The Canadian Champion

AND COUNTY OF HALTON INTELLIGENCER.

VOLUME 38. MILTON, THURSDAY, JUNE 30, 1898. NO. 1

CANADIAN CHAMPION

IS PUBLISHED

EVERY THURSDAY MORNING,

At the Office of Publication,

MAIN ST., MILTON, ONT.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION $1 a year in advance; if not so paid $2 will be charged.

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AUTHOR OF "MISER HOADLEY'S SECRET" "THE MYSTERY OF MORVILLE STRANGE" "BY WHOSE HAND" "THE OLD MILL MYSTERY" ECT. ECT.

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Long after he had disappeared amid the small clump of fir trees which fringed both sides of the drive close to the turn of the lodge gates Beryl remained leaning against the window frame looking out, full of the foreboding which the man's visit had roused.

Then, being a practical girl of method, she went to her room and wrote out every word that she could remember of the interview and added her comments and the impressions which had been caused, and she locked the whole away in her most secret and secure hiding place.

The points which stood out most clearly in her mind were that the foreigner, Pierre Turrian, had some very strong motive for finding Lola; that the tale he told about his musical mission was from start to finish a falsehood; that the fact of the marriage of Lola to Sir Jaffray had moved him beyond all power of self control; that in some way Montreux was mixed up in the matter, and that he had been anxious to learn whether Lola had ever mentioned the name of Turrian to her.

For some days the matter lay like a cloud upon her, and while she was on her visit to her friends she could not dispel it. One incident of that visit served indeed to keep the subject uppermost in her thoughts.

Among the guests was a Frenchman who was a noted amateur violinist, and Beryl, finding him one evening next to her at dinner, asked him whether he knew the name of Turrian as a violin player.

"Turrian, Turrian?" he repeated. "Where is he known?"

"I believe in Paris," answered Beryl.

"Ma foi, there is no such player in Paris," was the decided reply. "I may say I know every player of any consequence in the whole of Paris, but there is none of that name, I am sure."

"Do you know Montreux?" she asked.

"You mean the little Swiss place. I have been there twice, I think, in my rambles. Do you know it—a curious, dull, pretty place—the sort of little town you can look over from north to south and west to east in an hour or two and carry away as a memory photograph?"

"You never heard the name Turrian there as that of a violin player?" asked Beryl.

"In Montreux?" And the Frenchman laughed. "Not at all. Poor little Montreux has never distinguished itself yet in producing anything so important as a musician. Wait, wait. What am I saying?" And he laughed heartily. "I have forgotten the mad abbe. You know Montreux? No? Then you will not know of the good Abbe d'Eventin?"

"No, I have never heard of him."

"May I tell you? The good priest had been no one knows what before he entered the holy church. But, whatever it was, it was something bad, we may be sure. Well, he had picked up a smattering of music, and he could play the violin, and he played it in such a way as to drive himself out of his wits. Then it was that he conceived a great inspiration—he was to revolutionize the world. And how do you think he was to do it? By adding a fifth string to the violin. Isn't that droll? A fifth string, my faith! Poor fellow!"

"Is the tale well known at Montreux?" asked Beryl after joining in her companion's expression of amusement.

"Why, of course. What would you have? Could it be otherwise? Every urchin in the gutter has the story off by heart."

"What a most interesting story!" said Beryl, who found much more interest in it than she showed.

It emphasized two points in the tale which the man Turrian had told her.

It showed whence he had stolen the idea for his story about the fifth string, and it suggested that his connection with Montreux was at least as close as Beryl had at first concluded.

But it did not help her to any solution of the chief question as to what was the reason why the man was seeking Lola. It proved that the reason was not what he had said, and that did not carry her far.

It had another effect. Her companion's word had started a thought which afterward developed considerably. As the Frenchman had been speaking of Montreux, Beryl had been struck by the idea that in so small a place it must be exceedingly easy to find out anything about anybody, and from this it was an easy though gradual development that in such a place she herself could readily make any necessary inquiries.

That idea did not come for some time, however, and in the meantime Beryl was troubled to know whether she ought to speak to Sir Jaffray's mother and tell her what had passed in the interview with Pierre Turrian.

There was also the further question as to Lola herself. Ought she to be told?

This was a problem over which Beryl spent many hours of thought.

If there was any evil in the matter, anything which threatened Lola, not for all the world would Beryl have the news of it come through her. It would look all too much like the result of some vindictive feeling on her part.

But, on the other hand, if Beryl said nothing and it transpired afterward that the man had been to her, her silence would be open to misconception.

She resolved in the end, therefore, to go to Walcote manor and in the course of conversation tell Lady Walcote, as it were casually, of the man's visit, giving his object as described by himself.

On her return home she did this and suggested further that it might be well to write and tell Lola of the fact.

She described the incident in a way which excited no feeling in Lady Walcote's part except laughter, and it was in this vein that the latter spoke of it in a postscript to a letter to Sir Jaffray. The letter was dispatched to await the baronet and his wife at New York, as the time was drawing near for their return to England.

It was in this way that the warning was sent to Lola that her first husband was alive and had already hunted her down.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW LOLA HEARD THE NEWS.

The news that Pierre Turrian was alive did not reach Lola at New York, owing to a mischance. Sir Jaffray and she arrived there some days later than they had planned and not until the evening of the day before that on which they were booked to sail.

The letters were thus thrust away to be read on board the steamer, and in the confusion the postscript was overlooked.

Had she known the news Lola would have turned back at any risk and have arranged to prolong an experience which had been the brightest of her life.

She had never dreamed that marriage with Sir Jaffray would bring the happiness to her which she had found in it. She had married him from motives which were purely worldly and selfish. She had to make a position. She loved ease and luxury. She was done with love and sentiment, and she chose a husband as a man might choose a profession, because it gave her all that she wanted with the least personal effort and difficulty.

"We women sell ourselves, and she is the shrewdest who fetches the biggest price," had been one of her favorite opinions, and she was glad that she had been able to marry where the man would pay so freely and where he personally was not undesirable.

But she had made one miscalculation in her plans.

She was a woman whose heart was not dead, as she believed, but rather had never been quickened into life.

She had imagined that she could go through life as a sort of unemotional lay figure by the side of a husband whom she did not love, suffering his caresses and endearments, but not returning them or at most paying with simulated affection for the comforts with which he would surround her. But in her there were no neutral tints. She must love or hate.

Sir Jaffray's nature fired her, and the more she endeavored to assure herself of her own coldness of heart the more was she moved by him. The very indifference which she affected helped to overcome her. She could not be indifferent, and she could not hate him, and there was therefore but one possible result.

The next instant the man was on his back.

She had chosen, moreover, that kind of holiday which helped to make indifference impossible. She saw her husband at his best during the whole time, and there was no incident of their travel to distract her from him, nothing that caught and held her attention which was not associated closely with him.

More than all, however, he was a man born to be loved by women—strong to command where strength was needed, gentle as a child where gentleness served, as brave as a man can be and courteous to the point of long suffering. In all bodily exercises he was exceptionally agile and enduring, and he possessed in a marked and extraordinary degree just those qualities which to Lola were the type and embodiment of manhood.

She was bound to yield in time to the forceful influence which he exercised, and the more she perceived this and struggled against it the more irresistible did she find it.

As her feelings softened so her fears waxed. She was afraid to grow to love him, because she saw all the dangers of it to her.

One thing she had learned clearly about her husband. With all the stubborn tenacity of his race he held the honor of his name and family as high as a religious creed and perhaps higher. Straight dealing was an instinct and deceit and treachery an abomination. She had seen 50 instances of this in the months of the honeymoon, and she was shrewd enough to understand that the deceit which she had practiced he would punish remorselessly and visit with implacable unforgiveness if he ever discovered it.

His faith once given was given absolutely; once betrayed, was withdrawn forever.

She did not care while she knew that the tie between them was on her side one of tongue and not of heart. She knew, of course, that in the future, whether Pierre reappeared or not, she would need a clear head and calm judgment to walk safely, but if she grew to love her husband she would be neither clear in head nor calm in judgment.

So long as she could part from him, if all were discovered, without any loss except such as touched her social position and her money interests, she felt that she could go through all with the certainty of ultimate success.

But if she loved her husband there were a thousand and one complications which might follow, each of which would be a source of undoing.

It was no trouble to her to feign love, to school herself to seem happy in her husband's presence, to be bright and cheerful with him and to shower upon him a hundred attentions which seemed the spontaneous outcome of a desire to please, but were in reality the more shrewdly chosen because a clever calculation prompted each and all.

Gradually she was surprised at the ease with which this acting was done and the pleasure which it seemed to give her in the doing, nor did she guess the real source of the pleasure until an incident which happened when they had been away some two or three months revealed the truth to her.

They had ridden into a far outlying town in one of the southern states, and Lola was standing in the street alone waiting for her husband, who had been detained at the place where they had stabled the horses. A couple of drunken rowdies passed, and, noticing her beauty, stopped and spoke to her. She took no notice except to glance at them with so much contempt in her expression that one of them lost his temper and, with a deep oath, tried to clutch her by the wrist, vowing he'd kiss her for her insolence.

He reckoned without her strength and pluck, however, and as he grasped at her she pushed him violently backward and struck him with the heavy end of her big riding whip in the face. He staggered back and measured his length on the roadway, to the intense amusement of his companion, who laughed and swore gleefully.

When he got up, the ruffian, red with rage and swearing that he would have revenge, approached Lola, who awaited his attack with unflinching courage, eying him steadily the whole time. Rendered cautious by his first defeat, he held off for a moment watching his opportunity, and then with a cunning feint he put her off her guard and rushed in, pinioned her arms and held her.

She struggled to free her hands, but the fellow's sinews were too much for her, and she was beginning to fear that he would overpower her when she heard him vent a hoarse, guttural, choking sound and saw that Sir Jaffray had come up and caught him by the throat, half strangling him in his fierce temper. The next instant the man was on his back again in the roadway, flung there with great violence by her husband.

"Are you hurt, Lola?" he asked, with the pain of suspense in his eyes.

"No, not in the least. Come away. That brute's getting up again."

The fellow was on his feet again directly, and both he and his companion had drawn their revolvers.

"You don't shoot women in these parts, do you?" said Sir Jaffray sternly. "Wait. Come, Lola."

He led her away to a house that was open at some little distance, and, putting her inside, told her to wait.

"You mustn't go back, Jaffray," she said, a fear that she had never felt for herself awaking on account of him, and she clung to him to keep him by her.

"Don't be afraid," he said kindly, and, putting her hand off his arm with a firm, gentle strength, he went out again. He walked straight up to the bully who had assaulted Lola, and, disregarding contemptuously the revolver which the man held threateningly, struck him with his clinched fist a fearful blow in the face, knocking him down with a thud which resounded all across the road. The man lay like a stunned ox. Then Sir Jaffray turned to the companion, but he, seeing what had happened, fired his revolver at random and ran away, swearing.

When Sir Jaffray went back to Lola, he found her more agitated than he had ever seen her, and she did not seem herself again for many hours and indeed for days afterward.

He did not understand the cause of it all.

In that instant the revelation had come of the new feeling which was developing in her, and the knowledge, in view of all that it meant, had agitated her as much as any incident in all her turbulent life.

In the days that followed, Sir Jaffray noticed for the first time in his wife's waywardness and uncertainty of temper which were quite unusual, and they surprised and rather grieved him. She was in reality fighting against her new emotions and striving resolutely to conquer them.

But she fought in vain, and from that moment onward she felt, herself drawn closer and closer to him until she ceased at last to wage a useless fight.

Her return to England was thus unwelcome. So long as they were thousands of miles away from Europe she was safe against discovery, and could she have had her way she would have prolonged their journey indefinitely.

But Sir Jaffray was beginning to feel a strong desire to be home. He loved the place and longed to be there and to see Lola installed as its beautiful mistress. He would have hurried home earlier had he followed his own inclinations, but he could not interfere to stop the pleasure which she showed on every occasion in all the incidents of their traveling. He was delighted, however, when at length he stood with Lola on the big Atlantic liner and watched the lighthouse at Sandy Hook growing dimmer and dimmer in the haze of distance and felt that they were homeward bound.

He was surprised that Lola was silent and thoughtful.

It was a new thing for her to feel foreboding.

But now if what she had begun to dread came true she felt half helpless to grapple with it. And it was part of the effect of her new love and the fears it bred that the danger which, when she did not dread its coming, had seemed remote and all but impossible now appeared almost certain and inevitable. She blamed herself for not having taken any of the thousand precautions at the time of Pierre's death which she now saw she ought to have taken, and her father's words recurred to her over and over again:

"You did not see him dead."

How she wished she had.

Sir Jaffray rallied her once or twice when he caught her brooding apparently.

"Beginning to think what a serious matter marriage is?" he asked. "You'll have no end of fuss made of you in the county. Different from the wild west."

"I suppose one is quizzed a bit," said Lola. "But I know most of the people, and I can manage them, I think."

"Not much fear of that," replied her husband, with a smile of admiration. "There are not many people you could not manage. We shall have to have a function or two, and there'll be a bit of fuss when we get back, I expect. But we won't stay longer than you like at the manor. We'll get up to town. We shall have to go about a bit, you know."

"Yes, marriage isn't an excuse for refusing invitations, as it used to be in Galilee. It makes one look out for them rather."

"There won't be much looking out for them, I promise you. When once you're seen, they'll come fast enough."

"I suppose so, but I'd rather have our time back there," with a movement of the head toward the west, "than a London season."

"You'll grow out of that fast enough," he said. "But I'm glad you haven't been bored. After all, there's no place like the manor to my mind. I'm awfully fond of the old place, and on my word I go back to it with greater gusto every time I've been away." Then, after a long pause, he added, "I shall like it better than ever with you as its head, Lola, and I think you'll get to feel about it pretty much as I do."

"I shall, if you make it a pleasant place to me," she answered, with a laughing look of affection. "If not, I shall hate it."

"I'll try not to make you do that. I shall be glad when we get there. We're due in tomorrow afternoon, and if all goes as it has hitherto we shall be well up to time. We shall be home before midnight, all being well. I'm afraid that our getting in at such a time will a bit upset any arrangements which the Walcote people may have made for a reception, but we must have 'em up next day and give 'em a lunch or a feed of some kind. Wonderful cure for disappointment is a good feed. Jove, I shall be glad to see the old place again!"

That night, the last they were to spend on board, the baronet went up on deck to smoke a cigar after supper, and Lola went with him. It was a clear, crisp, sharp air, and the moon and stars were shining brightly. She took his arm, and, pressing closely to him, walked up and down the deck.

"Our last night at sea, Jaffray," she said.

"And a lovely one, eh?"

"Have you enjoyed the time?"

"Never had a better in my life," he answered enthusiastically. "Didn't know marriage was half so good."

"Or you might have tried it before?" And she laughed.

"If I'd met you before," he replied, like a lover.

"I'm glad I've given you one span of happiness, Jaffray," she said, and the tone in which she spoke seemed rather sad.

"It seems to have changed you a good bit," he said. "You're not like the same girl in some ways."

"Not with you?" She put the question in a tone that touched him at once. "I'm the same with you. You forget that till you came into it mine was a fighting life."

"So that chap must have thought in Calladua," he said, laughing at the recollection of the way she had treated the man who had tried to insult her.

"But you had to come to the rescue then. I wonder if you always would and will."

"We don't breed cowboys in old England," he answered.

"True, but there are other villains. Do you believe in omens, Jaffray?" She put the question impetuously.

"Yes, of a kind," he said. "When I've been hunting big game, for instance, and missed at the first shot, I always took it for an omen that if I didn't hit with the second I should have a bad time, and I took good care not to miss, I can tell you."

"Oh, I don't mean things you can avoid."

"Then I don't believe in any other. Bad luck doesn't begin with a man as a rule till he's made a mess of things for himself."

"Yes, but I mean if you fear something's going to happen?"

"But a man doesn't fear that unless he knows there's something that can happen. A man who walks straight isn't afraid of tumbling into the ditch at the roadside. But once I had a presentiment, by the way, and it came true," he added after a pause.

"What was that?"

"When I saw you that day in the little woman's house, I had a presentiment that you would be my wife, and here we are."

He laughed pleasantly and pressed her arm, and she thought it wiser to say no more about omens after what he had said.

Their arrival at Walcote manor was necessarily very quiet. They reached Liverpool in the afternoon of the following day, and as soon as the baggage could be got together started for home.

Lady Walcote had remained in the house by Lola's special wish—one of the results of the change in her feelings—and Lola did her utmost to follow up the kindlier letters she had written with a greeting of really affectionate warmth.

But the old lady had not changed on her side, and, though resolved to act up to the promise she had made to Sir Jaffray before the marriage, she did not like the woman he had chosen and would not pretend that she did.

Thus the home coming was chilled on the threshold, and Lola herself was both disappointed and irritated, and there was more of the old Ishmaelitish feeling of defiance in her manner than her husband had observed since the marriage.

With Jaffray himself his mother was all tenderness and love, but she felt the change in the position.

It was the first time that he had come home from any of his wanderings when she herself had not had the first place in his thoughts. If the other woman had been Beryl, she thought, it would have been tolerable, but to give place to Lola was unbearable.

She staid with them for a long time while they talked to her of their travels, and she listened attentively.

"You have been a good correspondent, Jaffray — better than usual, I think." The baronet had thoughtfully made a point of writing much more frequently than he had been accustomed to write on former occasions. "The letters from you both have been most bright and interesting. You have had all mine, I suppose?"

"Yes, I think so. We got the last batch at New York."

"And what is your theory of the five stringed violin enthusiast? Is he a lunatic? He has been here and was most impatient to know when you would be back."

"Five stringed violin?" exclaimed Sir Jaffray. "What do you mean?"

"There, you haven't read my letters. I told you about him and his queer visit to Beryl."

"Who is he? What is it? I must have missed it."

"The foreign violin player, M. Pierre Turrian, who has a theory about violins."

"Jaffray, I think I'll go, dear. I'm dead tired," exclaimed Lola, rising the instant Lady Walcote finished. "We must have all the home news in the morning," she added, with a smile.

So it had come already, she thought as she went away, with a great pang at her heart, but making no outward sign of any kind.

CHAPTER VIII.

FACE TO FACE ONCE MORE.

That night was one of the hardest in Lola's life, but she faced the crisis with all the strength of her most resourceful character and came out of it undaunted and determined.

So great was her self mastery and so strong her powers of acting that Sir Jaffray did not detect a single symptom of the struggle which absorbed her.

Through the night she lay awake, never moving, lest she should wake him and so disturb her own opportunity for thought, and perhaps arouse his suspicious that something was amiss.

There were two courses open to her. One was to tell Sir Jaffray at once the whole matter and trust to his love for her; the other was to face it out and dare the man she hated to do his worst.

If the man at her side had been different, if his sense of honor and morbid fear of the suspicion of dishonor had been less acute, she would have told him all and trusted to her love to win him to cling to her through the publicity and scandal which would inevitably follow when Pierre was set at defiance.

But she dared not.

She knew that Sir Jaffray, with all the influences that were round him, the strong love of truth that dominated him, the capacity to suffer rather than be touched with a taint of dishonor, would put her away from him at once, and probably he would never see her again.

The alternative was to face the other man and dare him to do what he pleased.

What would he do?

There was that scene on the Devil's rock, but there was no proof of what she had done. Besides, if there were, what did it matter? If she was to be dragged from the place to which she had climbed, what did it matter how far she fell? A little deeper would make no difference.

Need she fall at all? That was the question.

She knew Pierre well, had seen through and through his sordid little soul, and could count up easily enough the price that would buy him. Comfort, ease, luxury, money for his vices—these were his ambitions, and she could satisfy him. Sir Jaffray had settled on her an ample dowry, and she could easily get more money if she wanted it.

[redacted]

[redacted] woman you were on the boat. Where are your omens?" He smiled.

"Where, indeed?" she replied, laughing back. "I'm afraid I must have been upset by the voyage. Perhaps I thought I was going to be shipwrecked. But I'll be safe here, eh?" There was more in her words than he understood.

"You ought to be if anywhere," he answered.

"Even if I manage to offend the very great personages who come here?"

"You won't do that. People aren't easy to take offense with Walcote."

"Where's the mother—Lady Walcote? I suppose I may call her mother?"

"She's not coming down to breakfast. She's not used to our wild west early rising. Besides, she was up late. She'll be down to lunch."

"Did you sit up late? I was horribly tired. I couldn't stay? What was that she was saying about some ridiculous musician or other and a five stringed violin?"

"Bit of a crank, I fancy," said Sir Jaffray, laughing; "said he wanted some rot or other about a violin and that you'd been his pupil or something years ago. Turrian his name is. Do you remember him?"

Lola laughed musically and showed her white, level teeth.

"What, Pierre Turrian? Oh, do tell, as our friends across the water say. I wish I'd stopped up to hear. Remember him? Of course. He's only a young man, fair, and would be handsome if he hadn't a curious expression on his face which I couldn't like. He's a wonderful fiddler—wonderful—a genius with more than a touch of madness, but a wonderful player."

She spoke as unconcernedly as if she were discussing a servant.

"Where did you know him?"

"Switzerland, soon after I left the convent. He taught me singing when there was some talk about my using my voice, you know." She had told him that at one time her father had thought of putting her on the stage, but that she had refused to go—a version of the fact that was not accurate—a mere reference to this subject generally enough to turn him from awkward discussion.

"Were you under him long? Did he think that you were thinking of that?"

"Of course not," she answered. She paused, taking her cue from hesitation. "The thing never went though for that. He knew no more that I had a voice that was to be used and he trained it. He is a good musician as well as player. You'll hear him all probability. By the way, I have to get to work and practice. My wanderings haven't given me much for singing." And with that she changed the subject.

She had produced the impression she wished upon Sir Jaffray's mind and further prepared the way for Pierre Turrian's coming to the house should he insist upon doing that, as she thought very likely.

But she had still to deal with Lady Walcote, and during the time she was going round the house and stables and the grounds and the conservatories with Sir Jaffray she was thinking out how best to meet his mother.

She commenced with an attack from her own side, skillfully planned and executed.

She found the old lady sitting alone in the morning room, and she went up and kissed her with a show of much warmth. Then, drawing a low chair, she sat down by her.

"Good morning, mother. I may call you mother?" she asked, looking into the elder woman's rather stern eyes.

"Jaffray's wife can be nothing but my daughter, Lola," she answered.

The girl paused and then said slowly and thoughtfully:

"I could wish that there were less diplomacy in that answer and more warmth in the tone." And she sighed. "I have never had a mother, remember."

"I know very little indeed of your childhood, Lola. You have never told me anything, you know," was Lady Walcote's answer.

"It is hard to give confidence where there is no sympathy," said Lola.

"As hard as to give sympathy where no confidence is offered, child."

To be continued.

BILIOUSNESS

Do you get up with a headache?

Is there a bad taste in your mouth?

Then you have a poor appetite and a weak digestion. You are frequently dizzy, always feel dull and drowsy. You have cold hands and feet. You get but little benefit from your food. You have no ambition to work and the sharp pains of neuralgia dart through your body.

What is the cause of all this trouble?

Constipated bowels.

Ayer's PILLS

will give you prompt relief and certain cure.

Keep Your Blood Pure.

If you have neglected your case a long time, you had better take

Ayer's Sarsaparilla

also. It will remove all impurities that have been accumulating in your blood and will greatly strengthen your nerves.

Write the Doctor.

There may be something about your case you do not quite understand. Write the doctor freely, tell him how you are suffering. You will promptly receive the best medical advice. Address,

Dr. J. C. Ayer, Lowell, Mass.

"Seems to have done you good to get home."