FORTUNE FAVORS THE BRAVE;

OR, A LOOK INTO THE PAST

CHAPTER XII.—(Cont'd)

Dorothy stared straight at her father, and her lips trembled.

"Kicked that dear, beautiful collie! Oh, daddy, how could he do it?"—her face was crimson with disgust and anger. "What did you do?"

"I confess, my darling, my fist all but met Mr. Crawshaw's head; fortunately, I restrained myself sufficiently to remember that I was his host, but I think I let him see something of my contempt; and I gave Foster orders before him to let the poor creature loose, and take her into the paddock."

"And—and was she really hurt, papa"

Sir Humphrey's brows met.

"Yes, she was," he said, almost shortly; "she ran lame, and moaned at every yard. On my life, Dolly, I was never so near thrashing a man in the whole course of my career!"

"I wish you had done it!" Dorothy cried, with flashing eyes. "Let Mr. Crawshaw kick his dog, or show off any of his brutal ways before me, and ——"

But here Miss Leicester had to compose her feelings and her face, and meet her guests as they came across the lawn.

"I feel as if I shall never be able to touch his hand or welcome him here again. I always distrusted and hated him, now I loathe him—coward and brute!" she said to herself, as she listened to the Hon. Ella's glowing account of the match, and watched Crawshaw saunter, in his peculiarly insolent, offensively pretentious manner, toward them.

"I know if I stay I shall be rude to him, so I had better go before he comes," she mused, and, with a hurried excuse, she went up to Mrs. Fairfax, and strolled with her to the house. "I will wait till Nancy is quite better, and then I will tell her," she said to herself, as she ran hastily upstairs to dress for dinner.

"I know she will hate him even more than I do. Oh, dear! I wish to Heaven it was permissible to speak out one's mind to one's guests! I should not spare Mr. Thomas Crawshaw!"

She tapped at Nancy's door and peeped in, but no one was there.

"Gone down to meet me, no doubt," Dorothy conjectured, with some disappointment. "I wish I had seen her, dear thing! Well, at any rate, she is better, and that is all I care about."

She questioned Baines carefully as to how Nancy had looked, and was very much cheered by her maid's good report.

"Of course she is sure to look pale, that is only natural. Do you know, Baines, I fancy Miss Hamilton must have had a slight attack of sunstroke; she will run about without anything on her head."

"Yes, miss; I think you're right, miss," was Baines' reply; but, while she brushed and arranged the soft, golden curls, the maid was thinking to herself, shrewdly and quietly. "It weren't no sunstroke, more like a heart stroke. There were a look in the poor thing's eyes as she smiled at me just now, that give me quite a turn. I wonder what has happened to her? She's a sweet young creature, as don't deserve any misfortune, that she don't!"

And while Dorothy was chatting on lightly to her maid, Nancy was making her way slowly to the farther end of the garden, that quiet nook that had been her one trysting place down by the lower lake.

"I must get strong, I must have courage to meet them all," she said to herself over and over again, "they—they must not see that anything is wrong or——"

She dreaded everything. She had gauged Crawshaw to his uttermost depths; she knew if she broke one letter of her bond that her uncle—that sole surviving link to her dear, dead mother—would be disgraced, dishonored, perchance even killed by the result of his shame. And as if to make assurance still more sure, Crawshaw did not fail to remind her of her vow.

As she was leaving the pleasaunce, as the flower grounds were [illegible] about to enter the wil[illegible] part, she met one [illegible] was evidently [illegible] person, and [illegible] as drawn [illegible] dog who [illegible] cleared [illegible] id, stop-

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ping and thinking vaguely how faint her own voice sounded in her ears; and then her eyes fell on the collie whose laborious breathing betrayed its sufferings, and whose handsome, pathetic eyes solicited her pity.

In an instant her own misery was forgotten, and she was on her knees beside the animal.

"What has happened? Oh! what has happened to her?" she cried, sharply; her great, tender heart could never bear the sight of a dumb creature's pain.

The groom shifted his foot uneasily.

"She's only a bit lame, miss," he answered, hurriedly.

"Lame! She is ill, dying; look at her eyes, they are asking us to help her. See, she cannot stand upright; something has happened to her—what is it? Foster must doctor her; he is so clever and good with dogs. Oh, poor Zoe! poor Zoe!"

Her little white hand caressed the collie's sleek head, while a pang shot through her heart afresh at every short, hard breath that came from the poor animal. Everything was forgotten at that moment but pity for the dog, who had grown to know and like her even in the few short times it had been over at the Hall.

"She should not be out here walking," Nancy said, coldly, to the man; she thought him heedless and cruel. "She must go to the stables at once."

"Begging your pardon, miss, Mr. Crawshaw made me bring her out here."

"He—he could not surely know she was in such a state," she murmured, in faint, low accents.

The groom answered her rather gruffly:

"He ought to, then, miss, seeing as it's all through him she's like this."

Nancy's blue eyes were turned upwards; for many a day their look of uncontrollable horror lived in the man's memory.

"Through him?" she whispered, faintly.

"Yes, miss; she did something as vexed Mr. Crawshaw, and he kicked her. I don't suppose he meant to hurt her really, for she's a valuable dog; but Foster says she's injured internally, miss, and he fears she'll have to be poisoned."

Nancy bent lower and still lower over the dumb, suffering creature, till her pale lips touched the dog's head; a great bond of sympathy was suddenly riveted between this animal and herself; both were plunged from sunshine to gloom, both their hearts were riven in twain, to both the bitter end had come.

"Poor Zoe, he might have spared you!" was the unspoken cry on Nancy's lips as she rose slowly to her feet—her face was ghastly pale, her hands trembling.

"You—you must do something for her," she pleaded, rather than said, to the groom, "she cannot suffer like this."

"I'll fetch Foster to her, miss, and we'll carry her between us to the stable. Perhaps she'll be better to-morrow, miss."

To-morrow! Nancy shuddered. What depths of horror were expressed in that word! With bent head she was turning away, when the man stopped her.

"I beg your pardon, miss, but Mr. Crawshaw told me I was to look for you and give you this."

He held out a note as he spoke, and Nancy took it mechanically.

"Go—go, and bring Foster quickly," she said, as a moan from the dog broke on her ear. "I—I will wait here till you return."

The groom obeyed her quickly, and she was left alone with the suffering animal stretched at her feet, fit emblem of her own shattered, ruined life.

With stiff, cold fingers, that seemed to belong to an arctic clime, not a hot summer night, she opened the letter, written in the flourishing, clerky hand that she knew well.

"In case any lingering doubt remains in your mind, I send this to tell you that if you breathe one word of the truth about your uncle to any individual here or hereafter, I will at once commence proceedings against him. Understand me plainly, not one word of the news I brought you, or of the motive that has prompted you to be my wife; do this, and you know the consequences—your uncle will be convicted and imprisoned, first on a charge of forgery, then on robbery. He is not strong nor young, and so, if you care to have the onus of his death—for he is sure to die—upon your conscience, you——"

She could read no farther. With a gesture of intolerable pain, she crumbled the paper in her hand, then tore it into a hundred shreds, and cast it to the soft summer breeze, to be carried away to the uttermost corners of the earth.

"Oh, Zoe, Zoe," she moaned, crouching down by the dog, "what have we done that we should be tortured like this? I may have committed some wrong, but you—"

The poor creature tried feebly to lick her gentle hand, and at the touch a flood of hot tears broke from her eyes, while a shiver of dread and repugnance passed through her frame; as if a shadow of the future that crept near to make her misery greater? Was it a grim prognostication of what was to come? She did not know; but she was faint and ill when the two men came back through the trees.

"Carry her carefully, Foster," she said to the old head groom, who had lived at the Hall for nearly half a century; "and, Foster, do not let Miss Dorothy know if you can help it; she—she will be so grieved. Poor Zoe! Good-bye—good-bye."

She bent and kissed the dog again, and then she turned and walked steadily away down to that dear, well-remembered spot at the lake's edge.

"Oh, love—oh, life!" she cried, to herself, as she stood alone beneath the low-hanging branches of the trees. "You will never know what I am enduring—you will never know. Pray God you may never be given such agony as has fallen on me!"

The episode of the wounded dog had unnerved her—her strength and courage were fleeting fast. In a few short moments he would be returned—he would rush to seek her—he would call her name. Nancy covered her pale lips with her hands to still the bitter cry that escaped from them.

Yes, he would come—love's knowledge is almost infinite; he would trace her here, and then—Then what? How would she greet him? What words could she use? What manner could she bear? An icy band stole round her heart. What explanation could she give? How could she tell him the horrible truth?

Her breath seemed to stand still; not till now did the full hideousness of her position come upon her. She was bound by affection, gratitude, honor, to seal her lips, and yet——

She stared suddenly; upon the breeze came the sound of her name, uttered in a soft, musical voice.

It was Dorothy's—she was seeking for her.

"Nancy—Nancy, where are you—where are you?"

She paused an instant, then pain gave her strength.

"I cannot meet her yet," she said to herself, and she stole down to the water's brink and crouched below the bushes.

"Nancy—Nancy!"

The voice came nearer—then nearer.

How Nancy longed to spring forward and cling to that dainty form, kiss that lovely face, and nestle close to the loving heart!

"She is not here. Oh, dear," murmured Dorothy, dispiritedly; "it's no use, Merefield, she must have gone back to the house by some other path. I do hope she is not ill again."

"Shall I look farther this way?" asked Lord Merefield, eagerly.

Dorothy shook her head.

"No; no; dinner has been kept waiting as it is. I must hurry back. She is not far; but I do wish I could see her. I shall certainly send for Dr. Knowles if she is not better to-morrow. I feel uneasy about her."

"Oh, don't worry dear. You know——"

The voices died away, and Nancy was safe to emerge from her hiding place when she cared.

Stunned, amazed, overcome with horror as she had been ever since her interview with Crawshaw, she had not realized one half the difficulties, the mental sufferings that lay in store for her.

"What will they think of me?" was the bitter cry that broke from her heart, as she stood with bent head and arms hanging nerveless at her sides. "What will Dorothy say? How—how shall I explain to her my strange conduct? She has seen that I loathe this man; she will think I am tempted by his money, that I am a hypocrite; and Derry—Derry, who is my very life!—Derry, who has given me the whole of his great, noble heart; Derry who spoke of his poverty, and, oh God! I can't bear it—I can't endure it—it will drive me mad!"

She crouched on the ground in her abject despair, while the leaves fluttered in the evening breeze, and the lake murmured serenely at her feet. Stretch her hand out where she might, there was no help for her, no haven, no refuge—the sacrifice had fallen to her share, and she must go through with it alone to the end!

* * * * *

(To be continued.)

AN INTERESTING REPORT.

Published elsewhere in this issue is the Annual Report for the past year of the Board of Directors of the Canada Cement Company, as read by the President, to the Shareholders, at the Annual Meeting held in Montreal on the 21st of February.

The frank statement of the policy and the general attitude of fairness evidenced by this address, are such as to warrant more than passing comment. Any lay member of the community reading the Report must surely feel disposed to echo the hope expressed by the President, that the increased demand and increased output in the year to come will result in further savings in the cost of manufacture; and it further cannot be but felt by the public at large that any such reductions that may be obtained will, according to the broad-minded policy of the Company, be used as an advantage to the customers of the Company—the concern depending for their profits upon increasing volume of business.

Especially interesting is the statement that the policy of the Company is such as to tend towards equalization of the price of cement throughout Canada so far as possible.

Another noteworthy feature of the Report is the provision made for employes to become possessors of stock. This is, as pointed out, a policy already in force in some of the largest institutions, and shows that the Canada Cement Company are quick to appreciate any means of stimulating interest and confidence upon the part of the staff.

The strong financial position of the company is a well known fact, and all that is necessary to ensure the continued success of the concern is continued prosperity of the country, together with an increased realization of the importance and economy of cement as a building material.

CARE OF THE LAMBS.

At eight to ten days of age lambs will begin to eat. At that time a creep should be built which will give them access to a feed box containing grain and a trough with hay. Box, trough and feed should always be be keep sweet and clean.

A good grain ration for lambs is made as follows: Mix one-third of oil-meal with one part each of bran, oats and fine cornmeal. Red alfalfa hay or the second cutting of alfalfa hay are the most desirable form of roughage. Of the two alfalfa is to be much preferred.

It is a good idea to keep up the grain feed right along until the lambs are sent to the market. By so doing the lambs are kept fat all the time and are ready to be turned into cash on short notice should the market take a sudden rise.

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CANADA CEMENT COMPANY LIMITED

Annual Report of the Board of Directors

TO THE SHAREHOLDERS:

Your Directors beg to present herewith the annual statement of the affairs and financial position of the Canada Cement Company, Limited, as of the 31st December, 1910.

In presenting the Balance Sheet, we call attention to the Company's strong financial position as disclosed by the large amount of cash on hand, and other quick assets, and the comparatively small amount of current liabilities. After providing for interest on our Bonds and Dividends on our Preferred Stock for the year, we have been able to set up reserves for depreciation, extraordinary repairs and renewals, bad debts, etc., and carry forward a substantial balance to Surplus Account

The consumption of cement during the past year was not as large as anticipated. Our business also suffered on account of the Railways not being able to meet our full requirements for cars during the heavy shipping season; consequently we carry over from last year 781,116 barrels of cement.

Early in 1910 the price of our product was fixed at a lower price than cement had ever been sold for in Canada, excepting for a short period in 1909, but your Directors are pleased to state that the anticipated savings in manufacturing and distributing our products were such that they were able to still further reduce this price.

We trust, when you consider the above mentioned conditions, and also the fact that during 1910 our plants were only operated to 57.6 per cent. of their capacity, the profits shown will be satisfactory to the Shareholders.

During the current year, we look for a larger natural demand, which demand will be stimulated by continuing to manufacture a strictly high grade article, and by selling it at the lowest possible price. This anticipated increase will enable us to operate our plants to better advantage than in the past, but we do not expect that the demand will be sufficient to enable us to put into operation either of the two plants which have been idle since the organization of this Company. However, it is confidently expected that the increased demand, and increased output, will result in further savings in the cost of manufacture and distribution, and it is the policy of your Directors to give your customers the benefit of these reductions.

The Shareholders' profits will depend on the increased volume of the Company's business, the policy of the Company being the maintenance of such a stable position as will insure regular and uniform payments of interest on its bonds and dividends on its Preferred stock, and at the same time be in a position to withstand any unforeseen emergency that may arise consequent on business depression or otherwise, which condition naturally necessitates the accumulation of, and the maintenance of, a large cash reserve.

It is also the policy of the Company to equalize the price of cement throughout Canada in so far as the physical conditions make such possible, and in furtherance of this policy, your Directors have arranged to purchase a site near Winnipeg, on which they will erect, this year, a mill to grind clinker, which will be shipped from one of our Eastern mills. The buildings, machinery, etc., will be planned so that, should it at any time in the future be advisable, a Burning Department can be added, and the clinker produced on the property.

And further, an agreement has been entered into whereby this Company expects to acquire, in the near future, a property at Exshaw, which, added to our Calgary plant, and the projected plant at Winnipeg, will put us in the position of anticipating any extraordinary growth in the consumption of cement in the Great West.

With the view of educating the public, and popularizing the use of cement, in addition to the ordinary advertising, the Company has published a small book illustrating some of the many uses to which cement may be put, for which book there has been a great demand, 25,000 applications for same having been received during the past six months.

For the purpose of stimulating interest in the Company on behalf of the Employes, both in efficiency and cheapening production, as well as creating a feeling of mutual goodwill, your Directors deem it expedient to introduce a system, already adopted by several large industrial corporations with beneficial results, viz., to enable employes to become the possessors of Preferred and Common Stock at prices which will be attractive to them, the employes paying a fixed amount per share per month out of their earnings, and the Company carrying the stock for them, charging a rate of 5 per cent. interest. If the plan is put into effect, all dividends will be credited to the employes applying for the stock. Said stock will be held in trust for the employe for a term of five years, excepting in exceptional cases, such as death, when his heirs will receive what benefit a deceased employe has derived from subscribing to the stock.

Your Directors feel that the policy, as herein outlined, will, as nearly as possible, make the interests of the consumers, the employes, and the shareholders identical, and will insure to the most enduring and beneficial results for all concerned.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,

WILLIAM C. EDWARDS,

President