

Fighting Life's Battle;

OR, LADY BLANCHE'S BITTER PUNISHMENT

CHAPTER XIX.

In the "good old times," which, thank Heaven, by the way, we shall never see again, favored mortals were supposed to have been guided by spirits, which, when the favored mortals were thinking of setting out on adventures, whispered, "Go thou!" or "Do not go!"

If Lord Norman had been in possession of such a guiding spirit it would certainly have whispered in his ear, on the morning of the Scarfross expedition, "Do not go!"

As it was, though he had no presentiments of coming evil, and the plot which had been laid for the destruction of his happiness, he was not very keen on the outing. Deerstalking had been a passion to him, and there was no one whose knowledge of the sport was greater than his, no one whose eyes were keener, or whose physical endurance was greater.

But on this occasion he would rather have remained at Ballyfloe, and spent the two days with Floris.

To back out of the affair was for him, however, an impossibility.

Sir Joseph had organized the expedition for weeks past; and then again, there was the personage who particularly desired Lord Norman's company.

The party started in the early morning, on horseback, attended by a few favored Highland servants who were experts in stalking, and everybody who knew anything of the sport declared that the prospects were first-rate, and that the sturdy Scotch ponies would soon return laden with the royal game.

Lord Norman, who had been rather silent during the long ride, grew more cheerful after dinner, and when the cigars were alight vouchsafed to relate some of his experiences in deerstalking, and to be generally amusing.

They gathered round the fire, chatting, until eleven, then, by mutual consent, went off to bed.

As the accommodation was strictly limited, two men had to sleep in a room, and Lord Norman found that his companion chanced to be a young fellow fresh from college, who was an intense admirer of his and who, in fact, had begged and prayed Sir Joseph to arrange that he should share Lord Norman's room.

The boy—he was very little more than a child—had stolen up a short time before the general withdrawal, and had seen that a good fire was burning, and had, with his own hands, made the rough apartment as shipshape as it could be made by the arrangement of rugs and shawls, choosing for himself the smallest bed, and in every way he could think of studying his hero's comfort; feeling that if he could gain Lord Norman's permission to be near him on the eventful morning, he should be amply rewarded.

"Well, Harry," said Lord Bruce, looking round, "you haven't forgotten your old fagging days. 'You have made the room quite homelike! What a splendid fire! The worst of it is one is always tempted to sit up and keep it company. Do you mind if I have a cigar? Say so, if you do.'"

"Mind!" said Lord Harry, fervently. "I'll have one, too, if I shan't be disturbing you by sitting up."

Lord Norman laughed. The boy's devotion pleased him.

"Here, take one of these," he said, giving his case. "We mustn't sit up long, though. We start almost at daybreak, and it will be hard work and no rest to-morrow, Harry."

"I shan't sleep for thinking of it!" said Lord Harry—he had come into his title a few months back. "Oh, by the way, Norman, would you mind my going with you instead of one of the others? I know it is a great favor I am asking, and I shan't be too much cut up if you refuse," he went on eagerly; "but if you say 'yes,' I'll promise to do exactly as you tell me, and not make a nuisance of myself."

Lord Norman nodded. "I shall be very glad to have you, Harry," he said, little guessing what would come of the boy's request. "And I'm sure you will be anything but a nuisance."

Lord Harry expressed his gratitude, quietly; he knew his hero disliked any fuss, and the two drew near the fire and smoked and talked; that is, Lord Norman

talked and the boy listened with reverent ears and closely-riveted attention.

Lord Norman told him exactly what he would have to do on the morrow, impressing upon him how necessary it would be to maintain perfect silence, and to guard against his being seen by the deer.

"Deercrawling it might be called, instead of deerstalking," he said, for we shall literally have to crawl and drag ourselves over the ground once the game is spotted."

"I shall watch you, Norman, and do exactly as I see you do," said Lord Harry, earnestly.

"And luck standing by us, we will give a good account of ourselves! And now we had better turn in, I think."

Lord Harry got up at once with the obedience of a private to his officer, and went to bed, but Lord Norman sat and watched the fire for a long time before he retired.

It was a noisy breakfast next morning; most of the men taking their coffee and broiled ham and eggs standing, and as the sun rose from behind the hills, they set out themselves on foot, the gillies bringing up the rear with the horses.

As he had promised, Lord Norman chose Harry for his companion, and, accompanied by Donald, they took the line allotted to them, and commenced the day's work in a glow of pleasant excitement.

The country was as familiar to Donald as Fleet street was to Dr. Johnson, and with the cunning of a Red Indian, he guided them to the most likely spot for the big game.

In silence the men crept from sheltering rock to sheltering rock, Donald's keen eyes always on the lookout for the vision of a pair of antlers between them and the blue sky.

About noon, as they were lying hidden in a little hollow with their guns in their hands, Donald made a slight motion with his hand, and presently a stag moved from behind the hills in front of them and came proudly into the valley.

Harry, watching his hero, saw him press himself, as it were, into the ground, and followed his example.

The eyes of the three men were glued on the approaching monarch of the glen, their hearts beating so fast that the boy fancied the stag must hear them and take flight.

Slowly, haughtily, the beautiful creature advanced, then, while still out of range, turned and threw up its head, as if scenting the air.

There was a moment of awful suspense for the silent watchers; then the stag, appearing reassured, moved slightly round, still advancing.

The moment he came within range Norman turned his eyes on Harry, and formed the word "fire" with his lips.

The boy hesitated; it was too generous a sacrifice.

He looked at Lord Norman questioningly; then seeing that he might accept the offer, took aim, and—missed.

Donald growled; but at the same instant Lord Norman fired, and the stag leaped into the air and fell prone on its side.

Lord Harry, with a boy's enthusiasm, sprang to his feet with a triumphant shout, and dashed toward it.

Now it does not follow that because a stag falls he is dead!

Donald and Lord Norman, knowing the danger, shouted warningly; but Lord Harry, misunderstanding them, kept on his way and had reached the stag, when it sprang to its feet then and charged full at him.

It was an awful sight. The beast looked monstrous in its savage fury, and the boy seemed paralyzed.

All would have been over with him had he not fortunately caught his foot in the heather and slipped at the moment the stag would have reached him, and instead of striking him the bets went over his prostrate form.

In an instant it turned to renew the attack, but by this time Lord Norman had come up, and standing over the boy, raised his gun by the stock to strike the animal.

There was one confused mingling of man and stag—an awful crash-

ing sound, as of broken bones, and Lord Norman went down as if felled by a tree.

Then, and not till then, dared Donald venture to fire and bring the great beast down, and it fell without a groan, and dead this time, right across Lord Norman's body.

It all happened in so short a space of time that the poor boy stood staring with white face and staring eyes, scarcely realizing the consequences of his inexperience.

Donald, with savage Highland imprecations, dragged the stag from the prostrate form of Lord Norman, and raised his head, and Lord Harry fell on his knees beside him.

"Oh, what have I done—what have I done?" he cried. "Is he dead, Donald? Oh! Donald, Donald—what shall we do now?"

"Haud your tongue, and give me the flask, mon!" said Donald, savagely. "If the laird be dead, he's give his life for ye, that's sure enough; the beastie would have killed thee. Unloose his neckcloth and run to the brook we passed for some water. Get it in your cap. And shout wi' all ye strength as ye go."

Poor Lord Harry bounded off, shouting at the top of his voice; but the hills seemed to echo his cry for help with infinite mockery. When he came back Lord Norman was still unconscious.

His face and breast were covered with blood, flowing from wounds in his head and neck, and Donald could not give any opinion as to the extent of his injuries.

Neither the water nor the brandy would restore Lord Norman to consciousness, and for the first time in his life the sturdy old Highlander looked at a loss.

"No, no, he's not dead, mon," he said, in reply to Lord Harry's frenzied inquiries; "but I'd like to see him come to! Climb yonder hill there, and fire your gun, and shout; may be some of the party will be near and come over and help us."

Lord Harry snatched up his gun and tore off, and Donald washed the wounds as well as he could with the little water he had, and forced some brandy through the clenched lips.

The stag had struck a ferocious blow—his last in this life—and the antlers had broken Lord Norman's skull, and cut his neck and breast to a fearful extent. The thick coat was slashed and torn as if it had been divided by a keen-edged knife.

Presently, while Donald was eyeing the stalwart frame and wondering whether it would be possible for him to carry it any distance, he heard the voices of men shouting from behind the hill, and in a few moments Lord Harry returned at full speed.

"They are coming!" he panted. "Thank Heaven, they are coming! Oh, Donald, what shall I do? Some more water!" and off he ran again.

The approaching figure proved to be Sir Joseph and a servant with a pony. Sir Joseph's distress at sight of the unconscious, bleeding figure of Lord Norman was almost as great as Lord Harry's; but there was no time lost in idle bewailing.

Carefully and tenderly they lifted the wounded man and placed him across the pony, Donald and Sir Joseph supporting him in as easy a position as possible, and the mournful cortege then started for the hut.

They could only go at a walking pace, and the way seemed interminable, but at last they reached the hut, and Lord Norman was carried into the room which last night he had paced with presentiments of coming ill thick upon him.

One of the men was despatched on the fleetest horse to Ballyfloe for medical assistance—fortunately there happened to be a young doctor among the guests—and Lord Norman was carefully undressed and his wounds bound and attended to.

Toward evening he recovered consciousness.

Opening his eyes he fixed them on Sir Joseph, who stood beside him, with a troubled expression, and his lips moved.

Sir Joseph bent down and caught the word.

"Floris!"

He understood in a moment. "It is all right, my dear Norman. I have sent to Ballyfloe, of course, but my man is intelligent and will not alarm Miss Carlisle."

Lord Norman panted forth a sigh of relief, then his brow knit as if he were striving to remember something, and he murmured: "Harry!"

The boy had implored them to allow him to remain in the room, and Sir Joseph beckoned him forward.

"He is all safe!" he said.

Lord Norman smiled, as the boy fell on his knees beside the bed, and gently stretched out his hand,

which poor Lord Harry seized and pressed miserably.

These efforts, slight as they were, proved too great, and Lord Norman instantly relapsed into unconsciousness.

So there he lay, helpless in mind and body, while Floris—hundreds of miles away—was by her mother's bedside, and separated from him, alas! by more than miles.

Certainly Floris had favored Lady Blanche, and—"the wicked were flourishing!"

(To be continued.)

About the Farm

FILLING THE SILO.

The silo is no longer an experiment, as all those who have fed silage properly will agree. The round silo, whether the same is made of wood, metal, concrete or brick, has overcome many of the difficulties which were encountered in keeping silage in the old-fashioned or square silo. The present form of the silo is probably as perfect a form as will ever be devised. Thus, in selecting a silo the main point at issue is the cost.

There is now no longer any doubt as to the right method of filling the silo. With the perfection of silo-filling machinery many of the troubles attending this operation in the past have disappeared.

If a long spout is hung from the end of the conveyer so that the silage falls in the centre of the silo—a large pile and the surface of the silage next the wall of the silo is kept tramped, and water added as necessary, there will be no danger of the same spoiling. The question as to how mature corn should be before using for silage is much less in dispute than it used to be.

Now it is generally accepted that the best silage is made from corn that is quite mature. If a dent variety, the dent in the kernel should commence to show. A good many of the unsatisfactory results in storing silage in the past have undoubtedly been due to the use of corn that was too green. An argument which we might mention in favor of silage in addition to those which we have already mentioned in the present high cost of feeds.

All grains and feeds of all kinds are higher in price than they have been in the past and the prospects are that they will continue to be high for some time. There is no way that we know of to supplement high priced grain in dairy feeding except by the use of silage. We, therefore, believe that every dairyman, and every farmer who has young cattle on his hands, can well afford to consider the silo as a valuable adjunct in his feeding operations.

LIVE STOCK NOTES.

Never compel a horse, much less a growing colt, to stand day in and day out on a hard, dry floor, without exercise.

Arrange to have two sheep pastures so that the flock can be changed from one to the other each week. The sheep relish a fresh, clean pasture. If you can do no better, put a fence through the old one.

The task of training a colt requires patience. Lessons must be repeated time after time in order to make sure that the colt is learning and that he does not forget. It is a wise precaution to hitch the colt with an older horse that has a good gait. The colt is thus apt to acquire a like step.

Much has been said of the utility of birds as insect scavengers, but there are no better insect destroyers to be found among all the feathered tribes than domestic poultry. The farms where hens and turkeys are allowed free range, are invariably found remarkably exempt from harmful insects. The free range of the place is not only the best way to derive the most benefit from fowls, but it insures the greatest exemption from most of the large insects, such as grasshoppers, cutworms, cabbage and cornworms, and nearly all large larvae and grubs that infest the crops.

FARM NOTES.

The best way to dispose of bones of all kinds is to grind them. The finer they are ground, the sooner they become available to the plant. If they are treated with sulphuric acid they are almost immediately usable by the plant as food.

A good deal is said about cover crops just now, and many kinds are recommended, but most writ-

ers make the same mistake farmers do in growing soiling crops, i.e., thinking plants will grow large on poor soil. It does not pay to buy high-priced cow peas, crimson clover, Canada peas or red clover to sow on land so poor that it will not yield a load to the acre.

An essential feature in plowing is that the broken connection of the inverted furrow-slice with the subsoil will soon be repaired. It is well known that the moisture in the soil comes to the surface by means of a natural law called capillary attraction. The same process may be observed in a sponge where a part of it is in water, or where a bit of blotting paper is used to take up spilled ink. Straw manure plowed under will in a dry season hinder the re-uniting of top and bottom soil, and the capillary attraction remaining broken, moisture is denied to the growing crop, and the season, or the manure, or Providence is blamed.

NEVER SEEN WHITE MEN.

Strange Tribe of Eskimos Found by Whalers in the Arctic.

On the bleak northwest coast of Prince Albert Land Capt. William Mogg of the whaling schooner Olga has just found men who in spite of the hundreds of Arctic expeditions that have swept through the north had never seen white men before, and who gazed upon the white skinned strangers with the same awe with which Columbus was greeted on San Salvador over 400 years ago.

It is only in the last five years that whalships have ventured into the waters that wish these distant shores. When the whalers did venture there they little expected to find any evidences of human habitation. To their surprise they found abandoned food caches, deserted camping grounds and other signs of recent habitation.

As they saw no people they naturally inferred that the country was being used as a summer hunting ground by natives from the Canadian mainland far to the south. These natives professed ignorance of such hunting grounds.

The puzzle was not solved until last July, when the Olga in her northern cruise sighted human forms on a hill several miles inland. These forms proved to be old men who were advancing toward the shore where the ship lay at anchor. As they approached it was seen that they carried no weapons whatever and walked with arms extended as a sign of peaceful inclinations.

The old men were Eskimos and spoke the regular Eskimo language with only slight variations. They said that they had never seen white men before, and were so much afraid of them that they could not be coaxed on board the vessel. They knew nothing about cereal foods or flour, and when offered pilot bread laughed at it as an article of human food.

They said that they lived on seals, bears, whales, caribou and feathered game, which they killed with bows and arrows and spears or captured in snares and curiously contrived traps. They knew nothing about the fur trade and said that the skins were always cut up with the meat and divided among the hunters engaged in making the kill. They were neatly dressed in furs and appeared to be well fed and perfectly happy.

When whale ships first appeared on the horizon a panic seized the people and they fled inland. Each year they had fled, leaving as little as possible to attract the attention of the newcomers. As they lay concealed behind the ridges they listened in breathless terror to the crashing of the bomb guns used by the whalers.

At last curiosity got the better of them and they decided to find out the why and wherefore of it all. A council was called and it was decided to send messengers out to the next ship that came. The old men volunteered to go because they said that if the strangers killed them it would not matter so much.

These rude ambassadors said that they had many people inland, but refused to tell where they were. They had never seen guns before and were very suspicious of men who would be guilty of carrying such weapons.

When vessels first appeared off Banks Land, half a century ago, the natives acted in a very similar way and showed a superstitious dread of coming into contact with white men.

Marie—"I think Chollie is a delightful dancer; he's so light on his feet!" Lillian—"When you're better acquainted with Chollie, you'll discover that he's light at both ends."