

Fighting Life's Battle;

OR, LADY BLANCHE'S BITTER PUNISHMENT

CHAPTER XXXIII.—(cont'd)

It was a very quiet wedding, at least that was how Lady Betty described it, though, as Floris said, if hers was a quiet one she pitied the bride who had to endure a grand one.

The date of the wedding had got about, perhaps Lady Betty whispered it in the strictest confidence to a lady friend or two, and the little chapel in the Savoy was crammed.

All Floris' friends were there, the Lynches and Dr. Greene included; and the great duke who was related to Bruce, at his own request, gave the bride away.

Bertie was best man, and not a few of the young ladies who were present cast pensive glances in his direction; but Bertie seemed to think on this, as on all other occasions, that there was only one woman in the world worth thinking of, and as he could not have her the rest, as Hamlet says, "was silence."

The wedding breakfast was a great success, principally, I think, because there were few speeches, and those short ones; and among the presents spread out on the drawing-room tables, amid the articles of gold and silver and the splendid jewels, was a bunch of rare orchids from Florence, with Mrs. Sinclair's best wishes.

Floris looked very beautiful; indeed the great society paper declared emphatically that she would be the most lovely bride of the season; and Bruce, who had lost his haggard look, was, as Dr. Greene remarked, "as fit as a man could be."

They had decided to spend the honeymoon at Norman Eolme; they both had had enough of the Continent for the present, and soon after the breakfast they started, the guests thronging the entrance hall with the usual rice and slippers, most of the latter, it is scarcely necessary to state, striking the coachman and footman.

One honeymoon is generally very much like another, but Floris and Bruce's was an exception to the rule.

They had so nearly lost each other that their reunion had seemed almost miraculous, and Bruce would sit and look at her sometimes, in the quiet of the after-dinner hour, and ask himself what he had done to deserve this great joy which had fallen to him.

After three weeks of this perfect happiness they went to London, but the honeymoon was not over, and they went without fuss or notice to their friends.

"Let us enjoy ourselves together for a week or two at least," said Bruce. "We won't go to the London House but put up at Claridge's and we'll just take a holiday as Susan the housemaid and James the footman do when they are mated. We'll go to the theatres and do the galleries and concerts and I'll row you to Taplow-on-the-Thames on especially fine days, and you shall be quite a Bohemian."

And they carried out their little plan to perfection.

The ceremony and hard work pertaining to her as the Countess of Norman were put off for awhile, and they devoted themselves to each other like "Susan and James."

One night, as they were returning from one of the theatres, their little brougham broke down near Leicester Square.

It was nothing very serious, and no one was hurt, not even the horse.

Bruce got Floris out in a moment, and was calling a cab, when Floris, who had got on a bonnet and a thick, plain wrap, said:

"It is a lovely night, Bruce. Can't we walk?"

"All right," he said. "You are sure you are wrapped up?"

"Perfectly; and the walk will be so nice. I've never walked in London so late as this. How strange it looks."

He took her on his arm, lit a cigar, and they walked toward home.

To avoid the crowded thoroughfares, Lord Norman turned down a quiet street, and they were just passing a French cafe, the lights from the windows of which quite

lit up the street, when the door was violently thrown open and a woman came hurrying out.

She was weeping bitterly, but in a dull, heavy fashion, as if she were accustomed to it; and Floris, seeing her, pressed Lord Norman's arm and whispered:

"Oh, Bruce, that poor woman, see!"

He turned his head, and at the moment a man, evidently intoxicated, came out of the cafe, looked round in search of the woman, and with a tipsy oath aimed a blow at her.

Lord Norman was just in time to seize his shaky arm and push him back against the wall.

The man stared at him for a moment, then, mumbling incoherently, shuffled and staggered back into the house.

Floris, whose pity was always, as Bruce said, ready for man or beast, went to the woman and touched her on the arm.

"Poor creature," she murmured. The woman dropped her apron from her eyes, and Floris started back.

It was Josine!

Josine, a pale, careworn, harassed-looking woman with sunken eyes and tear-swollen lips; there was a dark red stain on one side of her face, showing that the brute had already struck her before she had left the house.

Floris shrank back into the shadow, and Bruce came up to her.

"Are you hurt?" he said, quietly, "is there anything I can do for you?"

Josine shook her head dully and despairfully.

"No, sir; he is my husband. Look at my face!" she raised her head to the light, "look at me! He who did that was the man I raised from beggary, my husband! He has spent all my money, and—"

She stopped and shrank back with a cry of fear and dread, for the light had fallen upon Bruce's face, and she had recognized him.

"Milord Norman," she gasped. "Oh, mercy, milord, mercy," and she seemed about to fall on her knees; but Floris caught her arm and held her on her feet, murmuring words of forgiveness and pity.

She would have stopped with her goodness knows how long, and would have taken her away, but Bruce drew her to him with gentle firmness.

"Come now, Floris, you can do nothing to-night. I will come and see you to-morrow, Josine. You have behaved very wickedly, but you have received your punishment, my poor girl."

"Yes, yes, milord," sobbed Josine, gesticulating wildly. "It was all the money. If I had not had Lady Blanche's money this man would not have married me, and I should have been spared this," and she pointed to the scarlet stain on her white face. "Ah, we were very clever, milord, but it is Miladi Floris who has won the game after all, while we—" and with a shrug of her shoulders and a dull sob she went into the house.

On a night in June, when the season was at its height, was held one of the great state balls.

The room was very crowded, and dancing was rendered almost impossible.

For the most part the brilliant throng gathered in groups and chattered, while they listened to the music or watched the dancers who had found sufficient courage to take the floor.

The center of one of these groups was Floris, Countess of Norman.

She had never looked more lovely than she looked tonight, and it was no wonder that with her beauty and the vague air of romance that had come about her, London should be metaphorically at her feet.

Close by her side, as usual, was Bertie, and not very far off young Lord Harry, whose devotion to Bruce was almost dog-like in its intensity.

Bruce had attempted a waltz with some one, but had found the attempt a failure, and was sitting it out with his partner in a cool nook near the door.

Presently his partner was taken away from him by the man to whom she was next engaged, and

Bruce was making his way to his wife's side, when he came full tilt upon Lady Blanche.

She was so much altered that for the moment he was staggered; but the next, as he met the calm, serene gaze of his brown, velvety eyes, his heart swelled with a righteous anger.

She held out her hand with a cold, icy smile, though her heart may have been beating wildly notwithstanding.

Lord Norman touched her hand with his fingers, and stood regarding her.

"How do you do, Bruce?" she said. "I did not know you were in town. We have just come back. Is—" she paused a second, "is Lady Norman quite well?"

He bowed.

"Yes, we have just come back. I suppose I ought to tell you that I am engaged to be married to the Count d'Encion."

Bruce knew him; an old man, and a bad one.

"To the Count d'Encion?" he said, speaking for the first time, his eyes stern and cold. "When I may conclude that you will spend a greater portion of your time in Paris?"

"Yes, certainly," she said.

"Why?"

"Because, as Lady Norman would decline any invitations to houses which you intended visiting, it would be as well to know when you were in town."

Lady Blanche rose, she had sunk on to a chair, and looked at him; she was deathly white and breathing hard.

"You do not forgive or forget, it seems, Bruce."

"I forgive, we both forgive, and we are anxious to forget; that is why I do not intend my wife to meet you, Blanche," he said, calmly.

She opened her fan, shut it with a sudden click, and turned from him.

A few minutes afterward he heard "Lady Seymour's carriage" called for.

He could forgive Oscar Raymond, dead by his own hand; he could forgive Josine, with her drunken husband as a punishment; but he could not forgive, entirely and completely Lady Blanche!

THE END.

On the Farm

THE DANES AS DAIRYMEN.

Denmark, the home of co-operation among farmers, is generally recognized as the leading dairy country of the old world. It is therefore of interest to read the report of two experts who spent a summer in Europe studying dairy methods. In a bulletin recently published their observations are given as follows:—

"The million dairy cows of Denmark are confined almost exclusively to two breeds—the Danish Red, of Zealand, and the Jyske, or Black and White cow of Jutland. Both of these have been developed within the last 35 years from the native stock of the country by careful selection for milk production. The Red cow is a product of a cross of Schleswig blood on the native rather scrubby cattle. The result is a race of fine dairy cattle weighing from 1,000 to 1,100 pounds. They are dark red, with black muzzle, medium size, deep body, medium bone, fine skin and well developed udder and veins. The Black and Whites of Jutland have been developed from the beef breed in use in earlier times. They are a larger breed than the Red cows, resembling the Holstein-Friesians in color and size, but are shorter in leg and deeper in body than the Dutch cow. Both of these breeds have a distinctive conformation and are good economical producers.

"The development of the breeds to such a high degree in 25 to 30 years has been due to the farmers' skill, intelligence and common sense in selecting and breeding for milk production alone and the efficiency of these cows is a most striking example of what may be accomplished in a short time if good systematic work is done and common sense and judgment are exercised. While many of the bulls used are young and untried, they are always individuals of merit and from cows with large records. Only the best heifers are raised and with the record of the dam and the qualities of the sire known their selection is comparatively simple, and no better cow can be

raised than can be bought on the open market. The price of cows is from \$80 to \$90, some of the best averaging as high as \$100, so that it is also profitable from the financial standpoint to raise the young stock to replenish the herd. Heifers drop their first calf at from two to two and one-half years of age and if they prove to be good producers are usually kept in the dairy until 12 years old, when they are fattened for beef. In fairly good condition cows bring 5½ cents per pound. Old, thin cows bring less.

"The cows are treated with kindness and every effort is made to have them comfortable at all times. On many farms the cows are regularly groomed. Tethering the cows on grass is usually commenced the fore part of May, for a portion of the day at least.

"The soiling crops used are rye, oats and peas, oats and vetch, and clover and grass. These are hauled to the barn and fed green, or pastured off by tethering the cows along the edge. In some sections where the farms are small all the land is under cultivation and the cows are kept in the barns until the oats and peas are nearly mature, when the cows are tethered on these during the month of July, after which they are too ripe to be well relished. The cows are then changed to the second crop of clover, which by this time is from 12 to 18 inches high. Some dairymen practice partial soiling all the time, cutting green rye the last of May, which was sown the previous September. When this rye becomes ripe in June they feed clover and when this is mature, about July 1st, oats and peas are fed. After these the second crop of clover is ready. It must be remembered that in the cool European countries it requires much more time for grain to ripen after it is fully headed than in the central states, thus making the soiling season much longer. It is the general rule to pasture until short of grass, about July 1st, and then soil until the grass is good again. The cows are left on pasture until October, the exact time depending upon the season, thus making the period cows receive green feed extend over nearly six months.

"The cows are seldom turned to pasture in Denmark, but tethered by means of a halter on the head and a rope or chain 12 to 20 feet long, which is attached to a ten-inch pin driven into the ground. The cows are moved five times a day, from three to six feet, depending upon the amount of feed. In this manner the crops are grazed off without waste from tramping. The great advantage of this system of tethering is that the crops can be allowed to grow two or three feet high and yet be eaten down without wasting, thus producing much more feed per acre than can be grown on pasture that necessarily must be kept cropped fairly close. This is the Dane's chief point in the economy of feeding during the summer. Practically no grain is fed while cows are on the grass. A few dairymen feed a little oil cake to their best milkers.

"The cows are put into the stable in the fall and not let out again until the following spring. They are fed all the straw they will eat, and on an average, 4 pounds of hay 40 to 100 pounds of roots, and about six pounds of grain per day, consisting of oilcake, bran, barley and oats, the grain being fed according to the milk flow.

"Many of the dairymen on the small farms milk three times a day, having ten cows to the milker. On the large farms they usually milk twice a day, having from 15 to 20 cows to the milker, requiring two and one-half hours, night and morning to do the milking.

"The cows are allowed to go dry from six to eight weeks. To supply the Danish export trade of butter an even flow of milk is required the year round and most of the cows freshen from September to May. The male calves and any heifers not needed for future cows are sold for veal from three to four weeks old. Calves are not allowed to suckle their dams. They are fed whole milk for the first week. After this it is gradually changed to skim-milk, and this is fed to the heifers until they are four to six months old. From this time on they are raised on pasture during the summer and in winter are given hay, straw and roots and sometimes a little oilcake."

Professor (coming home late) — "Drat it! There was something I wanted to do. What on earth was it?" (After thinking about it half an hour)—"Aha! now I know—I wanted to go to bed."

BASHFUL STANLEY.

His Response to a Speech of Eulogy at a Banquet.

William H. Rideing tells in McClure's Magazine of a dinner of the Papyrus club in Boston at which Henry M. Stanley, the explorer, was the guest of honor:

"Whether he (Stanley) sat or stood, he fidgeted and answered in monosyllables—not because he was unamiable or unappreciative, but because he—this man of iron, God's instrument, whose word in the field brooked no contradiction or evasion, he who defied obstacles and danger and pierced the heart of darkness—was bashful even in the company of fellow craftsmen.

"His embarrassment grew when after dinner the chairman eulogized him to the audience. He squirmed and averted his face as cheer after cheer confirmed the speaker's rhetorical ebullience of praise. 'Gentlemen, I introduce to you Mr. Stanley, who, etc. The hero stood up slowly, painfully, reluctantly, and, with a gesture of deprecation, fumbled in first one and then another of his pockets without finding what he sought.

"It was supposed that he was looking for his notes, and more applause took the edge off the delay. His mouth twitched without speech for another awkward minute before, with a more erect bearing, he produced the object of his search and put it on his head. It was not paper, but a rag of a cap, and with that on he faced the company as one who by the act had done all that could be expected of him and made further acknowledgment of the honors he had received superfluous. It was a cap that Livingston had worn and that Livingston had given him."

ISLAND COMES AND GOES.

Rises in August and Disappears Regularly in February.

One of Michigan's unsolved mysteries is the island that every summer comes to the surface of Lake Orion and every winter goes back again to the depths from whence it arose.

Its periods of appearance and disappearance are nearly regular. It comes to the surface about the middle of August and goes down again about Feb. 15. What causes it to act thus strangely is a conundrum that none has been able to solve; but to keep it above water or compel it to remain in the depths have been alike without results.

On one occasion a number of farmers and teamsters resolved to put the island out of moving business. In their efforts to do so they hauled many loads of stone and deposited them on it during the early part of winter, believing that when it went down in February it would go down for good, weighted as it was with the stones. But the following August saw it bob up serenely from below—minus its load of stones.

At another time an effort was made to keep it on the surface, and it was chained to the surrounding country with heavy log chains. When its time for departure came it departed, and the log chains were never recovered.

The island is composed of soft mud and rushes, and there are some skeptical souls who attribute its formation and appearance and disappearance to the gathering of vegetation in one spot by the currents of the lake and its subsequent decay.

"Window Leaves."

In South Africa Dr. R. Marloth discovered six species of plants possessing what are styled "window leaves." They are all stemless succulents, and the egg-shaped leaves are imbedded in the ground, only the apex remaining visible. This visible part of the leaves is flat or convex on the surface and colorless, so that the light can penetrate it and reach the interior of the leaf below, which is green on the inside. With the exception of the blunt apex, no part of the leaf is permeable to the light, being surrounded by the soil in which it is buried. The first of these plants discovered is a species of bulbine.—London Graphic.

The Manly Man.

"After you've been two weeks in the house with one of these terrible handy men that ask their wives to be sure to wipe between the lines of the forks and that know just how much raising bread ought to have and how to bang out a wash so each piece will get the best sun it's a real joy to get back to the ordinary kind of man. Yes, 'tis so!" Mrs. Gregg finished with much emphasis. "I want a man who should have sense about the things he's meant to have sense about, but when it comes to keeping house I like him real helpless, the way the Lord planned to have him!"—Youth's Companion.

Money in Moving Pictures.

"I am going to embark in some sort of business and want to know whether you think there is much money in moving pictures?"

"There was for a fellow who moved a half dozen of ours," said the flat dweller. "He charged us \$10."

Genius begins great works; labor alone finishes them.—Jonhart