

Fighting Life's Battle;

OR, LADY BLANCHE'S BITTER PUNISHMENT

CHAPTER XXXII.—(Cont'd)

They went back to the carriage very sedately, but Marie, though young, was knowing.

"Oh, signorita," she whispered, as Floris, full of tenderness to all and everything in her new-born happiness, stooped and kissed her. "Is that signor your lover? Yes! Ah, but he is handsome and noble, is he not?"

It was a magic journey, that return to Florence, and though the two said but little their hands locked together, and their eyes which met each other's ever and again, spoke volumes.

Mrs. Sinclair expressed no astonishment whatever at their return.

"I thought you would come back," she said dryly; "and now I suppose I may finish my great book myself, Miss Wood, I mean Miss Carlisle!"

"Oh, no!" said Floris, flushing; "I shall stay with you, madam."

But Mrs. Sinclair caught Lord Norman's eye, and met his smile with a significant one of her own. That evening he sent a telegram to Lady Betty.

It was very short, but it was very emphatic enough, for in three days Lady Betty was at the Violet Villa. Floris' astonishment at her appearance was only equaled by her delight.

"Now, I don't want to know anything more than Bruce has told me, my dear," she said, after she had a good cry and nearly exhausted herself by lavishing caresses on Floris. "In fact, he has forbidden me, at the risk of his sore displeasure, to talk about the past; but I've only one question to ask, and that is, 'Can you start for England to-morrow?'"

"To-morrow!" said Floris aghast. "Yes, my dear; that is Bruce's wish."

"But you, dear Lady Betty?"

"Oh, I am of no consequence," said her ladyship, with a laugh. "Besides, really and truly, I am dying of anxiety to get you home, to have you to myself for a few days—I shan't have you long, I know, for Bruce is most intemperately anxious to appropriate you altogether. But do let us start to-morrow, if you can; I am sure no one will be gladder to see you than Sir Edward. My dear, if I wasn't one of the most sensible women in England, I should have been most dreadfully jealous of you! Sir Edward thinks there is no one in the world so clever and bright and good looking as 'Miss Carlisle,' and he has talked of you and regretted your absence every day. So let us go back to-morrow."

They started in the morning. Everything that wealth and influence could effect was done to surround the journey with luxury and ease.

If Floris Carlisle had been a princess of the blood royal, as Lady Betty said, there could not have been more fuss; and yet there was so little real fuss.

In his quiet way, Lord Norman secured sleeping-cars, engaged the best rooms, had carriages in waiting, and arranged everything almost as if by magic.

And so it happened that Floris, who a few months back had left England alone and friendless, returned to it like a Queen of Sheba!

Their welcome in Grosvenor place was characteristic of Sir Edward.

"How do you do, Miss Carlisle?" he said, holding her hand and looking at her in his grave way, but with a kindly light in his keen, absorbed eyes. "I am very glad to see you back, and I have missed you very much indeed. Bruce is a lucky fellow indeed," and he took and wrung Lord Norman's hand.

After dinner Sir Edward sat over his wine with Lord Norman for a little while, then he rose.

"Going to the house, I suppose?" said Lord Norman.

"N—o, not to-night, I think," answered Sir Edward.

"Not to-night! Why, I thought you had to speak!"

"Y—es, so I had; but I don't think I will go to-night—that is, if I shan't be in the way. I don't know what the papers will say; no doubt they'll imagine I've had a domestic bereavement."

It was a great compliment to Floris, and one she was fond of talking about in after life, when Sir Edward had become the "great statesman of the day."

They spent a quiet, delightful evening, and when the two ladies had gone to their rooms, Lady Betty held Floris at arm's length.

"Ah, my dear, how happy you look!" she said, her eyes full of sympathy very near to tears.

"Do I? I am glad of that," whispered Floris, "for I am very, very happy, dear. Happier, perhaps, for all that has passed. You see, one wants to know what misery is to be able to appreciate, at its full value, such happiness as mine!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The season was in full swing when these two lovers—so long separated, so strangely united—returned to London, and their advent made a pretty considerable stir.

The world at large knew nothing of what had happened, but rumor with its usual readiness, invented a hundred and one stories, of all of which Floris was the heroine.

Consequently there was the greatest anxiety to see her, and Lady Betty was besieged with invitations, all pressing in the extreme.

"I think we had better go to the duchess' ball, and get it over, my dear," said Lady Betty. "Of course you'll be mobbed and stared at, people are simply dying of curiosity to know the true story of your adventures; but you won't mind."

"No, I shan't mind," said Floris, with her old naivete; "not in the least, seeing that I don't mean to tell any one."

"Very well," said Lady Betty; "then we'll go to-morrow night and gratify the world with a sight of the future Countess of Norman, whose adventures—" "More or less fabulous," put in Floris—"have filled the society papers."

It was a grand ball, and more crowded than it would have been if the duchess had not carefully circulated the news that Miss Carlisle and Lord Norman were actually coming.

For the first few minutes Floris was a little shy under the battery which was directed at her by so many curious eyes, but she grasped her lover's arm, just to reassure herself of his presence, and glanced up at his handsome face with its old patrician impassiveness, and courage came back to her.

Before they had been in the room an hour the Lynches came in, and Floris needed no courage to meet these true friends.

Sir Joseph and his good-natured wife were overwhelmed with pleasure at seeing her, and scarcely left her side the whole evening.

A little after midnight Lord Norman went to the refreshment room to get a drink, and had got his glass of champagne, when he saw a gentleman entering at a door opposite him.

He set the glass down and strode across the room, with a glad "Bertie!" on his lips.

Bertie Clifford, for it was he, started and turned around, and extended his hand, then, before Lord Norman could seize it, drew it back, and with a cold, low bow was about to pass out.

Lord Norman flushed, turned pale and stood for a moment irresolute, then he followed him and put a hand on his shoulder.

"Bertie!" he said.

"Well?" said Bertie, and his face paled sternly under its bronze. "I have no desire to hold any conversation with you, Lord Norman."

Lord Norman bit his lips.

"What does this mean, Bertie?" he said, gravely. "Ah, I see!"

Bertie flushed.

"My memory appears to be a better one than yours, Lord Norman," he said; "at any rate, it is good for me to forget that a man who has acted as you have done to an innocent and trusting lady, has lost the right to accost me or any honest man."

"Stop—for Heaven's sake! Come with me," said Lord Norman, quickly, and seizing his arm, he drew him into a retired spot. "Ber-

tie, have you not heard—have you seen none of the papers?"

"I have just returned to England," said Bertie, "and have seen no papers, nor heard any scandal whatsoever; that which I refer to—your conduct—happened before I left, Lord Norman. But I am glad I have met you thus soon, as it affords me an opportunity of demanding satisfaction on behalf of a lady whose name had not better be mentioned, but who honors me with her friendship."

"Satisfaction—yes!" said Lord Norman, gravely and quietly. "No, there is no need to mention her name."

He paused a moment, then went on, his voice quivering a little.

"Bertie—you see, I still dare to call you so—Bertie, if anything could strengthen the friendship and respect I have for you, these words you have spoken, this greeting you have extended to me would do it! Yes, Bertie, I know what you mean—the lady you think I have wronged, to whom—Heaven forgive me!—I did all unintentionally, is my—is Floris Carlisle—my future wife!"

Bertie stepped back, mute with astonishment.

"Hush, don't say a word," said Lord Norman, much agitated. "Wait until I have told you the whole story, Bertie."

The two men remained in the quiet corner for half an hour.

At first, amazement was the predominant emotion in Bertie's heart, but this soon gave place to relief and thankfulness.

"Thank Heaven!" he said, at last. "Bruce, forgive me; and yet—"

"I scarcely deserve forgiveness; you are right. I believed, like a credulous fool. But don't think I have escaped punishment; I have had enough of that, Bertie, to satisfy even you. But come and see Floris. If there was anything wanting to complete her happiness, your presence will supply it—we have talked of you so much, old fellow. How did you get home?—not invalid—not wounded?" and he looked him over, anxiously.

"Invalid, but not wounded," said Bertie; "but I am all right now. I shall be able to dance at your wedding, Bruce," he said, with a faint flush. "Wait a moment, will you?" he added, as Lord Norman was for taking him to Floris. "This Oscar Raymond; you remember the man, of course! See here, Bruce, I don't want to startle you, but I have news of him."

"News of Oscar Raymond!" repeated Lord Norman, as if the name were difficult for him to pronounce calmly.

Bertie nodded gravely.

"Yes. I came by the overland route, you know; my doctor insisted upon my making a round of it, anxious as I was to reach England. At Genoa we stayed at the 'Three Keys' Hotel—"

"Yes, yes, I know it."

"The night we stayed there a man was found dead in the room. He was an Englishman, there could be no doubt about that, but there was nothing to lead to his identification excepting a cigar case with the initials 'O. R.'"

Lord Norman started and bit his lip.

"Did you see it—the case?"

"Yes."

"It was a Russian leather case with the Christ church arms on the back."

"Yes," assented Bertie. "You know it?"

"It was one I gave him when we were at college together," said Lord Norman, gravely. "You saw him?"

"Yes, for a moment. Now I know of this strange story, I remember enough of the face to trace a likeness, but this man's hair was iron-gray—almost entirely gray, I am sure."

"It is the same man. Great Heavens! Dead so soon!"

"Yes, and died by his own hand. We found a bottle of chloral by the bedside; there was no doubt in the doctor's mind. We did all we could and I stayed and saw him buried. What did you say, Bruce?" for Lord Norman had murmured something.

"Vengeance is mine!" he said aloud and solemnly. "Don't tell me any more, Bertie; and—don't a word to Floris. Come to her now."

But Bertie held back for a moment longer.

"I think I'll call in the morning, Bruce," he said, in a low voice, but at that moment her voice was heard behind them, and the next she had caught sight of him.

In an instant she broke from the arm of Sir Joseph, who accompanied her, and came toward Bertie, with outstretched hands and glowing eyes.

"At last!" she breathed, as he

held her hands, both of them utterly indifferent to the people around them. "At last! Oh, how glad I am! How I have longed for you to come back! How glad, how glad I am! Where did you find him, Bruce? It only wanted this—"

"What did I tell you, Bertie?" said Lord Norman, with quiet triumph.

Bertie said nothing, not a word, but probably, like the parrot, he thought the more.

Certain it is that from that moment he became, indeed, a brother to the beautiful woman, and that, though he never married and was a constant visitor—more constant by a very great deal than brothers are—Bruce never felt the slightest twinge of jealousy.

(To be continued.)

On the Farm

POULTRY KEEPING FOR BOYS.

The boy who is permitted to embark in the poultry business is benefited in many ways. Not only is his mind and time occupied, but he is given an outlet for the latent qualities that are in him. He at once becomes a factor in the world of industry and finance. He becomes interested in business methods and receives a schooling that will help to fit him for the duties of his later life. He studies the best methods of breeding and producing stock and by a system gets the most profit out of his investment. He learns to write business letters, keep books, drive bargains, and by correspondence and personal contact he learns the peculiarities, whims and idiosyncrasies of people generally. All this will prove valuable to him in later years, when he is perhaps engaged in some mercantile or manufacturing business, or even working for some one else.

When you start him out, give him full charge; have him understand that he is to keep a strict and accurate debit and credit account with his fowls, and further that the profits of the venture are to belong to him. It is a mistake to expect a boy to do the work while others take the profits, and it is no wonder that he soon loses interest in the enterprise under such conditions. He should be taught to conduct his business along business lines, keeping strict account of all receipts and expenditures, cost of production in detail, so that he can know at any time just how the business is paying. After he is once started give him to understand that it is up to him to keep it going, encourage him in every way, but teach him to be self-reliant and independent. Advise him when necessary at times and help him in his correspondence, but do this simply as an adviser and not as a dictator. It only takes a few dollars to start a boy in the poultry business. Start him in a small way and let him expand as circumstances warrant.

TUBERCULOSIS IN CATTLE.

Tuberculosis or consumption in cattle is an infectious and communicable disease known by the formation in the glands and other parts of the body of small bunches called tubercles. It is from these tubercles that the disease receives its name, Tuberculosis. The germs of tuberculosis enter the body by way of the nostrils in the air breathed, or by way of the mouth or digestive tract in feed. As soon as the germs enter the body they begin to multiply, slowly but surely until the entire body of the animal becomes affected; such animals spread the disease to other animals stabled with them and calves or pigs consuming milk from a tuberculous cow are liable to become affected as are human beings.

All germ diseases, and especially tuberculosis, are more liable to affect animals that are in a run-down condition, such as cows afflicted with infectious abortion or retained after birth, than those that are in a strong, healthy condition, for the reason that the animal that lacks vitality acts as a hot-bed for the germs of diseases to propagate and multiply, while the healthy, strong vigorous animal may ward off the disease to some extent.

Tuberculosis being largely a house or stable disease due to artificial life such as being housed or stabled, every possible precaution should be taken to prevent disease. One tuberculous cow in a close,

foul, hot, badly ventilated stable is liable to infect all other cattle in the barn. To prevent and guard against disease, it is necessary to maintain absolute cleanliness.—Dr. David Roberts.

FARM NOTES.

We think 100 bushels of unleached ashes enough for almost any crop, and certainly upon a light loam we would not use more, though cabbages, potatoes and grass would not be hurt by more, and the heavy application would last longer, but 100 bushels to the acre would show its effect for at least twelve years afterward.

The farmer stands at the head of the list of long livers. He generally has to toil hard, but his work is in the open air, and in an altogether healthy environment. Good digestion with him waits upon appetite, and he eats heartily of wholesome food, which nourishes his frame and makes good red blood. The dissipation and vices of cities are unknown to him, although he has his innocent pleasures, and, above all, he is a man with an object in life.

If the farmer desires to know how to select good clover seed he should learn to know weed seed as soon as he looks at it. Then if his eyesight is not good enough to distinguish it when it is among the clover seed, let him spend from 50 cents upward for a good magnifying glass, and let him buy no clover and not much other seed until he has examined it, and found it reasonably clear of the weed seeds. It may be hard to find it perfectly pure, but there is no use in buying such seed as a sample sold in Vermont last year, which had 59.31C weed seeds in a pound. The seeds of plantain, sorrel, pigweed, smartweed, curled dock and the foxtail grass were the most abundant in this lot, and each of them might pass for clover seed at first glance, but can be detected under a magnifying glass.

THE YOUNG GAMBLER.

He Had an Even Chance, But Fate Was Against Him.

I remember one handsome young fellow whom I used to meet occasionally on the staircase who captured my youthful fancy. I met him only at midday, as he did not rise till late, and this fact, with a certain scrupulous elegance and neatness in his dress, ought to have made me suspect that he was a gambler. In my inexperience it only invested him with a certain romantic mystery.

One morning as I was going out to my very early breakfast at a cheap Italian cafe on Long wharf I was surprised to find him also descending the staircase. He was scrupulously dressed even at that early hour, but I was struck by the fact that he was all in black, and his slight figure, buttoned to the throat in a tightly-fitting frock coat, gave, I fancied, a singular melancholy to his pale southern face. Nevertheless he greeted me with more than his usual serene cordiality, and I remembered that he looked up with a half puzzled, half amused expression at the rosy morning sky as he walked a few steps with me down the deserted street. I could not help saying that I was astonished to see him up so early, and he admitted that it was a break in his usual habits, but added, with a smiling significance I afterward remembered, that it was "an even chance if he did it again."

As we neared the street corner a man in a buggy drove up impatiently. In spite of the driver's evident haste my handsome acquaintance got in leisurely and lifting his glossy hat to me with a pleasant smile, was driven away. I have a very lasting recollection of his face and figure as the buggy disappeared down the empty street. I never saw him again. It was not until a week later that I knew that an hour after he left me that morning he was lying dead in a little hollow behind the Mission Dolores, shot through the heart in a duel for which he had arisen so early.—Bret Harte's "Under the Redwoods."

The Old Wooden Warships.

A modern battleship is supposed to last twenty years. As a matter of fact, its real efficiency as a first-class fighting machine is less than half that period of time. Improvements are being made so rapidly and constantly that ships are superseded often after having served only one or two commissions. It was otherwise in Nelson's time. The Victory, for example, was launched in 1765 and was therefore forty years old at the battle of Trafalgar, when she flew the admiral's flag and was accounted quite the finest line of battle ship in the British navy. And her cost, including her armament, was only about \$500,000.—London Standard.

"No, my dear boys," said the new teacher. "I don't approve of using a strap" (enthusiastic and long-continued applause). "No," went on the gentleman, when the noise subsided, "I am firmly convinced that a stout cane is more effective."