A Foolish Young Man;

Or, the Belle of the Season.

CHAPTER XLIII.

The ball which Lady Clansford always gave about the middle of the season was generally a very brilliant affair; but this year it was more brilliant and, alas, more crowded than usual; for Lord Clansford was connected, as everybody knows, with the great Trans-African Company, and, as also everybody knows, that company had recovered from the blow dealt it by the rising of the natives, and was now flourishing beyond the most sanguine expectations of its owners; therefore, the Clansford coffers, not to mention those of many other persons, were overflowing, and Lord Clansford could afford a somewhat magnificent hospitality.

Howard, as he made his way up the stairs, smiled cynically to himself as he caught sight of a little knot of financiers who stood just outside the great doors of the salon. They were all there—Griffenberg, Wirsch, the Beltons, Efford, and Fitzharford; and they were all smiling and in the best of humors, presenting by their appearance a striking contrast to that which they had worn when he had seen them on the night when the ruin of the company had been conveyed in that fatal cablegram. Having succeeded at last in forcing an entrance, and bowing over the hand of his noble hostess, which must have sadly ached and returned her mechanical words of welcome, with a smile as galvanic as her own, Howard sidled his way along the wall—a waltz was in progress—and collided against the youthful and bounteous Bertie, who was mopping his brow and looking round despairingly for his partner.

"Hallo, Howard!" he exclaimed. "Pretty scrimmage, isn't it? Should have thought your languid grace would have kept out of this sight. I've given a dance to a girl, but dash my necktie if I can find her; might as well look for a needle in a bottle of hay as if any fellow would be such a fool as to put a needle in such a place. Jim jolly mad at losing her, I can tell you, for she's the prettiest girl in the room, and I had to fight like a [illegible] to get a dance from her. And now I can't find her; just my luck!"

"What is the name of the prettiest girl in the room?" asked Howard, languidly.

"Oh, it's the new beauty, of course," retorted Bertie, with a superior little shrug at Howard's ignorance. "It's Miss Heron, of Herondale, the great heiress."

Howard pricked up his ears, but maintained his languid and half-indifferent manner.

"Heron of Herondale," he said, in his slow voice. "Don't think I've met her."

"No, I daresay not. She doesn't go out much, and Lady Clansford thinks it's rather a feather in her cap getting her to come. When you see her you won't say I've overrated her. She's more than pretty, and she's the bright and particular star of the season, if she didn't go so much."

"Herondale," said Howard, musingly. "Isn't the place near the Villa at Bryndermere, isn't it? I don't remember anyone of the name is having been amongst [illegible] company there."

"No," said the omniscient Bertie. "She was living in retirement with her father, though Stafford must have known her or made her acquaintance. Don't you remember that she was present when poor Miss Falconer met with her fatal accident?"

Howard remembered very well, but he said "Ah, yes!" as if the fact had just been recalled to him.

"Her father died and left her a baleful of money that's ever so many months ago, and now she's come up to London; and I tell you, Howard, that it is with her, as it was with the friend of our schoolboy days: 'I came, I was seen; I conquered!' Everybody is mad about her. She's staying with some country people called the Vaynes, people who would have passed, like a third entree, unnoticed; but they are deluged with invitations, and all on account of Eliza."

"Do not be vulgar, Bertie," said Howard, rebukingly.

"Well, it was vulgar," admitted Bertie, "especially applied to such an exquisite creature as Miss Heron. Oh, there she is with young Glarn! They say that he is more than ready to lay his ducal coronet at her feet—confound the young beggar!—but she doesn't give him the least encouragement to do so. Look! she doesn't appear to be listening to him, though he's talking for all he's worth. And it's the same with all of us; we're all dying with love for her; and for all she cares, we may jolly well die!"

Howard looked across the room and caught a glimpse of a tall, slim figure, a fair, very lovely face with soft and silky black hair, dressed in the simplest fashion, and dark, violet eyes half hidden by their long lashes. It was a lovely face and something more—an impressive one; such a face, once seen, not easily forgotten. Perhaps it was not its beauty, but a certain preoccupied expression, a sadness in the eyes and in the curve of the expressive lips, which made it so haunting a one. She was exquisitely dressed, with a suggestion of mourning in the absence of diamonds and a touch of pale violet in the black lace frock.

"She is very beautiful," said Howard; "and I can condole with you sincerely on the loss of your dance."

"Yes, it's nearly over now," said Bertie, with a sigh. "Talking of Stafford," he said, after a minute, "when did you hear from him last?"

"To-day," replied Howard; "I have his letter in my pocket."

"Still out in the backwoods?" asked Bertie. "Poor old chap! awful piece of luck for him! If his father had only gone on living and waited until that blessed company had come right-side uppermost, he'd have been a millionaire. Look at Griffenberg and the rest of 'em!" he nodded towards the group of financiers; "they're simply rolling in money, rolling in it."

"And he's still in the backwoods, as you call it," responded Howard; "and from what he says I should think he's having a pretty hard time of it, though, of course, he doesn't complain; there are some men still left who don't complain." There was a pause during which he had been thinking, deeply, then he said: "So Stafford knew Miss Heron, did he?"

Bertie looked mysterious and lowered his voice.

"Yes. Look here, old chap, I shouldn't say that to anyone but you; but you are Stafford's great and only chum, and I know I can speak safely; to tell you the truth—"

"Now you are going to tell me anything but the truth," murmured Howard, with a sigh of resignation.

"Oh, no, I'm not!" retorted Bertie. "What there is of it is the truth and nothing but the truth. It isn't much. But I've a kind of idea that Stafford knew our young beauty better than we think. Do you remember how he used to leave our party and go off by himself? Not like Stafford, that, was it? And one of our fellows remarked to me that one day he saw Stafford riding with a lady. He couldn't swear to him, but—well, Stafford's hard to mistake. Then again, how was it he and Miss Heron were in at Maude Falconer's death; and why did he bolt off to Australia again directly after the funeral? And why is it that she keeps us all at arm's length, even that confounded Glarn?"

Howard's eyes grew sharp; but he smiled lingeringly, as he said:

"You ought to edit a riddle book, Bertie, my son. I think we could get across the room now. I should be greatly obliged if you would introduce me to Miss Heron."

"All right," said Bertie, "come along! But I warn you, you'll only meet with a cold reception; just a smile and a word and then she'll look away as if she'd forgotten your existence, and had not the least desire to remember it."

"Oh, I'm used to that," said Howard. "Lead on!"

As they crossed the room Howard's acute brain was hard at work. There was something in Stafford's conduct, a tone in his letters which Howard could never understand; but now, in the light of Bertie's mysterious communication, he thought he discerned a solution of the problem over which he had pondered for many an hour. Stafford had been unhappy during the whole of his engagement to poor Maude; he had exiled himself again immediately after her death, though, as Howard knew, he was well enough off now to return to England and to live at any rate, in a quiet way. If there was anything in Bertie's suggestion—

Howard pursed his lips with an air of determination. If there was anything, then he would find it out and act accordingly. Stafford's happiness was very precious to Howard, and in the quiet, resolute, cynical way characteristic of him, he resolved that if that happiness lay in the hands of this beautiful girl with the sad eyes and lips, he, Howard, would do his best to persuade her to yield it up.

His reception was certainly not encouraging. Ida glanced at him, and returned his bow with a slight inclination of her head, and then looked away as if she had done all that could be demanded of her; and it was with faint surprise, perceptible in her face, that she heard Howard say, in his slow, and rather drawling voice:

"There is a conservatory behind that glass door, Miss Heron; it is not very far from the madding crowd, but it must be cooler than here. Will you let me take you to it?"

She hesitated for a moment, but something in the steady regard of Howard's calm and sleepy eyes impressed her.

"Very well," she said; "but I think I'm engaged for this next dance, and I must not go far away. I have already broken two or three engagements."

"In that case you can come without hesitation," he said. "It is the first crime that costs a pang; having passed that, the downward course is easy and painless."

He led her to a seat, and with the cool determination which Stafford always admired in him, began at once; for he did not wish to give her time to slip on her woman's armor; he intended to strike quickly, unexpectedly, so that she should not be able to conceal the effect of the blow.

"Almost as hot as in Australia," he said, languidly, but watching her out of the tail of his eye. "I suppose you were never there, Miss Heron? Nor have I been; but I've got a letter in my pocket from a very great friend of mine who is roughing it on a cattle-run, and he has so often described the country to me, that I almost feel as if I knew it. He is my dearest and closest friend, Stafford Orme, as I always call him and think of him; of course I am speaking of Lord Highcliffe."

The problem was solved; he saw her pale face suddenly flush, and then as suddenly grow pale. So sharp had been the blow, its effect so overwhelming, that her fan fell from her hand. Howard, as he restored it to her, seized the opportunity of looking her full in the face, and assurance was made doubly sure. This girl did hold his friend Stafford's happiness in her hand. Ida was silent for a moment; because she knew she could not control her voice, could not keep it steady; then, with a quickened breath, she said:

"Yes. I knew Mr. Orme—Lord Highcliffe."

"Then I hoped you liked him," he said, mercilessly; for there was no time for mercy; some idiot of a dancing-man would come and take her from him the next minute. "I express the hope, because I myself like and admire him very much indeed. He is a splendid fellow, and one of those instances of a good man struggling with adversity. Are you fond of poetry, Miss Heron?"

Ida's bosom was heaving, she was fighting for calm. She knew now who it was with whom she was speaking; it was the friend, the cynical Mr. Howard, of whom Stafford had told her; she had not caught his name at the introduction. She regarded him with intense interest, and inclined her head by way of assent.

"I never think of my friend, Lord Highcliffe, without recalling those significant lines of William Watson's." He looked at her, and be it said that his eyes were fine and impressive ones when he showed them plainly. "These are the lines:

"I do not ask to have my fill
Of wine, or love, or fame,
I do not for a little ill
Against the gods exclaim.

"One boon of fortune I implore,
With one petition kneel:
At least caress me not before
Thou break me on thy wheel!"

Her lip quivered and her long lashes concealed her eyes.

"They are fine lines," she said.

"They fit my friend, Lord Highcliffe's case to a T. He was for a time the spoiled darling of fortune; she caressed him as she caresses few men; and now she is breaking him on her wheel; and the early caresses, of course, make the breaking all the harder to bear. He writes most interesting letters. I don't know whether you care about farming and cattle-raising and that kind of thing; for my own part I am sublimely ignorant of such matters. I can lay my hand upon my heart and say I know a cow from a horse, but nothing shall induce me to go further. If you are interested I would venture to offer to show you one of his letters; there is nothing in them of a private character."

Her heart beat still more quickly; he saw the eager light flash in her eyes; and his hand went to his breast coat-pocket; then he said, blandly:

"I will bring one next time we meet. Are you going—where are you going tomorrow, Miss Heron? I, too, shall be going there probably?"

She put her hand to her lips with a little nervous gesture; she was disappointed; she thought he was going to show her a letter, then and there.

"I am going to Lady Fitzharford's tomorrow afternoon to try over some music with her," she said, hesitatingly.

"Ah, yes! Lady Fitzharford is a good friend of mine," he said. "Shall you be there at, say, four?"

"Yes," said Ida in a low voice.

The color rose to her face, and she faltered:

"Did you say that Mr. Orme—Lord Highcliffe—is well?"

"Oh, yes; he is all right, now," replied Howard; "he has been ill—a fever of some kind or other, I believe—but he has recovered; he is a monster of strength, as you may have heard. But I am afraid he is very unhappy; something on what he calls his mind—he is not very intellectual, you know—" Ida shot an indignant glance at him, which made Howard chuckle inwardly—"But the best, the noblest of good fellows, I assure you, Miss Heron. I'd give anything to see him happy. Ah, here comes a gentleman with hurried gait and distracted countenance; he is looking for his partner; alas! it is you! We meet, then, at Lady Fitzharford's to-morrow. I will bring my friend's letter; but I do sincerely hope it won't bore you!"

He bowed his adieux and left her, and left the house; for the ball had no further interest for him. All the way home he pondered over the case. That she loved Stafford, he had not the very least doubt; her eyes, her sudden blushes and color, her voice had betrayed her.

"He has loved her all the time; and I am a purblind ass not to have seen it!" he said to himself, with cynical self-contempt, as he climbed up to his rooms. They were modest but comfortable rooms in Piccadilly—and he struck a match before he opened the door; but it was not necessary for him to have got a light, for there was one in the room already, and by it he saw a long-limbed figure which had been sitting in his easy-chair, but which rose and exclaimed:

"Howard!"

Howard held his breath for a moment, then said, with exaggerated calm:

"I'm glad you found the cigars and the whisky, Stafford. Have you been waiting very long; sorry to keep you."

Howard laughed as he wrung his friend's hand.

"I thought I should surprise you, old man; but I flattered myself," said Stafford.

"Nothing surprises me; but I'll admit to being rather pleased at seeing you," drawled Howard, pushing him gently back in the chair. "Have you ever walked from Australia, or flown?"

Stafford stared.

"Oh, I see! You mean I came so quickly on my letter? I started directly after I posted it, but lost the mail at Southampton. I—I got a restless fit, and was obliged to come."

"Got it now?" drawled Howard. "Or perhaps the journey has cooled you down. Have you eaten? I can get something—"

"Yes, yes," said Stafford, rather impatiently. "Got dinner at the hotel. I came on here at once; heard you'd gone to a dance, and thought I'd wait. I want you to do something for me, Howard—I'll tell you all my news some other time—not that there's much to tell; I'm well and flourishing, as you see. I want you to go down to Bryndermere. I dare not go myself—not yet. I want you to get all the information you can about—about a lady: Miss Heron of Herondale—"

"How very strange!" said Howard innocently. "Do you know, I have just had the pleasure of meeting Miss Heron of Herondale—"

Stafford sprang to his feet.

"Where?" he demanded hotly.

"At Lady Clansford's ball which I have just left. May I ask you why you are so interested in Miss Heron as to send me on such a mission?"

"I love her," said Stafford, briefly. "I cannot live without her. I've tried, and I cannot live without her. I've tried, and I've failed. I've loved her since—oh, I can't tell you! I want to know what she is doing. I want to know if she has forgotten me; if there is any hope for me!"

Howard looked at him compassionately, and whistled softly.

"My dear old man," he said, with an air of reluctance, "you fly rather high! The lady you speak of is the belle of the present season; she is the admired of all admirers; belted earls, to say nothing of noble dukes, are at her feet. She was the star of the ball which I have just left. If I may say so, I think you were very unwise to leave such a peerless pearl to be snapped up—"

Stafford turned away from him and stifled a groan.

"I might have known it," he said. "The belle of the season! Well, why not? There is no one more beautiful, no one more sweet. Who am I that she should remember me? What am I—"

"Rather a foolish young man, if you ask me," said Howard. "If I'd been in love with such a peerless creature, I shouldn't have left her to go tramping after cattle in Australia."

"What else could I do?" exclaimed Stafford, sternly. "Have you forgotten that I was not free, that when—when death"—his voice dropped—"set me free, it was no time to speak of love to another woman? I was obliged to go; but I've come back—too late, I suppose! Don't say any more; let us talk of something else; you are looking well, Howard."

"Yes, it's no use crying over spilt milk," said Howard, with a sigh. "Oh, I'm all right. Look here, I'll put you up to-night; we've got a spare room. Now, mix yourself another drink and light up another cigar—not bad, are they—and tell me all you've been doing."

At a quarter to four the following day Howard put in his appearance at Lady Fitzharford's house in Eaton Square.

"Oh, I'm so glad you've come," she said; everybody was pleased to see Howard; "you are just the man I want. That sweet creature, Miss Heron, is coming here directly to try over some songs with me—I'm going to sing at that bazaar, you know—and as you know something of music—is there anything you don't know, Mr. Howard?—you can give us your opinion."

"With the greatest pleasure, my dear lady," responded Howard; "but on two conditions: one, that you don't take my opinion; the other, that you leave me alone with Miss Heron, directly she comes for a quarter of an hour."

Lady Fitzharford stared at him.

"Are you going to propose to her?" she asked, with a smile.

"No," he replied; "I am tired of proposing."

"Well, I don't think she would accept you," said Lady Fitzharford, "she has had the most wonderful offers; she has refused Lord Edwin the Bannerdales son and heir, and, I believe, the Duke of Glarn—"

"I know, I know!" said Howard, more quickly than usual. "I can hear her on the stairs. Oh, vanish, my dear lady, an you love me!"

Lady Fitzharford had scarcely left the room, laughing and not a little puzzled, before the servant admitted Ida. She was pale and the look of sadness in her eyes was even more palpable than on the preceding night. She blushed for an instant as she gave her hand to Howard.

"Lady Fitzharford has gone to get her music, Miss Heron," he said; "she bade me make her excuses; she will be here presently. It is so good of you to remember our appointment! When I came to think it over, I was quite ashamed, do you know, at the obtrusive way in which I pressed the subject of my friend, Lord Highcliffe's condition upon you. But mind, though I do think you would feel interested in his letter. He has a knack, unintellectual as he is"—Ida rose ready to the fly again and flashed a momentary glance of indignation at him—"of describing scenes and incidents in a kind of graphic style, which— What an idiot I am!" he broke off to exclaim, he had been feeling in his pocket; "I have actually left the letter at home! Please forgive me. But perhaps you will regard my lapse of memory as affording you a happy escape."

Ida's lips trembled and her eyes became downcast. Disappointment was eloquently depicted on her face.

"No, I am sorry," she said. "I—I should have liked to have seen the letter."

"Would you, really?" he purred, penitently, as she turned away to the window. "Then I will go and get it; my rooms are only a short distance."

"Oh, pray, don't trouble," she said, so faintly that Howard found it difficult not to smile.

"Not at all," he said, politely, and left the room.

As he went down the stairs he glanced at his watch, and muttered:

"Now, if that young idiot isn't up to time!"

At that moment there was a knock at the hall-door, the servant opened it, and Stafford entered with a gloomy countenance and a reluctant gait.

"I've come," he said, rather morosely; "though I don't know why you should have insisted upon my doing so or what good it will do me to hear about her," he added, in a low voice, as they followed the servant up the stairs.

As the man touched the handle of the door, Howard said:

"Go in, my dear fellow; I've left my pocket-handkerchief in my overcoat in the hall; back in a moment."

With a frown of annoyance, Stafford hesitated and looked after him; then, with a shrug of his shoulders, he obeyed and entered the room.

They uttered no cry of surprise, of joy. They stood for a moment looking at each other with their hearts in their eyes. It was the moment that bridged over all the weary months of waiting, of longing, of doubts and fears, of hope that seemed too faint for hope and but a mockery of despair.

He had no need to ask her if she loved him; her face was eloquent of the truth, and her eyes reflected the love that glowed in his. He had got hold of her hand before she knew it, had drawn her to him, and, utterly regardless of the fact that he was in a strange house, that they might be interrupted any moment, he kissed her passionately with all the passion that had been stored up for so long.

"Ida," he said, as he bent over her and pressed her to him, "I have come back. I cannot live without you—ah, but you know that, you know that. Is it too late? It is not too late?"

"No; it is not too late," she whispered. "I—I did not know whether you would come. But I have been waiting; I should have waited all my life. But the time has been very long, Stafford!"

At the end of the quarter of an hour for which Howard had bargained, Lady Fitzharford opened the door of the inner room softly, so softly, that seeing Miss Heron in the arms of a stalwart young man, and apparently quite content there, her ladyship discreetly closed the door again, and going round by the inner room found Mr. Howard seated on the stairs. She looked at him with amazement, well-nigh bewilderment.

"Are you mad?" she exclaimed, in a whisper.

Howard smiled at her blandly.

"No," he said, with a backward jerk of his head, "but they are. I'm told it's a delicious kind of madness worth all your sanity. Do not let us disturb them. Come and sit down beside me until the time is up," he glanced at his watch; "they have still three minutes."

With a suppressed laugh she sat down beside him.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," she said, "to play me such a trick. But, oh, how happy they look!"

"I am ashamed of myself, my dear lady," he said; "but I should have been more ashamed of myself if I hadn't. Do they look happy? We will go in and see presently. It will be my great reward. But I should like to give them another five minutes, dear lady, for I assure you, on my word of honor, that I was once young myself."

THE END.

A Real Canadian Contingent at Salisbury Plain.

From left to right are: Mr. W. R. Critchley, Captain A. C. Critchley, Captain O. A. Critchley, and Mr. J. A. Critchley. Captain O. A. Critchley is a Canadian owning a large ranch in Alberta who has taken all his sons to serve Great Britain in the war. They are now all in Strathcona's Horse in camp at Salisbury, except Mr. W. R. Critchley, who is running a machine-gun detachment in an infantry battalion. All are six feet or over, the father being six feet three inches. Captain A. C. and Mr. J. A. Critchley are in the Canadian regulars, and have played in their regimental team (Strathcona's Horse) for some time past, and this team at present holds the Western Canadian polo championship, and has done so for the past two years. The father and other brother are also fine players, and the family in combination make up a most formidable team.

FROM ERIN'S GREEN ISLE

NEWS BY MAIL FROM IRELAND'S SHORES.

Happenings in the Emerald Isle of Interest to Irishmen.

Hay to the value of $2,500, belonging to M. G. Sweeney, was destroyed by fire at Dalinelo, near Castlerea.

Lieut. H. F. Day, eldest son of the Very Rev. Dean Day, Waterford, has been killed in action in South Africa.

A railway servant named Lawrence Farrell of Newtownandwell, was knocked down by an engine and fatally injured.

Fifty-four inmates of the Mitchellstown Union have been transferred to Fermoy Workhouse to make room for the military.

Stephen McDonagh, clerk of Petty Sessions, and Harbor Master, Foynes, fell down dead while walking in the town.

H. J. Chippendall, Governor of Armagh Prison, has been temporarily appointed to the governorship of Maryborough Convict Prison.

A young man named John Kearne, of Glasslough, was fatally wounded by the accidental discharge of a gun while ferreting in the district.

A woman named Mrs. Ferris, of Tyrone, was seriously injured and a little girl also hurt by two runaway horses at the Market Square, Dromore.

An old man named Samuel McChesney, Newry, was severely burned when, owing to his weak condition he fell across the fire while preparing dinner.

The collection for the Belgium refugees promulgated by his Grace, the Most. Rev. Dr. Harty and taken at the Cathedral gates, Tipperary, amounted to over $500.

The S.S. Carmarthenshire, a vessel of 485 feet in length, with a tonnage of 9,000, was successfully launched from the yard of Messrs. Workman & Clark, Belfast.

Gleveigh Castle, in the wildest and most beautiful part of Donegal, has been offered by the owner, Mrs. Adair, to the Belgian Minister in London to house Belgian refugees.

Mrs. Anne Hollawey, wife of a former superintendent of police, was fatally burned at Ardarnagh, Ballyhaise, when her clothing became ignited through the up-setting of a lamp.

Lisburn Castle, Antrim, formerly the residence of the late Sir Richard Wallace, Bart., has been opened under the auspices of the Lisburn Urban Council as a Technical School, with a roll of 400 pupils.

BRITISH GIVE [illegible] MERCY

BUT THE GERMANS ARE NOT SO CONSIDERATE.

Soldier Writes of Experiences—Hussar Pays Tribute to Aviators' Bravery.

Sheffield is [illegible] her sons at the front.

Private A. [illegible], who is in the 2nd York[illegible] Regiment, and lives in Sheffield, England, writes home to his [illegible] has been wounded in [illegible].

"The fighting [illegible] on all the time," he adds, "and there is not much chance [illegible]. We lost our colonel and [illegible] the battalion as he [illegible] fellow. We lie in the trenches [illegible] if we get up just to have [illegible] get in a [illegible] they are sending big shells over to trenches all the time. [illegible] make you [illegible] horse and cart in. [illegible] sad to see the people [illegible] homes and the Germans [illegible] the places. When [illegible] return they find [illegible] burnt to the ground. [illegible] is making [illegible]

Enemy Losing Thousands.

The Germans [illegible] thousands of [illegible] receive this [illegible] be right well [illegible] another pot at the Germans. [illegible] have lots of lads about 15 years of age and men of [illegible] have such [illegible] the front, and when you get them they shout for mercy. [illegible] give them mercy, but [illegible] Germans when they get [illegible] give them much mercy."

[illegible] son of [illegible] Bank, was with the [illegible] Scottish in their [illegible] and says:

"We had a [illegible] of it with [illegible] majority. I am [illegible] not very [illegible] glad to get a [illegible] artillery fire, [illegible] stuff. We [illegible] and having [illegible] grub and a [illegible] time."

"Cannot [illegible]."

Alfred Lucas [illegible] interesting letter [illegible] who joined [illegible] break of the war [illegible]:

"We have [illegible] the fighting [illegible]. Several of my [illegible] who are [illegible] tached to the [illegible] hot time of [illegible] determined [illegible] guns, but will [illegible] though we [illegible] my battery [illegible] of the Germans [illegible] those who [illegible] ble effects of [illegible] imagine the [illegible] suffering which [illegible] some horrifying [illegible] Dante's Inferno at its [illegible] ing compared [illegible] come down [illegible] ate for a day [illegible] the rest. The [illegible] alike; in the [illegible] advanced with [illegible] rushed to [illegible] fy. We learn [illegible] progress of [illegible] we have had [illegible] long time, but [illegible] that in view [illegible] penditure and [illegible] ing on daily [illegible] war."

Hussars [illegible]

Fred Cockin [illegible] 2nd Dragoon [illegible] is at Matlock [illegible] ents: "The [illegible] hot to-day [illegible] many have [illegible] buried in the [illegible] Germans got [illegible] big guns and [illegible] into the trenches [illegible] our brigade and [illegible] lucky until to-day [illegible] have been doing [illegible]. They take more [illegible] body by flying [illegible] man trenches and [illegible] lery fire by dropping [illegible] ored lights. [illegible] being under fire [illegible] der, over and a [illegible] aeroplane on the [illegible] hitting. If people [illegible] what it is like [illegible] join the army and [illegible] surprise a few. Hell [illegible] in it. There has been one continual roar of artillery and [illegible] last night and to-day [illegible] on. Recently we had a [illegible] day, losing [illegible] C.O., Major Browning [illegible] officer, 49 wounded [illegible] ing. We had [illegible] squadron."

"The Lord will [illegible] as far as many a [illegible] ever gets."

On the Farm

[illegible]

FOR DISTEMPER [illegible]

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A. F. & A. M. [illegible] Lodge, No. 400, G.R.C., Markdale, meets in Masonic Hall, McFarland Block, on Tuesday on or before the full moon. Visiting brethren invited. R. J. [illegible], W.M. H. C. Duff, Secretary.

I. C. O. C. F., No. [illegible], Markdale, Canadian Order of Chosen Friends, No. [illegible] fourth Tuesday in the month in [illegible] Hall at 8 o'clock. [illegible], Chief Councillor. [illegible] Recorder.

[illegible] MARKDALE, No. 291. [illegible] Hall [illegible] month at [illegible] brethren [illegible]