# Fighting Life's Battle;

## OR, LADY BLANCHE'S BITTER **PUNISHMENT**

CHAPTER VII.—(Cont'd).

"Bruce!" almost shrieked Lady Betty. "At last! Now, really, you ought to have been here an hour ago l''

"A thousand pardons!" he said, in his quiet way. "I have been detained by a meeting of the committee of the Jockey Club. Sold all your rubbish—I beg pardon—useful articles? Where is Miss Carlisle?" and his dark eyes roved around the

"Inside," said Lady Betty. "Now, Bruce, what are you going

He scarcely seemed to hear her. "Anything. An antimacassar, pair of slippers—ah, Bertie!" with a "Glad to see you at the good work!" Then, as Bertie made room for him, he bent his head and passed the narrow doorway. "Good-morn-in, Miss Carlisle," he said.

Floris bowed; she was busy giving change at the moment, and did not look up, so that he did not see the sudden flush which swept over her beautiful face.

Bertie fidgeted and looked around.

"I'll go and see to my show," he said, and disappeared.

"I hope you are taking in a great deal of money, Miss Carlisle," said Lord Norman.

"Yes, I think we are," answered Floris, still avoiding his gaze.

"Floris," said Lady Betty, cheerfully, "look him out some pretty, useful things."

"Such as dolls and tea-cosies,

Miss Carlisle, please-He went inside, and Floris turned over the things, laughing the while.

For all his declaration of indifferonce, he was a long while making his selection, and his dark eyes were more often fixed on the lovely face beside him than upon the fancy articles.

"What will you do with all these?" asked Floris.

"Heaven only knows!" he responded. "But I am not cleaned out yet. Is there anything here that you have worked or made your-

"No," said Floris; "Lady Pendleton bought them all."

He glanced at a red rose lying on the snow-white kerchief across her bosom.

"There is only one thing I see here that I really care for," he said, thoughtfully.

"Is there? What is it?" aske! Floris, innocently looking over the heap. "I thought I had shown you everything. Is it that writing-

"No, but I'll take that. Isn't that, Miss Carlisle; will you sell me that rose you wear?" he asked, respectfully, almost reverentially.

Floris crimsoned for a moment,

and her eyes drooped; then the cold hauteur, which, alas! came so easily to her, overspread her beauti-

iul face. "It is not for sale, my lord."
"Forgive me," he murmured,
penitently. "You are right. It is

beyond price-in my eyes, at least. Obeying a sudden, uncontrollable impulse, she snatched the rose from her bosom and flung it to the ground.

He stooped and picked it up, and held it out to her, with a look on his face that thrilled her.

"Has it become so hateful to you because I coveted it?" he said, ladly. "Please put it back to show me that I have not sinned beyond forgiveness. I promise not to of-lend again."

She took the rose, hesitated a moment, then, instead of replacing it in the kerchief, laid it down on the table.

"Some one else might covet it,"

she said, simply. He bowed his head, laid a small pile of gold beside the flower, then, without a word, raised his hat and

Floris stood for a moment motionless, her color coming and going, her heart beating fast and furiously. then she took up the rose and thrust it gently inside the bosom of her

dress. Lord Norman strode down the avenue between the rows of shops as if he were making for the door; but as he came opposite the flowerstall kept by Lady Blanche, she came outside and called him.

He stopped and went up to her,

his face still dark and gloomy.
"What will you have, sir?" she asked, mimicking the tone of an ordinary shopwoman. "Lilies are very fashionable just now.'

"Anything you like. What fool-

ery it is!"

"Isn't it? But it does good, I suppose. Lady Glenloona says that we shall clear four or five thousand pounds. Shall I make you a bouquet?"

"Great heavens, no! should I do with it? Here, Blancho, I'll give you five pounds if you'll let me off with a single flower.'

"Very well," she said; "but don't think you are over liberal, Bruce. A gentleman just offered me a tenpound note for the camellia in my hair. A single flower! Bruce, what do you say if I give you my camellia?" and she looked up at him with infinite tenderness in her soft, brown eyes.

"Better keep it for some millionaire who will bid a thousand or two, Blanche," he replied, carelessly.

"No," she said, slowly. shall have it, Bruce, and for your paltry five pounds. There it is. Let me fasten it in your coat-do you konw that that makes it worth at least twenty? There," and she put it through his buttonhole.

He laid a five-pound note on the stall.

"Bruce"-very softly and winningly-"you must wear my flower at the ball here to-night.

"I don't know that I'm coming." "That is nonsense. Everybody You will wear it, coming. Bruce ?"

He nodded. "If I come, Blanche," he said, and as he strode on, Lady Blanche shot a glance of triumph toward Lady Pendleton's chalet.

# CHAPTER VIII.

The fair was over; the amateur shopwomen had rolled home in their carriages, the secretary of the Society for the Improvement of the South Sea Islanders had collected the money, some thousands all told -goodness only knows, and on one very much cared, how much of it reached the South Sea Islandersand an army of carpenters was at work clearing away the chatlets to make room for the ball.

Bertie, very tired, and rather hoarse from shouting "Walked up!" outside his show, and singing inside it, had gone off to his club to dress and get some dinner, and Lady Pendleton was lying down, but far too excited to slee  $\mu$ .

"A tremendous success, my dear!" she said to Floris, who was helping Josine to put away the Swiss masquerade dresses.

"Enormous! But what fearfully hard work. I am very glad I don't keep a shop. I used to think it must be quite pleasant to serve in one of the large linen-draper's places, but I've changed my mind now. And you must be tired, too I wish you'd go and lie down for a little while."

"I am not tired, said Floris, "an l I would like to stay and help Josine."

"There is no occasion for mademoiselle to trouble," said the girl "Mademoiselle looks smoothly. quite haggard with weariness and ennui," glancing at Floris' face, fresh as a flower and as little haggard as a child's.

"My looks do me an injustice, Josine," Floris said, pleasantly; she was always pleasant with the girl, though she had a suspicion that Josine disliked her.

"I think if I had a cutlet and a cup of chocolate sent up I should like it better than dinner downstairs," said Lady Pendleton. "You wouldn't mind keeping Sir Edward company, would you, my dear?

"Certainly not. Shall I tell them to send you up the cutlet-"Mademoiselle need not trouble." broke in Josine, with a jealous flash of her eyes. "I will charge

myself with her ladyship's commands." "No, you see to it, Floris, my dear; will you?" said Lady Betty,

room. Sir Edward came in for his dinner, looking worried and pre occupied as usual.

with a yawn, and Floris left the

"No, Sir Edward," said Floris, and he glanced at her cheerful face with an air almost of relief and en-

"Everybody seems tired out now days," he said. "The world is go adays,'' ing too fast. You have had a very great success, I hear; I met Lord Clifforde on the steps of the club, he says you have netted a very large amount.

"Thanks in no small measure to his lordship," said Floris, quietly. "He has worked very hard indeed." "Oh, he likes it," said Sir Edward. "He was in the best of spirits. Very different to Lord Norman, whom I saw for a moment.'

"Yes?" said Floris, examining the menu card with close attention.

"Yes; the thing seems to have bored him, and put him out of temper. He wanted to quarrel with me for letting my wife and you take any part in it. As if I could help it. unmarried man. By the way, Î see they are putting him in the society papers. I brought a Report home with me-ah! here it is. That is the paragraph. 'We understand that there is a prospect of a speedy alliance between the noble families of S-y-r and N-r-n.' Seymour, Bruce has all the ignorance of an Lady Lanche, you know, and Lord Bruce. Was she there to-day? Of course, though----

"Yes, Lady Blanche was there." said Floris, calmly, as she laid the paper down beside her plate, and Sir Edward little guessed the pang which his innocent communication had caused her or the shame with which she battled against it.

"Are you going to the ball, Sin Edward?" she asked. "I am sorry to say I shall not be

able," he replied, without any great exhibition of sorrow either in his 'face or in his voice. "Have got to speak to-night, and must be in my place. I asked Lord Clifforde to look after you.''

Floris longed to ask if Lord Norman was going, but could not force herself to do so; but Sir Edward's next words made the question nec-

"I don't suppose Bruce will go he only grunted when I mentioned it to him. Do you care about any dessert? If not, and you will excuse me I will leave the table," and with a sigh, the hard-worked statesman trudged off to his study to think out his speech.

Floris went up to her room, and got out the white dress which she had bought for state occasions. It was a very simple affair of cashmere, almost devoid of trimming, save for a line of swansdown at the neck and on the sleeves, and as she looked at it, she murmured, with a smile:

"Miss Carlisle's costume will not attract the attention of the fashionable reporter, at any rate, but though it may be neither rich nor ra e, it is, I think, suitable to her

While she was changing her dress, there fell from it the crumpled flower which she had refused to sell to Lord Norman, and as she lookat it lying on the floor, her face went as red as the rose itself.

How respectfully, almost reverently, he had begged for it, and how coldly she had denied him! Was it possible that her refusal had put him out of teriper?"

She laughed with self-mockery at

the idea. "I am growing foolish," she thought, "and all because the Right Honorable Earl of Norman chooses to amuse himself with Lady Pendleton's companion! What have I done, or said, that he should presume to act as he does? I suppose he thinks a servant a fair target at which to practice pretty speeches," and, with a bitter smile she pushed the rose aside with her feet.

But a moment later she stooped and picked it up.

"No, I will keep it and wear it to remind me of my folly," and she placed the crimson flower inside the bosom of her white dress.

She had scarcely finished dressing when Josine knocked at the door, and scarcely waiting for permission to enter, came in.

Her dark, beady eyes took in the whole of Floris' attire at a glance, then sought the floor.

"Miladi would be glad if you would trouble yourself to come to her, mademoiselle," she said. "And miladi desires me to assist mademoiselle with her toilet."

"Thanks, Josine, but I am dressed," said Floris. The dark eyes surveyed her cold

ly.
"Pardon! Mademoiselle's hair could be arranged more effective-

ly."
"I dare say," said Floris, carelessly; "but I won't trouble you,

Floris had left about.
"Dressed already!" exclaimed Lady Pendleton. "Oh, my dear, what a lovely dress!"

"Lovely!" echoed Floris, with a smile. "Oh, Lady Pendleton, it is as simple as it can possibly be."

"I don't care whether it's simple or not-perhaps that is it. perfectly ravishing! Don't come near me all the evening, mind, or you will make me look like a Mayday sweep!" and she laughed. Floris laughed with her, then

suddenly her eyes glistened as she looked down at the little woman.

"You are very kind to me, Lady Pendleton," she said, softly. Lady Betty looked up at the

"I wish you would do my hair like Miss Carlisle," she said to her

Josine crimsoned and set her teeth. This, after she had informed Floris that her hair was capable of improvement!

'I know not how, miladi." "Then-do you mind, my dear ?et Miss Carlisle do it," said Lady

Betty. The girl stood for a moment as if transfixed, then laid the ivory brush on the table ,and stood with folded arms, while Floris, willingly enough, arranged Lady Pendleton's hair as nearly like her own as pos-

"Oh, thank you my dear! There, Josine, that is how I like it done. I wish you'd learn to do it like

that. Remember, now, will you?'
"Yes, miladi," said the girl, be said the girl, between her closed lips;" "I will remember. Oh, yes miladi. I will not forget," and her white teeth clicked viciously.

"The carriage, my lady, and Lord Clifforde," announced a servant at the door.

Bertie, dressed with the minutest care, and looking handsome enough to turn the head of a Diana, received them in the drawing-room with enthusiasm.

"I say!" he exclaimed, under his breath, his blue eyes fixed on Floris. "There! I told you so!" said Lady Betty, dramatically. "Now, said Bertie, speak the truth, and don't

flatter or exaggerate. Isn't that dress simply lovely?" Bertie blusned, our land quite calmly and carelessly. Bertie blushed, but Floris smiled

"I don't know," he said. "I only know Miss Carlisle looks like one of Millais' pictures; is it the dress?

"Thank you, my lord," said Floris, laughing and courtesying. He blushed again, opening his ips as if about to speak, then took up his opera hat and led them to the carriage, into which he put them with extraordinary carefulness, as if they would fall to pieces if roughly handled.

The hall was crowded when they arrived, but though Bertie, with a lady on each arm, had to almost fight his way in, their appearance created what is called in newspaper parlance "a sensation."

(To be continued.)

# About the Farm

PASTURING HOGS IN SUMMER.

Feeding hogs these days is a very important matter, grain is high and so is every other feed, and as a consequence farmers are looking more and more to the hog pasture for relief.

All pasture grasses are not of equal value. The poorest kinds are much better than none, but the benefits received from any depends largely on the management of both hogs and pasture. Alfalfa stands at the head of the list, June clover a close second, with white clover, June grass and timothy in the order named.

If allowed to roam at will over a large field the hogs will soil and waste a considerable amount of feed. They will eat only the sweetest and freshest and will trample on and leave the balance to get tough and ripe, after which time they will not eat it at all. Dividing off a small patch at a time with hurdles or movable fence works well, providing the hogs can be sheltered from the hot sunshine in the middle of the day.

It is a mistake to compel the hogs to depend entirely upon the grass alone, even though the prices of grain and mill feeds are high. The stomach of the pig is not like that of the sheep or cow and cannot be used as a repository for a large amount of coarse feed at one time. It has been found by experience down.

"Lady Pendleton played out, I suppose?" he said. "Just what I she passed out before her, and, as expected. I am afraid you are tired out, too, Miss Carlisle?"

Josine. It does not matter," and and experiment that hogs fed a half ration of cornmeal while running to clover will make as rapid gains as they will if confined and fed a whole ration, and that, too, of a better quality of meat than that made wholly from corn. The grassbulks up the mass in the stomach, enabling the gastric juices to circulate more freely through it, and digestion is more completely accomplished than if grain constitutes the entire ration. And, further, the clover contains the elements that promote the growth of bone and muscle, which helps to make up a pretty well balanced ration.

> Just as quickly as the soil is thoroughly warmed through, sow a patch of rape, and it will be ready for the hogs when the pasture is pretty well played out.

### BEST WAY WITH POULTRY.

The farmer should give his mind as far as circumstances will possibly allow, to a continuous egg supply all the year round. He should endeavor to select a breed, or breeds, or crosses of breeds, best suited not only to general egg production, but to his individual circumstances and conditions. should so regulate the various ages of his layers as to ensure not only the aforesaid continuous supply, but the greatest possible number of eggs in the winter months, when they are scarce and dear, and to do this he must produce pullets of various ages, and also select possibly different breeds for winter and summer laying. He must also study the food supply, and endeavor to fit it to suit seasons and circumstances.

All these little items make a difference in the number of eggs produced, and in the consequent profit, to say nothing of the care necessary to ensure the possession of a good laying strain—which is an even more important factor than kreed. To produce table fowls at a profit when they have to be put on the market in the ordinary way (with perhaps the exception of a few very early spring chickens) requires practically the art of a profossional. Every farmer can with comparative ease, market a large number of new laid eggs every week in the year, with great pecuniary advantage to himself and also with benefit to the community at large, for there are always more wanted than can be procured.

## FARM NOTES.

The farmer should plan to make his farm a little better each year. It may be done by making the soil a little more productive, draining some wet place, improving the buildings, or even by setting out some trees.

Cultivation of corn should always be shallow, at least after the plant has obtained any considerable size. As the roots begin to reach out in search of food they should be protected, and instead of deep cultivation to cut off and lacerate them. they should be fostered and protected, and induced to grow by shallow work to make a fine mulch of the top soil. This will keep moisture near the warm surface.

In this day it is highly important that the farmer be a trained business. He is all sides by sharpers, who are trying, on one pretext or another, to get his money, and he is constantly tempted to make outlays on the farm which are of doubtful expediency. We should put back into our business no more than will add to its efficiency, and that is a point which calls for deliberation and wise judgment; and it is a questsion in which the good wife should have her say, for in 99 cases out of 100 her judgment is sound.

#### -A-QUESTION OF ARITHMETIC.

The schoolmaster's life is not a happy one sometimes, but in Texas at least it has its compensations. Here is a letter from an anxious parent recently received by a teacher in that State:-

"Sir,---Will you in future give my son easier soms to do at nites? This is what he's brought hoam two or three nites back: 'If fore gallins of bere will fill thirty-to-pint bottles, how many pints and half bottles will nine gallins of bere fill?' Well, we tried and could make nothin' of it at all, and my boy cried and laffed and said he aidn't dare go bak in the mornin' without doin' it. So I had to go and buy a ningallin keg of bere, which I could ill afford to do, and then he went and borrowed a lot of wine and brandy bottles. We filled them, and my boy put the answer down. I don't know wether it is right or not, as we spilt some while doing

"P.S.-Please let the next some be in water, as I am not able to buy more bere."

Never kick a live wire when it's