

A Scourge of Doubt.

OR.....

THE ERROR OF LADY BLUNDEN.

CHAPTER XXVI.

In Paris the weather is reasonable and almost mild. No rough winds have blown in its October. People still go about with cheerful faces, and benign smiles, and noses devoid of blue.

Fancy and Cyclamen, who are staying for a week in this most charming of all cities, on their way home, grow almost pathetic over the beauty of the climate, and argue whether it will not be wisdom to stay here fourteen instead of seven days. They have nearly said yes to this plan, when, running down the steps of the hotel, leading to the courtyard beneath, they both stop suddenly as with one consent to gaze earnestly at a man standing some distance from them. He is quite motionless. His eyes are bent upon the ground, showing their owner lost in thought; and he is industriously doing his best to pull his brown moustache to pieces.

"Is that Sir John, or is it his wraith?" asks Fancy, breathlessly.

"Sir John, I hope. I prefer my friends in the flesh. But how altered he is—how thin! I should scarcely know him. Wait for me a moment, Fancy; I must speak to him."

"So must I," says Fancy. "I'll go with you."

"No, let me go alone."

"If you wish it, cara,"—raising her pretty brows. "But ask him to come up and see us. And—pleasantly—ask him, too, where Lady Blunden is,—where they are stopping. Perhaps here."

"Dear Fancy, one word. If I do ask him to come up to our sitting room, say you will not mention Lady Blunden's name."

"But, my good child, why?"—with the utmost surprise.

"Because"—in an embarrassed tone—"well, I suppose I may as well tell you all. The fact is, the Blundens are not on very friendly terms, and, without making matters public, have agreed to separate."

"Cyclamen, what is it you would say!" asks Fancy, stepping back, and looking honestly horrified.

"It is only too true"—regretfully—"I wish it wasn't. It all arose from that mask ball at Twickenham. Sir John was there, it appears, under the rose, with some one who wasn't his wife, and Kitty saw them in the gardens, and—I really know almost nothing; but there was a terrible scene in my house next day, and they parted, and have never been face to face since."

"But he wasn't at Twickenham that night?"

"But he was. Kitty saw him. I am afraid he was wrong in some way, but how I don't know. Now, let me speak to him before he goes. And, remember, say nothing of her."

"Of course not. How do you think I should, after all you have told me? I was never so shocked, so bewildered, in all my life!"

Turning, she goes up the steps again (while Cyclamen goes down), and, having reached their drawing-room, is still so puzzled that even when Sir John and Cyclamen enter presently she is distraught to a degree, and greets him in a manner the reverse of effusive.

Having given him her hand, she moves away, with a faint smile, to a distant chair, leaving Cyclamen and him to retire into a window, where they converse in low tones.

"I am so glad to meet you again," Cyclamen says, kindly. "but so grieved to see you looking so badly. What have you been doing with yourself?"

"Overdoing the thing, perhaps. incessant traveling without any rest knocks a fellow all to bits, you know. But I am perfectly well."

"You are not happy," says Cyclamen, quietly. "That is what is the matter with you."

"Is it?" with a light laugh. "Is any one happy, do you think, in this troublesome world? Would you have me luckier than my fellows? Well," changing his mocking tone to one of deep depression—"perhaps I

am not, then. Do you know"—wistfully—"it is rather a blessing to meet some one who—who knows all about my luckless affairs, as I am heartily sick of lying to my friends all round."

He thrums upon the window-pane for a moment or two, and then says, without looking at his companion: "Where is she?"

"Still at Laxton with Mrs. Dugdale. At least, she was three weeks ago. I have not heard from her since then, but in her last letter she said she meant to stay there for some time longer."

"Ah! it is pleasanter for her, no doubt."

"I do not imagine she finds any place very pleasant," says Cyclamen, meaningly. Then with an effort, "Why did you not tell her you were going to Twickenham that night?"

"How could I? I never went there."

"But she saw you."

Sir John shrugs his shoulders. "She has excellent eyes, no doubt. And to see is to believe, they say. Nevertheless, I can only repeat I was not there."

"It is extraordinary. Why did you not protest as much to her?"

"She would not listen. And, besides, that was a slight offense, I suppose, compared to others she accused me of. Why discuss it?"—impatiently. "Nothing matters very much, does it?"

"Why, she described the very domino you wore," persists Cyclamen, who is lost in a vain effort to unravel this seeming mystery.

Their voices within the last two minutes have been slightly raised; so much so that Fancy has been compelled to hear. At this moment she comes forward right up to them, with a heightened color and distressed eyes.

"Did Arthur borrow your domino that night?" she asks, anxiously.

"Yes,"—carelessly. "At the last moment I made up my mind not to go to the ball and he—coming in just then, asked for the domino, and obtained it."

"It is all quite plain," says Fancy, nervously. "It is altogether a mistake. Did Lady Blunden know you lent your domino to—to your cousin?"

"No. There was really no time, no opportunity for explanation upon any subject. She went to the ball. I went to my club."

"Don't you see how it was?" says Fancy, putting one hand up to her cheek, which burns hotly. "Or must I tell you? I was in the garden with—Arthur that evening, and you know how like you he is at times, and how a mask deceives one. And—yes,"—bravely,—"I will confess it now, whatever comes of it; Arthur kissed me that night, and perhaps Lady Blunden saw him, and thought he was you, and that I—oh, I can't say any more—it is too horrible,"—exclaims she, turning away to hide her face, which is now red as any rose.

"Why did you not tell me this before?" says Cyclamen, reproachfully, forgetful of her own reticence.

"Why was I told nothing?"—re-

Piles

To prove to you that Dr. Chase's Ointment is a certain and absolute cure for each and every form of itching, bleeding and protruding piles, the manufacturers have guaranteed it. See testimonials in the daily press and ask your neighbor what they think of it. You can use it and get your money back if not cured. 60c a box, at all dealers or EDMANSON, BATES & CO., Toronto.

Dr. Chase's Ointment torts Fancy, still more reproachfully.

"That is certainly how the mistake must have arisen. How clear things seem now!" says Cyclamen, cheerfully. "You will see after a little while everything will come right."

Blunden shakes his head. "That one absurd suspicion was not all," he says. "There are other things. You are very good, av-

fully kind, you know, to care for my welfare as you do, but—matters have gone too far. She herself would be the last to welcome a reconciliation."

"Something must be done, and at once," Fancy says, coming forward again excitedly. "I can't have Lady Blunden thinking such dreadful things; I can't indeed. It is as bad for me as anybody. And, besides, mistakes of that kind should be cleared up. I shall make this cause my own. I shall go to her and tell her everything. And so shall Arthur. And afterwards I shall write to you, Sir John, to your hotel here, and then all will be well again."

* * * * *

"A lady in the drawing-room to see you, ma'am," says Lynan, the ancient servant, opening the door of the library and addressing Gretchen, who is sitting there with Lady Blunden and the boy.

"Her name?" asks Gretchen, lazily, who is nice and warm and cozy and feels thoroughly disinclined to action.

"She would give no name ma'am, but said she would not delay you more than five minutes."

"Dear me! A begging-letter woman or an impostor of some kind," says Gretchen, much disheartened.

"What shall I do? They always talk so fluently and won't go away. And they will say the same thing a dozen times in different language."

"Put money in your purse, dear," suggests Kitty, blandly. "There is nothing like it in such cases. Is she—a lady—or a woman, Lynan?"

"Oh, quite the lady, my lady, every hinch of her," replies Lynan, with conviction.

"That sounds more promising, nevertheless, as a precautionary measure, I shall take your hint and my purse," says Gretchen, rising, with a sigh. "I notice I am always called away to do something or see somebody just when I was most comfortable. And baby in such a good temper too!"

"Keep well away from her, and think of torpedoes, and hand-grenades, and dynamite, and pokers," says Kitty, as a last comforting suggestion; whereupon Gretchen laughs and vanishes.

Entering the drawing-room a few minutes later, she finds herself face to face with Mrs. Charteris, to her extreme amazement and discomfort. An expression of extreme hauteur grows upon her usually gentle face as she stands still in the centre of the room and regards her fixedly, uncertain what to do or say.

"You!" she says, at last, impulsively, being a bad dissembler, growing very pale, as repugnance and anger and some fear fill her breast.

"Yes," says Fancy, growing pale too, and coming quickly forward. "I must speak to you. There is something that must be explained. Ah, I see you too have put faith in this miserable misunderstanding that has arisen out of nothing."

"I really do not see what it is you can explain," says Gretchen, coldly.

"If you will listen to me you shall hear. Only yesterday I heard of—of—"

She hesitates, hardly knowing in what language to couch her knowledge of Kitty's quarrel with her husband. "And I have traveled straight from Paris here, as much for my own satisfaction"—somewhat haughtily—"as for the benefit of other people, to tell you Sir John Blunden was not at Twickenham the night of Lady Monckton's ball. I have been given to understand that it was generally believed he was there."

"Not at Twickenham? You must pardon me, Mrs. Charteris, if I say a wife may surely be allowed to recognize her own husband."

"Sometimes; not always. In this instance at least she was at fault. She made a mistake—a fatal one. It was Arthur Blunden she saw, dressed in Sir John's domino, and I was with him in the gardens. She must have seen us. Is it not so?"

"She saw you, yes,"—gravelly.

"And on account of the great likeness between the cousins (you must have noticed that), and because of the darkness, and the masks, and all, she must have mistaken Arthur for her husband."

"Can this be true?" says Gretchen, clasping her hands; and, forgetful of nice breeding and proper form, in her delight at the prospect of making life once more bright for Kitty, she says, naively,—

"Then he did not kiss you, after all?"

It is a betise,—a terrible one,—and Fancy winces. She grows crimson and bites her lip. Gretchen, quick to see, is penitent on the spot.

"Oh, pardon me!" she says. "I am rude,—detestable. What can I say to excuse myself?"

She is so thoroughly grieved about her offense, yet withal so unmistakably relieved and gladdened at the news just conveyed, that Fancy (who is the kindest-hearted creature in the world) forgives her and conquers her temper.

"But Kitty was so sure, so certain; and Arthur said nothing of having borrowed the domino."

"He only borrowed it at the last moment."

"But why did you not tell all this before?" asks Gretchen; and then ensues an explanation that leaves no room for doubt.

"Yet surely, surely there were times when you were more than civil to Sir John," says Gretchen, doubtfully.

"Were there? I don't know; I think not. Did I ever flirt with him? Well, if so I am sorry, I think you are the only woman in the world I would say so much to. If I have done wrong I come to you with Mea culpa on my lips. Do not refuse me grace."

"Tell me one thing," says Gretchen, earnestly. "Were you engaged to Sir John—in the old days, I mean?"

"Never; he never asked me to marry him. There was never the faintest sentimental feeling between us, though people would think so. To be candid with you, he would not have suited me at all. You will see I am speaking the truth. I was shocked, horrified, when I discovered that Lady Blunden had taken up such an erroneous idea. But all will be right now, I hope and trust."

"So do I," says Gretchen, sighing, "if only for baby's sake."

"A baby! Is there a baby? You told me nothing of it."

"Yes. A very darling baby. Of course I forgot you could not know; yet he is three weeks old."

"Sir John knows nothing of it?"

"Nothing. She will not let me tell him of it; indeed, up to this I have had no chance of telling him, as I have not known where he is."

"Why not put the birth in the papers?"

"I gave her my promise not to do so."

"That is wrong, surely," says Fancy, hastily. "Forgive me, I am not one to preach, I know, but I cannot help thinking a father should be made aware of his child's birth."

"I quite agree with you; yet I am fettered by my promise; and besides, believing all I did believe until your visit here to-day, I hardly cared to let him know of the little one. And now what am I to do, if she still holds me to my word?"

"Do nothing," says Fancy, rising impulsively to her feet, with rose-flushed cheeks and gleaming eyes. "I don't care about violating oaths; I don't indeed. There is no use in appealing to me. My principles are all astray; and if you think I ought to keep the news you have just communicated to me secret I can only tell you that I shan't do it. Mrs. Dugdale, as I have been the cause, though the innocent one, of all this misery, do let me also be the one to reduce the chaos to order. Do not refuse me this request. I think I shall succeed. And when Sir John and Lady Blunden are once more happy together, perhaps"—wistfully—"she will then forgive me."

"But what can you do? What is your plan?"—doubtfully.

"Of course you guess; but, first (pardon the question), does Lady Blunden still love her husband?"

"You are indeed a stranger to Kitty if you can ask it."

"Then I have your consent to make the attempt?" she asks.

"I hardly know,"—with hesitation. "If you failed, and Kitty discovered it, she would never forgive me."

"I shall not fail." There is a pause; then, with lowered eyes and purposely suppressed voice, Fancy goes on in a dolorous tone,—

"If you saw him, I think you would hardly know him, he has grown so thin, so haggard."

"Oh! poor Jack!—poor fellow!" says Gretchen. She is very pale, and tears are in her eyes. "Mrs. Charteris, you are right; do anything,—I don't care what; only bring him home to us."

So they part; and Fancy, reaching home as evening falls, writes a letter, pathetic, sensible, commanding, that stirs the heart of him who receives it to its lowest depths, causing him to stride up and down his room for hours in a passionate endeavor to come to a satisfactory settlement with his love and pride,—wearing out not only the carpet but the patience of his long-enduring man, who finds no rest from his troubles until at last he safely lands his master upon English soil.

(To Be Continued.)

Mrs. Brise—"Johnny, did the doctor call while I was out?" Little Johnny (stopping his play)—"Yes'm. He felt my pulse and looked at my tongue, and shook his head, and said it was a very serious case, and he left his prescription, and said he'd call again before night."

Mrs. Brise—"Gracious me! It wasn't you I sent him to see; it was the baby."

Perhaps one of the very oddest monuments is the tablet in a Berkshire, England, church in memory of a soldier who had his left leg taken off "by the above ball," the actual cannon ball being inserted at the top.

NEURALGIC PAINS

ARE A CRY OF THE NERVES FOR BETTER BLOOD.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Make Rich, Red Blood and Drive These Pains From the System—Read the Proof.

A high medical authority has defined neuralgia as "a cry of the nerves for better blood," and to effectually drive it from the system the blood must be made rich, red and pure. For this purpose there is no other medicine so prompt and sure in result as Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. These pills make new, rich, red blood with every dose, and impart new life and new vigor to the person using them. Mr. John McDermott, Bond Head, Ont., offers strong proof of the certain results obtained from the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in cases of this kind. He says: "A few years ago while working as a carpenter in Buffalo I got wet. I did not think it worth while changing my clothes at the time, but I soon began to suffer for my neglect. I awoke next morning with cramps and pains throughout my body. I was unable to go to work and called in a doctor, who left me some medicine. I used it faithfully for some time, but it did not help me. In fact I was growing steadily worse and had become so reduced in flesh that I weighed only 138 pounds. As I was not able to work I returned to my home at Bond Head. Here I placed myself under the care of a local doctor who said the trouble was neuralgia, which had taken a thorough hold upon my entire system. Misfortune seemed to follow me for the doctor's treatment did not help me, and I think my neighbors at least did not think I was going to get better. I had often heard and read of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and in this emergency I determined to try them. I had not used more than three boxes before I felt that the pills were helping me. From that on I gained day by day, and after I had used some ten or twelve boxes, I had fully recovered my old-time strength, and have since been able to work at my trade as carpenter without any trouble. I have no pains or aches, and I now weigh 156 pounds. I think Dr. Williams' Pink Pills an invaluable medicine and shall always have a good word to say for them."

When the nerves are unstrung, when the blood is poor or watery, or when the system is out of order, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills is the medicine to take. They cure all troubles arising from these causes, and make weak, despondent men and women bright, active and strong. Protect yourself against imitations by seeing that the full name, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People" is on the wrapper around every box. Sold by all medicine dealers or mailed post paid at 50c per box or six boxes for \$2.50 by writing to the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

FOOD FOR BRAIN WORKERS.

The Most Concentrated and Easily Digested.

The changes of the tissue in the brain that take place during study and thought are very important and very rapid; it has been estimated that three hours of brain work causes as great an exhaustion of the forces of the body as an entire day of manual labor. This waste must be replaced by abundant food, but its selection requires careful consideration and often self-denial, for many things which the physical worker can eat with perfect impunity are slow poison to the brain worker, who exercises the brain at the expense of the body, and rarely gives the latter sufficient exercise to counteract the mental strain and keep it in condition to resist disease. Bear in mind that, while the waste of the body is much more rapid, the deprivation of physical exercise encourages torpidity of the voluntary functions and renders them sluggish in eliminating these wastes;—therefore it is of the utmost importance that the tasks imposed upon them should be light. Brain workers require the most concentrated and easily digested foods; they should eat fresh beef and mutton, fish, eggs—cooked in many forms, but never hard boiled nor fried—oysters, and crisp salads, lettuce, chicory, tomatoes, watercress, etc.—with mayonnaise or French dressing. They should begin the day with fruit and make it form the principal part of luncheon; and be very sparing in their use of cereals, eschewing entirely white bread and oatmeal. Their ideal luncheon, which must be light if they continue to work in the afternoon, is a glass of milk or a cup of hot chocolate—or, better still, a glass of fresh buttermilk—with two or three Graham wafers or a bit of toast and some fruit, an apple, figs or an orange.

PRIZES FOR PRETTY GIRLS.

Some sixty years ago the Rev. Thomas Maffrick bequeathed to Holsworthy, Devonshire, England, certain moneys, the interest on which is to be paid to the prettiest young woman who most regularly attends church. Miss Jane Chapple has been selected this year as the queen of beauty. A sum of 5s. is also given yearly to the oldest spinster who is the most frequent attendant at church.

For Six Months He Did No Work

Was a Victim of Nervous Collapse—Weak, Helpless, Suffered—An Extraordinary Cure by Dr. Chase's Nerve Food

That Dr. Chase's Nerve Food possesses unusual control over the nerves and rekindles nervous energy when all other means fail, is well illustrated in the case described below. Mr. Brown was forced to give up his ministerial work, and so far exhausted that for a time he was positively helpless. Doctors were consulted, and many remedies were resorted to, in vain. Every effort to build up the system seemed in vain, and it is little wonder that the sufferer was losing hope of recovery, when he began to use Dr. Chase's Nerve Food.

Of Omemeë, and late of Bethany, Ont., writes:—"A year ago last November I was overtaken with nervous exhaustion. For six months I did no work, and during that time I had to be waited on, not being able to help myself. Nervous collapse was complete, and though I was in the physician's hands for months, I did not seem to improve. At any little exertion my strength would leave me, and I would tremble with nervousness. From the first I used a great many nerve remedies, but they seemed to have no effect in my case. I had almost lost hope of recovery

when I heard of Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, and began to use it. As my system became stronger I began to do a little work, and have gradually increased in nerve force and vigor until now I am about in my normal condition again. I consider Dr. Chase's Nerve Food the best medicine I ever used. Not only has it proven its wonderful restorative powers in my own case, but also in several others where I have recommended it. Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, 50 cents a box, six boxes for \$2.50. At all dealers, or Edmansson, Bates & Co., Toronto.

[Rev. T. Browe, Methodist minister]