the unworthy part of his nature. Too long had he lived for himself, he would play the part of a brave man and try to atone.

Joel moved impatiently, for he had little expected that the Earl would take up this position.

"Have you thought? Have you duly considered the consequences. You hold a proud position. The Earl of Wolverholme is a man who is respected, at whom dirt has never been thrown. Your name will become an object of execration. You, it will affect but little, for you are an old man. But when you are dead there will be another Earl of Wolverholme, who will have to bear the ignominy after you. And your son's children. They will be hounded from the haunts of civilized men, they will be ostracized by their class, and will be doomed to the lives of hermits."

"You could not deal them this blow," the Earl said weakly. "I will do anything I can, but I am helpless."

"You underestimate your influence," Joel said quietly.

The Earl looked pitifully at his son.

"Shall we brave it?" Harecastle cried desperately. "Shall you and I go abroad together. I will never marry and the name will die out."

"I do not know what to say, Cyril. Your life must not be blasted. I cannot let you make such a sacrifice. Will nothing move you, Joel?" the Earl asked eagerly.

"Why should I change? Shall I give in now that it is so nearly accomplished? You may save your words, they are useless."

"What advantage will you gain by doing us this injury?" the Earl asked simply.

"At any rate I shall secure an ample revenge. That will be some satisfaction."

Joel was terrified that they might defy him. His manner was cold and threatening, and he waited eagerly for the Earl to continue.

Lord Wolverholme's face twitched and he gasped painfully.

"Run to my room, Cyril," he whispered hoarsely. "You will find a bottle on my dressing-table. Bring it at once."

"Only one of those heart attacks," the Earl said feebly.

(To be continued.)

THE JOYS OF LIFE.

Case of Simple Minded Youth Who Trunbled the Handcart.

"In what joy consists," said Mr. MacWhackleton, "depends a good deal on our age, circumstances and point of view. I doubt if any of later life are greater than those of early youth.

"Going along our street last night was a youthful grocery boy pushing a hand cart and imitating the call of a cat. He didn't know whether he was rich or poor. If an automobile passed him he didn't wish that he could have it. Sufficient to himself, he simply regarded it as a part of the show. He hadn't come to any of the sorrows or setbacks of life yet, he was fearless and irresponsible; alive and kicking, he enjoyed every breath he drew, and now he was walking along, automatically pushing the handcart, which had practically gone out of his mind in the thrill of his cat calling achievements.

"'Miauow!' he said. 'Mi—au—ow!' long drawn out. 'Mi—au—ow!' and he tectered the handle of the cart in the intensity of his enjoyment, all wrought up by the sound of his own voice and the effectiveness of his own effort, thinking it fine and wonderful and thinking it nothing else.

"What was the tariff to him, or the earthquake in Italy, or where the money was coming from to pay the rent, or whether he could afford to go to the show or not, or any of life's cares and troubles? Nothing.

"He lived in a world of his own in which he was constantly discovering new wonders and himself learning to do new things, and lately it had come to him that he could imitate the call of a cat and just now he was in full flush of his first perfected power in this; and here he was pushing the hand cart along, teetering the handle up and down, and with his head thrown back, saying at every other step, 'Mi—au—ow! Mi—au—ow!' and finding it in a pervasive and permeating, a profoundly penetrating delight. What greater joy could one find?"

LOST OPPORTUNITIES.

Mark Twain said in a recent speech: "I want to tell you one more story, the story of the lost opportunity. Young people don't realize the full sadness of it, but who of us older people doesn't know the pathos of the lost opportunity? In the village which is a suburb of New Bedford, a friend of mine took me to the dedication of a town hall, and pointed out to me a bronzed, weather-beaten old man over ninety years old.

"Do you see any passion in that old man?" said he to me.

"You don't; well, I can make him a perfect volcano to you. I'll just mention to him something very casually."

And he did.

Well, that old man suddenly gave vent to an outburst of profanity such as I had never heard in my life before. I listened to him with the delight with which one listens to an artist.

The cause of it was this. When that old man was a young sailor, he came back from a three-year cruise and found the whole town had taken the pledge. He hadn't taken it, so he was ostracised.

Finally he made up his mind he couldn't stand ostricism any longer, and he went to the secretary and said: "Put my name down for that temperance society of yours."

Next day he left on another three-year cruise. It was torture to him to watch the men drinking, and he pledged not to. Finally he got home.

He got a jug of good stuff, ran to the society, and said: "Take my name right off, I'm going a buster."

"It isn't necessary," said the secretary, "it was never on; you were blackballed before you went away."

SHE WAS MISTAKEN.

Hubby was evidently worried, and wifey was trying to cheer him up.

"Cheer up, John and don't worry" she said. "It doesn't do any good to borrow trouble."

"Borrow trouble," echoed her husband. "Great Caesar's ghost, I ain't borrowing trouble; I've got it to lend."

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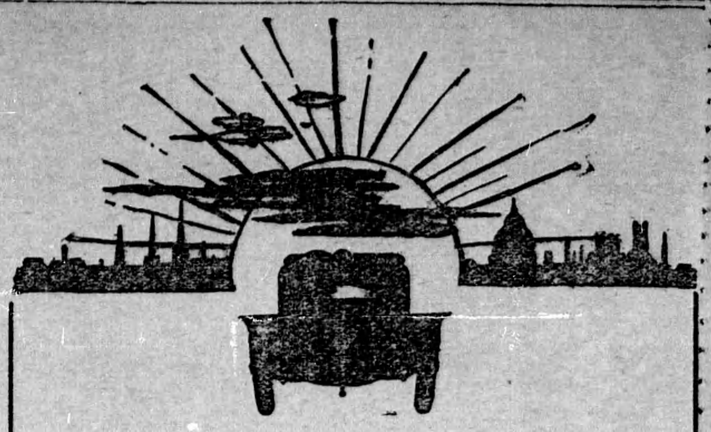

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About the Farm

MAKE CHICKENS SCRATCH.

Busy hens are layers, providing, of course, that they are well fed. Dumpy birds that mope around on the roost all day long, except when a little feed is thrown in to them, are not, as a rule, in any hurry about laying. Exercise is as necessary for the health and vigor of a hen as of a horse or man. Chickens are intended to scratch for their living, and a fowl which does not have to do it is like a lazy man who lounges about the house with only such exercise as he obtains in sitting down to the table, eating, and getting up again. Who would expect such a person to be healthy, vigorous or efficient? The idea that hens or cows derive sufficient exercise from the digestion of their food is absurd. Make the poultry scratch for their living, not amid filth and accumulated droppings, but in clean, fresh dry chaff, leaves or other litter, renewed two or three times a week. When throwing the grain into the pen, scatter it well, and rake or kick the chaff, leaves or dust over it, so as to make the birds use their legs. It may seem like a waste of energy, but it is not. Exercise and eggs are two words that begin with the same letter, and the relation between the facts is not less close than that between the words.

LIVE STOCK NOTES.

Always be sure that the collar is an exact fit for the horse. If not, make it fit or get a new one. Don't think that the horse's neck will adjust itself to the collar. Have a good fit in the collar and you will have but little trouble with sore shoulders.

Have the feet of all the colts leveled frequently and shaped properly, even if it is necessary to hire an expert horse-shoer to go to the stable to do the job. Faulty action in mature animals is often the result of neglecting the feet when the animal is young.

Should your hogs grow too thin in bone, do not blame it all to the breed. Remember that pigs cannot grow bone without the necessary material, any more than they can produce flesh and fat without food. See that your food ration contains plenty of phosphates, and keep salt and ashes within reach of the pigs.

It pays to use a disinfectant in pig pens. An excellent practice is to scatter a little chloride of lime through the pen twice a week, while a few pails of white-wash, to which a small quantity of carbolic acid has been added, will materially assist in keeping the place free from vermin. The hog is naturally a clean animal if he is allowed to be.

When a man buys his foundation stock and gives it intelligent care, he has a reasonable assurance of success in producing the same kind of hogs; but no breeder should be satisfied with producing just as good stock as he started with. It should be his hope and ambition to produce something better.

As an egg-producing food, a mixture of wheat, hulled oats, a little cracked corn and some millet seed, is an exceptionally good one. It makes a great food to scatter in the litter for the hens to work out. For hens that are comfortably housed and protected from the cold, we should use one-third hulled oats, one-third wheat, and the other third composed of equal parts of cracked corn and millet seed. Corn is heating, and if the hens are in a cold pen, we should increase this article. Hulled oats cost more than the ordinary kind, but they are worth a good deal more; there is no more food value in the hull or husk of the oats than there is in the oats straw itself.

MESSENGERS OF DEATH.

As year by year more is heard of the efforts to establish an International arbitration court, so also inventors produce more and more deadly weapons of warfare that cannot fail to work in the same direction. One of the latest is the rifle-howitzer shrapnel grenade, originated by Mr. F. Martin Hale, of England. It can be adapted to any Service rifle, and experiments have demonstrated that its death-dealing powers, at a range of 900 feet, are appalling. The grenade is an inch thick, and 5½ inches long, and, when fully charged, weighs nearly 1½ pounds. A man could carry a dozen of them without danger or inconvenience; while they can be fixed ready for firing both easily and quickly. Experiments, too, are being carried out with an automatic shot-gun and a carbine, whereby five cartridges can be fired in four seconds, without the use of the marksman's hand for cocking. The spent cartridges are also thrown out, surely and safely.