

# Fighting Life's Battle;

OR, LADY BLANCHE'S BITTER PUNISHMENT

## CHAPTER VI.—(Continued).

He flushed with grateful pleasure and seized it, getting nearly run over for his pains, and stood looking after the carriage until it was lost to sight.

Lord Norman watched him with a smile on his face.

"Don't they wear hats in Canada, Bertie?" he said.

The young viscount started, and laughed apologetically; then sent a man to the saloon for his hat.

"Oh, Bruce, what a lovely creature!" he exclaimed, in a low voice, as he locked his arm in Lord Norman's. Lady Betty's companion! Dou you know her well, Bruce? How glad I am that I came back, Lord Norman stopped again and looked at him, with something like a frown and a smile commingled, and that I dropped in to-night!"

"Now, Bertie, don't play the fool. I know what this rhapsody means. You are in love for the five hundred and ninety-ninth time!"

The young viscount raised his head and looked at him. His face went pale, and his blue eyes were almost solemn in their earnestness.

"No; for the first time, Bruce. Don't chaff me. I—I don't think I should like it. Yes, I am in love," he went on, almost defiantly; "and I am not ashamed to own it. I feel as if I had been bewitched."

He put his hand to his brow again, and his face went pale.

"Don't chaff me. I am serious this time, Bruce."

"So you have assured me quite a dozen times before," retorted Lord Norman.

"But I have never felt like this. There, don't let us talk of it, Bruce."

"But we will," said Lord Norman, almost sternly. "Listen to me, Bertie; I know about as much of you as you do yourself. You are Viscount Clifford, with an old title and an empty purse. You are good-looking, confound you, as a picture, and you have got to take your good looks into the open market, and do your duty in that state of life, etc. And that duty is, to marry an heiress as soon as you conveniently can."

The boy flushed, turned pale and then sighed.

"Now, Miss Carlisle is not an heiress; she is penniless, or next door to it, and Lady Betty's companion; and the sooner you get over your infatuation the better!"

Bertie stood silent for a moment—they had reached the door of Lord Norman's chamber—then he looked up.

"It is all very well for you to talk like this, Bruce. You do not know what I feel. I don't think you were ever downright in love."

"No!" said Lord Norman, with a strange smile.

"But you 'mean well,' as they say, and perhaps you are right. I'll call on Lady Betty to-morrow, and start off for—oh, anywhere!"

"Do," said Lord Norman.

"Lord Clifford!" said Lady Betty, as Josine opened the door of the boudoir, and made the announcement.

The room was in the wildest confusion, littered with the contents of a huge box, which had just arrived from Paris, containing a selection of Swiss costumes, slightly altered and beautified by the great master. Floris was kneeling before the glass trying on white linen caps and kerchiefs.

"Bertie, my dear! How attentive of him. Show Lord Clifford up," she said, and presently they heard him coming up two stairs at a time.

He stopped at the door, aghast and blushing at the sight of the finery and the occupation of the two ladies.

"Oh, I beg pardon! I thought the girl said 'upstairs.'"

"Oh, it is all right! Come in, Bertie. You are the very man we want," said Lady Betty, holding out her little paw. "We are too busy to receive visitors of ceremony this morning, but if you like to take us as we are you are quite welcome."

"What an awful litter! How do you do, Miss Carlisle?"

Floris held out her hand, without getting up from her knees, and he bent over it.

"What a fine lot of dresses!

Rather gorgeous, aren't they?"

"Color is everything at a fancy fair," said Lady Betty, with an air of conviction.

"Color and cheek!" said Bertie.

"Sir!" exclaimed Lady Betty, with mock severity. "We did not admit you into our boudoir to receive your impertinence."

"Beg pardon, Lady Betty!" he retorted. "I meant color and—confidence."

"Then we had better give you a stall all to yourself, Bertie," said Lady Betty. "Now tell me how I look. Isn't this quite a Swiss girl's get-up?"

They tried on several other caps and kerchiefs, and Bertie was asked his opinion on each and all, till he must have become rather confused; then he said suddenly, as if he had been bracing himself up for the announcement.

"It was very kind of you to show me these things, Lady Pendleton, because—because, you see, I shan't be able to see them at the fair."

"Why not?" demanded Lady Betty.

He glanced at Floris as she knelt at the box replacing the costumes.

"I—find I have to go down to my uncle's place; I'm overdue there now, and he gets rather rough if I don't show up pretty often."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Lady Betty.

"I'm sure he won't mind waiting a week or two longer for you; I shouldn't if I were your uncle. You must help us with the fair, Bertie! You will be of no end of use; won't he Floris?"

Floris didn't answer, but she smiled assentingly.

"There! You hear what Miss Carlisle says."

"I didn't hear Miss Carlisle speak," says poor Bertie, all his heroic resolutions of flying from temptation slipping away from him.

"I beg your pardon!" said Floris. "I am sure you would be of great use, Lord Clifford, and I hope you will be able to stay."

"If you say so," he said, "of course I will stay. My uncle must wait. Let me see what I can do?"

Then he sat down again, and eagerly plunged into the subject.

"I'll tell you what I can do," he said. "I'll be a fortuneteller or something of that sort in a cave; or have a show, and stand outside with a big drum. Walk up! Walk up, ladies and gentlemen! Just going to begin! That sort of thing, you know, eh, Miss Carlisle?" and he turned his handsome face to hers, with a radiant smile in his blue eyes that made Floris smile in return.

"Look here! I'll go and get some properties, dresses, and all that, and arrange something. Good-by. You leave the show business to me!" and shaking hands, he took his departure, "all in a glow with love," as Moore says.

In the afternoon Lord Clifford came again, making profuse apologies for the intrusion. But he wanted to consult them about the "show."

"I think I'll give a kind of entertainment—recitals and songs. We can rig up a tent or something of the kind and charge five shillings for admittance."

"A guinea! Nothing will be less than a guinea!" said Lady Betty, decisively.

Bertie looked rather glum.

"Rather a dear entertainment!" he said. "Never mind! You'll take the responsibility of the charge for admission, and how about the songs. I've bought one or two. I thought that perhaps"—he hesitated and glanced at Floris, who was seated at the window with a book—"I thought that perhaps you—or Miss Carlisle—would try them over for me."

"Oh, I never could play an accompaniment," said Lady Betty.

"Floris, my dear, will you try them over for him?"

Floris rose at once and went to the piano, and, with a suppressed delight, Bertie unrolled his songs.

"I'm afraid they are rather foolish," he said; "but the young lady at the music shop assured me that they were all the rage just now."

He stuck one up on the stand, from which it fell off, as usual, and in the scramble to recover it, his hands clasped Floris'.

All innocent and unsuspecting she laughed, and put the music in

its place, but a red flush flew to Bertie's face for a moment, leaving it pale and agitated, as he stood beside her looking down at the music.

"There!" she said, playing the prelude. "I think it is rather pretty. Will you try it?"

He started, and tried to smile carelessly, then began. The emotion that had taken possession of him gave a thrill to his really beautiful voice, and the lines rang out with exquisite feeling and harmony. "My sweet girl love, with frank, grey eyes!" He looked at her. Was it possible that she should not guess he was thinking of, singing to her!

Suddenly, while he was still singing, the door opened, and unseen by either of them, Lord Norman entered. He stood looking at them—at the lovely face of the girl, at the handsome, enraptured one of the young viscount—in silence and motionless; as he looked a strange pain gnawed at his heart, a pain which stung and hurt him terribly, though he tried to crush it down.

With a soft, lingering tenderness, Bertie dwelt on the last note until it died away sadly, then he looked down at her—indeed he had kept his eyes riveted on her most of the time.

"Will that do?" he asked, humbly.

"You sing it beautifully," she answered, frankly. "I think Lady Betty is right, a guinea will not be too much to charge for admittance to your entertainment."

"How good you are to me!" he said, in a low, tremulous voice.

Floris started at the tone rather than the words, and looked around. As she did so, she saw the tall, stalwart figure of Lord Norman standing regarding them, and with a flood of crimson suffusing her face, she rose.

"Please do not get up," he said, and his voice sounded very grave and almost grim. "I will go at once if you allow me to disturb you. Please sit down and play again. Bertie, I should like to hear you sing that again."

But Floris, pale and proudly cold, said:

"I will tell her ladyship that you are here, my lord," and with a bow glided from the room.

Bertie stood looking after her, aghast for a moment, then he turned to Lord Norman.

"What's the matter, Bruce? Why did she go like that? Have I offended her, do you think?" and the color actually deserted his handsome face.

"You!" said Lord Norman. "No, my dear Bertie. It is nothing, not much at least. Miss Carlisle happens to dislike me—no without cause—and flies from my presence. That is all," and he laughed, but there was a strange bitterness in the laugh, and he turned his face away from Bertie's gaze of surprise.

## CHAPTER VII.

The great day had arrived, and Lady Pendleton and about a score more of fashionable ladies were in the seventh heaven of delight.

For months little else had been talked of "in society" but the fancy fair in aid of the funds of the Society for Improving the Condition of the South Sea Islanders.

The thing had been got up on a most magnificent scale, utterly regardless of expense, and the great hall adjoining the Botanical Gardens had been transmogrified into a very fair representation of a Swiss village. It was a pretty, beautiful sight, which if it could have been transferred bodily to the boards of a theatre, would have made the fortune of a manager; and at the opening ceremony "society" thronged in and filled the place almost to suffocation.

Near the center of the hall stood Lady Betty's chalet, and in front of the open window, with its assortment of dolls, antimacassars, smoking-caps, babies' clothing, indifferent oil pictures, and bead slippers, stood Lady Betty, supremely happy in Monsieur Worth's idea of a Swiss costume! Never had Lady Betty been so happy; there was only one thing that prevented her being perfectly so, and that was Floris' respectful but firm refusal to stand outside the stall with her.

If she could have done so without offending Lady Pendleton, Floris would have declined to take any part in the affair at all, but as Lady Betty had made a point of it, she had reluctantly consented, stipulating, however, that she should be permitted to keep in the background. As the only "background" possible was the inside of the gimcrack chalet, she had taken refuge in it, and stood well in the shadow looking on at the strange scene.

Exactly opposite her was the chalet kept by Lady Glenlocha, with Mr. Parks, the famous gossip, close at her elbow. A little lower down she saw the stately figure of the

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Duchess of Sliefeden standing in front of her stall, and next her, in charge of a shop that seemed running over with flowers and fruits, stood the tall, graceful figure of Lady Blanche.

Ivory white, as usual, calm and impassive as an iceberg, but extremely beautiful in her gray dress and white cap, Lady Blanche surveyed the scene as if it had been got up expressly for her behoof and amusement.

All the rest of the crowd in the pageant faded from Floris' sight, and she seemed to see only that lovely white face, with the dreamy velvet eyes. She was so absorbed in contemplating her that she almost started when Lady Betty thrust her head inside the chalet, nearly knocking off the monstrous cap, and exclaimed in half-irritable, half-excited tones:

"Provoking, isn't it? It is just like Bruce! One of the patrons too! He ought to have been here at the opening."

"Here we are, Lady Betty, as the clown says! Splendid house, isn't it? How are you getting on?" As he spoke he looked about the chalet eagerly. "Where is Miss Carlisle?"

"Oh, inside there," said Lady Betty, radiant again. "What a tremendous success, isn't it, Bertie?"

"Splendid!" he assented, his blue eyes peering into the dusky interior of the stall anxiously. "Splendid! All the world and his family here! May I come in, Miss Carlisle?"

"I don't think there is room for two," said Floris, with a smile, as he stood at the low door with bent head. "How is your show getting on?"

"Oh, all right," he replied. "I've got a big chalet, and they have made a platform up, and presently I'm going to get 'em in at a guinea a hear."

The crowd thickened. Lady Betty was driving a fine trade in bead slippers and antimacassars, and Floris and Bertie between them were fully occupied in taking money and giving change. The music performed by the Coldstream band at the end of the hall, was deafening, the heat stifling, and Floris was wondering whether the South Sea Islanders would fully appreciate the efforts on their behalf, when a tall, stalwart figure, which she would have known amid a thousand, sauntered toward the stall.

(To be continued.)

## About the Farm

### YOUNG PIG MANAGEMENT.

A hog is half made when past the weaning period without a stunt or kink in its growth. Every check or halt in prosperity through its first two months is more expensive than at any later period. Too much rich feverish milk of the dam, causing thumps or other ailment, may leave harmful results, perhaps as much so as scant feeding or other neglect of the sow. More injury may be done to a pig's growth in two or three days than can be repaired in a month, even if he is made the subject of special care, which, where many are raised, is not the rule, nor easily practicable. "Good luck" with pigs calls attention, and that not occasional, but frequent and regular.

From the first week after farrowing, until weaning time, the sow will be little else than a milk machine, and, to be a high-power machine, in perfect operation, she must have proper care. Nothing else is so well calculated to make pigs grow as a bountiful supply of wholesome sow's milk, and the pigs that have plenty of other feed with the milk of a well-slopped sow for eight weeks, will ordinarily have much the start of those weaned at five or six weeks, no matter how much food and attention the earlier-weaned pigs may have had.

At eight or nine weeks old, most pigs are, or, rather should be, fit to take away from the sow; some litters are individually older at sev-

en weeks than others at ten, and better fitted for weaning. Sometimes it is necessary to wean when pigs are five or six weeks old, and in other cases it may be advisable to wait until the pigs are ten weeks or even older. In the corn belt the period will generally average longer than in New England. Breeders who wean at early ages generally do so in order to more profitably raise two litters a year.

Provided with and taught to eat suitable feed some weeks before; hand, pigs are not noticeably checked in their growth by weaning, but those that have been dependent mainly upon the mother's milk, when abruptly taken away from it, frequently seem to have their growth partially suspended for weeks. Many breeders successfully let the sow wean her pigs, as she will in time, and the change is so gradual that no pause in growth indicates when the milk diet ceased. A modified application of this in which the pigs are separated from the sow at an age suiting their feeding and the convenience of the breeder, will not infrequently be found advisable, but by no means should the pigs be allowed to remain with a sow until she is virtually devoured by them, as is sometimes done.

It is not a good plan to take all the pigs from the sow, unless one or two of them can be turned with her some hours after, to draw the milk she will have at that time and again, say, after a lapse of 24 hours. The preferred way is to leave about two of the smallest with her for several days, and after that leave only one for two or three days more by which time the flow of milk will have been so gradually diminished that no injury to the sow will result by keeping them entirely away from her. This extra supply of milk helps also to push the smaller pigs along in growth, and put them more nearly on an equality in size with thriftier mates.

### LIVE STOCK NOTES.

Some day when you are not urgently engaged, tie your head back as far as you possibly can and you will experience the sensation that is so delightful to horses check-reined up to the limit.

Pigeons want oil, and if the proper quantity of vegetable oil can not be supplied, they will take animal oil. This is why they keep pecking at a new beef bone with marrow and fat on it, and why they seem to be so fond of salt codfish, there is a certain amount of oil in the fish besides the salt.

Special attention should be paid to the feed of fowls when fattening. One of the best varieties to make savory flesh is wheat bran or shorts and Indian meal mixed half and half to a stiff pudding with hot water, or skim milk is preferable, if to be had. Feed no more of this than will be eaten up clean by 9 o'clock in the morning and for the rest of the day give corn and oats half and half.

In hot weather the horse which labors in front of the wagon or plow should be watered frequently. His stomach is small and it is a bad plan to give him a large quantity of water just before or immediately after eating. The water should be taken long enough before a meal to allow it to get out of the stomach, and thus make room for corn and oats, and it should not be taken after eating in quantity sufficient to wash away food before digestion begins. Give water at short intervals and a raging thirst will not be created.

### FARM NOTES.

The young weeds should be destroyed before they reach the light. The soil has been stirred for planting; but within a week it should be stirred again to kill the young sprouting weeds. With small, tender plants, the small harrow or cultivator may be passed between the rows of field crops; with large, strong rooted plants, like corn, the slant-tooth harrow may be passed over the whole broadcast, pulverizing and destroying the small sprouting weeds, but doing no harm to the strong corn plants, whether before or after they have reached the light. In the garden, the steel rake may do the same work in the narrow bed, as the horse harrow performs in the field.