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CHARTER SMITH,

DURHAM FOUNDRYMAN

The Chronicle is the most widely read newspaper published in the County of Grey.

Through Storm and Sunshine

CHAPTER XXXIII.—Continued.

"Permit me to advise you, Miss Neslie, to do nothing of the kind. I have never liked her ladyship; and, if I had dared to do so, I should have told Sir Arthur from the first that she was not a fit companion for you. I hope I am not wicked when I say that I really think the boy's death a providential affair."

Vivien looked gravely sad. "I have sometimes," she said, "when I have been sorely tired, thought that his death might be the best thing for Lancelwood, and I have often wished that he were out of the way; but now that it has happened, I deplore his death—I am heartily sorry for it."

After a short time Mr. Greston remarked—

"I understand Lady Neslie; and with your permission, Miss Neslie, I shall give her a hint that the Abbey is no longer her home. It seems to me that the whole place requires purifying. I have never met so motley a crowd of visitors; and Holmes tells me they stay for months at a time. I can manage it very nicely. I will ask her if I can be of any assistance to her in her removal."

There was a wonderful difference between Lady Valerie, the mother of the heir, mistress of the Abbey, and the crestfallen woman who looked at the lawyer when he put his kindly-expressed question.

"I am to go, am I? Well, I could not expect anything else. I should do just as Vivien does. I shall not go to that dreary old Dower House though. I shall go to Paris and live there. Thank Heaven, though I lose Lancelwood, I do not lose my money! Mr. Greston, tell Miss Neslie that I will go in a fortnight from now. Oh, if my boy had but lived, this would not have been!"

There was, as a matter of course, a great commotion over the death of the little heir. People who had most decidedly cut Lady Neslie in the days of her arrogant prosperity were sorry for her now, and called to express their sympathy. Yet every one said the accident seemed really providential—the whole estate would have been ruined if "Miladi" had remained there much longer.

The brilliant train of visitors had already disappeared. The Comte de Calloux, who had wooed the fair widow purely for the sake of living at Lancelwood, was one of the first to go. He pretended to have received letters of great importance. He regretted to make such hurried adieu, but he must start without delay. "Miladi" looked into his face with a light laugh.

"I understand, Monsieur le Comte," she said. "I have lost Lancelwood, and therefore I lose you. I regret the loss of Lancelwood. I do not regret the loss of you. I shall do better—adieu."

Before three weeks were over the Abbey was cleared of its unwelcome occupants, and Vivien Neslie was once more installed as its mistress. Gerald Dorman had written to say that he was returning. He sent a little box by post. Miss Neslie opened it, and found within the gold ring with the one large pearl which she had given him.

She was puzzled to know what it meant, but he was coming that evening—then she should know. Mr. Greston was remaining at the Abbey—Vivien had begged him to do so. He found that he could spare the time, and was happy to oblige her. It was settled that he should spend his summer vacation there.

Why had Gerald sent the ring? He knew the boy was dead. Was it that he guessed how she repented, of those terrible words of hers? Did he know her well enough to understand that they had been spoken while suffering from the effects of despairing irritation? Now that the child was dead she saw how wicked they were.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

It was in the middle of a sultry afternoon that Gerald Dorman arrived. Miss Neslie did not see him as he went at once to his rooms. She told Mr. Greston of his arrival.

"Shall I ask him to dine with you?" she said. "You will like a chat with him over your wine."

"That I shall," replied the lawyer. "I have been rather struck with his intelligence, and his zeal for the family."

Vivien saw Gerald for a few minutes before dinner, but the lawyer being present, she could not ask him any questions. He looked at her black dress, and then into her eyes; and in some vague way that look made her very uneasy.

During dinner Mr. Greston referred more than once to the circumstances of the child's death. He told them of a similar incident that had occurred in a noble family whose affairs were in his hands. And each time that little Oswald was mentioned Vivien saw Gerald's eyes seeking her own.

"You must have been very much astonished," said Mr. Greston to Gerald. "Very," he replied with quiet brevity; and Vivien wondered that he said no more.

When dinner was over she left the gentlemen at their wine and Mr. Greston became quite communicative.

"I do not consider that I am irreligious," he said, "when I declare that the heir's death seemed to me providential. If the boy had lived, it would have been all over with the Neslies of Lancelwood. Her ladyship would have ruined the family. Already there is the greatest difference in the house; there is order, regularity, method. It is now the house of a gentleman governed by a lady—before it was something that baffled description. I am heartily glad that Miss Neslie has her own again. She is a noble woman."

So they talked until it was time to join the mistress of the house in the drawing-room; then Mr. Greston, with many apologies for his want of sociability, said that he had his daily paper yet to read—with Miss Neslie's permission he would read it there.

"It is a very pleasant evening," he said. "Pray, Miss Neslie, do not remain in-doors on my account."

He sat down by the open window, and Vivien stepped out on to the terrace. The evening was warm, dewy, odoriferous. The thought of a walk through the grounds was pleasant; but she had some vague, indefinable dread of being alone with Gerald Dorman. She kept within sight of the window; strange to say, however, he seemed in no hurry to join her. She walked across the terrace to the broad stone balustrade, and leaned idly over it. Gorgeous passion-flowers twined themselves round it, thick green ivy almost clothed it. She little dreamed how fair a picture she made, her black dress sweeping the ground, her lovely face bent over the passion-flowers, her arms resting on the green leaves.

Gerald watched her until he could watch no longer; then he went out to her. The golden rays of the setting sun lit up her head and face as with a kind of glory. Gerald laid his hand on hers.

"Miss Neslie," he said, "I am come for my reward."

She raised her face to his, and he saw that the expression on it was perfectly genuine, and he fell back from her with a cry of bitter pain.

"I do not understand," she replied; "and, Gerald, tell me, why did you return this ring?"

She saw his face grow pale and his eyes grow dim in the waning light.

"Do you ask me that? Great Heaven, do you not understand?"

"No. Tell me, why did you return it?"

"Surely," he said, "I was not mistaken; surely I did not dream that you uttered certain words."

"I am not very patient," said Vivien; "and you are keeping me in suspense."

He came one step nearer to her.

"Do you mean, Miss Neslie, that you do not know where I have been—that I have been doing?"

Her heart seemed to sink within her, a sudden horrible fear came over her. What did he mean? She tried to ask him, but her lips grew stiff and would not part.

Then her courage returned; there could be nothing for her to fear.

"No," she replied, slowly, "I do not know what you have been doing, Gerald."

"Do you remember the evening I found you sitting by the sun-dial? Lady Neslie and the Comte de Calloux were walking on this terrace. Do you remember what you said—that you would give your life even to the man who should rid Lancelwood of its heir?"

"Great Heaven!" she cried, rather to herself than to him. Her strength seemed to fail her. She clutched at the ivy leaves as though she would fain save herself from falling.

"Did you mean it or not?" he asked.

"I meant it then; but now the child is dead," she gasped.

"Miss Neslie, one of us is making some terrible mistake. I did not write to you—I dared not—lest the letter should fall into other hands; but I thought you understood."

"Understood what?" she cried, in a passion of despair. "You are killing me with this suspense."

"Miss Neslie," he asked, in a low voice, "do you believe the child to be really dead?"

"Certainly I do," she replied.

"He is not dead," said Gerald slowly. "I thought you meant what you said. I thought you wished to be rid of him, and I took him away."

"I did, but I was mad, Gerald. I was mad with sorrow and shame. I did not really mean it. I swear that I did not."

The agitation of his face was terrible to see.

"Then I have toiled, and planned, and worked, and sinned in vain," he said, in a low, despairing voice—so despairing that all the generous part of her nature was aroused. She laid her hand on his.

"He is living and well," returned Gerald; "he is on his way now to America with one who will take the greatest care of him—one who will make him a good, honest, honorable man. He is so young that he will soon forget all about Lancelwood. He can live in affluence, if you please, but away from here, and Lancelwood will remain in proper hands."

She stood like one turned to stone; the setting sun shining on her face showed it was white, and cold, and still as the face of the dead. She never moved nor spoke. The shock was so terrible to her that in after years she wondered that it did not kill her.

"May Heaven forgive me," she said slowly—"and you also! I can never pardon myself, Gerald. I feel like a murderer."

"Nay," he returned; "as far as the boy is concerned, the change is far better for him; instead of growing up a dissipated, unprincipled, spoiled tyrant, he will be made a useful man and a good member of society. He would never have been that here."

"Still," she said, dreamily, "I do not understand. You were away in London when Oswald disappeared—how could you have been concerned in his abduction?"

"I went to London merely, to obtain a disguise," he answered. "Shall I tell you the story of the abduction, Miss Neslie?"

She bent her head for a minute, and then, raising it, said—

"Yes; tell me all—tell me every detail."

CHAPTER XXXV.

"Tell me all about the abduction of little Oswald," repeated Miss Neslie to Gerald Dorman.

"I will tell you everything," he promised. "I had planned it in my own mind even before I had left your side on the evening that you gave me sun lit up her head and face as with a kind of glory. Gerald laid his hand on hers."

"I never even dreamed of it," said Vivien, slowly.

"I went to London and there purchased for myself the disguise of an old man—a white wig and a white beard. These, with a broad-brimmed hat, so disguised my face that I hardly knew myself. I next purchased a dress of a little girl, and then I returned to Lancelwood. For days I wandered about here; watching an opportunity to waylay the boy; that opportunity came at last, when I found him by the banks of the river. He did not know me, and I persuaded him to go into the woods with me."

He stopped abruptly—a low moan from Vivien's lips had startled him.

"Miss Neslie," he said, "believe me, the evil is not without remedy. Just as I would have died to do it, I would die to undo it."

"Tell me all," she said, presently.

"I will tell you. In the disguise I had purchased I met the child, and he did not know me. I took him into the woods, and, by telling him some story or other, persuaded him to change his clothes and put on the little girl's dress that I had bought. He enjoyed the fun, and talked all the time; then, I leading him by the hand, we walked down to the river-side, and, unseen by him, I threw his hat and cape into the water—farther down I flung in his whip. Many people who afterward joined in the search met that day an old man and a little girl as they thought, without the least idea who they really were. Then they went straight across the country, took the train at a leading junction and went to London. My brother, who is devoted to me, has undertaken the entire charge and education of the boy; but he does not know who he is, and he treats all he says about Lancelwood as the result of a diseased brain—or, if he suspects, he says nothing. I have promised him five hundred per annum, and with that he is to provide handsomely for the boy. He will be well fed, well dressed, well educated; he will have the training of a Christian gentleman, he will be taught a trade or profession, whichever he prefers. He likes my brother, and remained with him willingly enough."

"But," asked Vivien, in a low voice, "did he not cry for his home or his mother?"

"No; the novelty of traveling and going to sea, more than compensated for home. Indeed, Miss Vivien, I do not think the child ever liked his mother. He is so young; at his age every impression soon fades. Before he has been a year with my brother he will think his life at Lancelwood a dream. I posted my letter from London, that I might not appear to be in any way mixed up in the affair. I spent the greater part of my time

in Liverpool, making preparations for the boy's departure. I assure you, when I saw him last, he was living and well; he stood on the deck laughing and waving his hand to me. I assure you also of another thing—he was a far better boy when he went away than he had ever been here. My brother is a good man, who will train him well. If he suspects any mystery at all, it is nothing like the truth. He may imagine that the boy is Lady Neslie's son—he does not know that he is heir to Lancelwood. The advertisements and rewards that attracted so much attention never met his eyes."

She stood quite silent, leaning against the passion flowers; then suddenly she raised her face to the blue sky.

To Be Continued.

GREENLAND'S EAST COAST.

Lieut. Andrup Will Try to Outline the Unknown Part of It.

There is a part of the east coast of southern Greenland that has not yet been visited by any explorer. Quite a number of Arctic investigators have been north and others south of it, but the region between 69deg. and 67deg. 22 sec. north latitude, a distance of about 100 miles is as yet entirely unknown. A year ago this unexplored part of the coast was a good deal longer than it now is, but Lieut. Andrup explored a part of it last year and now he will return to complete the work.

Andrup is an officer in the Danish Royal Navy. The work he was detailed to do last year was very successfully carried out. He mapped the east coast from 65 deg. 45 sec. to 67 deg. 22 sec. north latitude. He will leave Copenhagen this month on the steamer Antarctic with three companions and his intention is to go ashore near the 69th parallel, and will then travel south between the island and the coast ice. His destination is Angmagssalik, 65 deg. 45 sec., the only settlement in East Greenland. During this journey he will pass all along the unexplored coast.

While he is on this mission a party of five naturalists on the Antarctic will travel north to the entrance to Scoresby Sound for the purpose of studying natural history and exploring the northern fiords if the condition of the ice permits. At the end of August the Antarctic will go to Iceland to take on a supply of coal and will then proceed to Angmagssalik to meet Lieut. Andrup.

It may be that the ice will prevent Andrup from reaching that station this fall. In this case he will have to camp where winter overtakes him and will resume his route toward the south next year. Arctic ice experts are very much afraid that the ice conditions will not be favorable this season and some of them predict that Andrup will not be able to go as far south as Angmagssalik, but that he will be compelled, like Lieut. Ryder in 1891, to winter on the bleak coast.

PAINFUL PERIODS.

Women who suffer terrible pain every month can find ready relief by using Milburn's Sterling Headache Powders. They contain no morphine or opium, and leave no bad after effects. Price 10c. and 25c. Don't accept common headache powders, they'll surely disappoint.

HE MEANT WELL.

Papa—Aha! You have disobeyed me.
Willie—Boo-hoo! I tried not to. It ain't my fault.
Papa—Not your fault, eh?
Willie—No, sir. You said: "Don't let me catch you at that again," an' I done my best not to let you.

WORK WHILE YOU SLEEP.

If you take a Laxa-Liver Pill tonight, before retiring, it will work while you sleep, without a gripe or pain, curing Biliousness, Constipation, Dyspepsia and Sick Headache, and make you feel better in the morning.

Electricity in the atmosphere affects your system, said the scientific physician. Yes, said the patient, who had paid \$10 for two visits, I agree with you there are times when one feels overcharged.

Dr. Low's Pleasant Worm Syrup is sure death to the worms every time, but harmless to the most delicate child. It contains its own cathartic, so there is no need of giving castor oil or other purgative afterwards. Price 25c.

INCORRIGIBLE.

Mrs. Lushford—I see you are late again. Don't you remember what I told you the last time you stayed out so late?

Mr. Lushford—No, m' dear. Zass ze reason I stayed out zish time—to see if you'd say it over again.

ENGLISH SOLDIERS IN INDIA.

There are less than eighty thousand English soldiers in India, or about one white soldier to every thirty-five hundred natives.

THE WAR IN ASHANTI.

Rebellious Natives Helped by the Climate and Natural Difficulties.

The Ashanti troubles seem to be proving more serious than was expected. Kumassi, the capital, where the Governor is besieged, is surrounded by large bodies of natives fairly well armed, the garrison being composed of 700 native troops, under the command of Major Morris. This officer, however, with six others, has been seriously wounded, and one officer has been killed.

This was according to despatches from Kumassi dated June 4. Since then an attempt made by the relieving force to cut a way through the natives holding the country between the Prab River and Kumassi has been repulsed with some loss. The road from Prabsu is blocked by a great number of armed natives, who constructed stockades and placed trees and other impediments to obstruct an advance of the British troops. The climate also adds to the difficulties of an advance, the rains being incessant and torrential, and the rivers flooded, while the bush with which the country is covered, besides being almost impenetrable, is at this season of the year turned into one vast swamp in the lowlands. It is true that the native African troops do not suffer seriously in health from the exposure, but their English officers fall victims to the malaria and heat.

The chief difficulty, in the absence of railways, is the transport of supplies and ammunition. So virulent is the climate that horses succumb after a brief period, and at present the only source from which carriage can be provided are the natives; but they are untrustworthy, being subject to panic, ready at the least alarm to drop their burdens and flee into the bush. There is, moreover, the additional difficulty that a sufficient supply of carriers cannot be had. It was proposed the other day to meet the emergency by a decree impressing the natives, but as soon as it was known that it was in contemplation, so many took to flight that it had to be dropped.

Meantime considerable reinforcements are reported arriving at Cape Coast Castle, so that there must be quite a small army now in the field at different points of concentration. It is important that the relief of Kumassi should be effected with little delay. News travels fast in those regions, and as it is known that there is quite a number of men who have been trained by British officers with the insurgents, there is the danger of the troubles spreading to the interior to the Niger country, from which these men come, which would be a very serious matter.

That the British Government is alive to this is apparent, from the orders just given to prepare a number of light draught gunboats and steam launches for African river service. It would be a great misfortune should the Governor with his garrison in Kumassi be compelled to surrender, for white troops cannot very well be employed in that country for another four months, and the supply of ammunition in Kumassi is running short.

WONDERFUL RUSSIAN EGGS.

Easter Souvenirs of the Czarina and the Dowager Empress Shown at Paris.

Easter is celebrated in Russia with great ceremony, and the custom of giving elaborate Easter eggs has been carried to extravagance by the wealthy and aristocratic people in St. Petersburg; but no other Russian women have such collections of Easter eggs as the young Czarina and the Dowager Empress.

It has, for many generations, been a court custom for the reigning Czar, to give his wife at Easter time an egg containing some handsome gift, usually a souvenir of some particular event, and the present Czar and his father, Alexander III., have always observed the old custom. The two Empresses have, with considerable misgivings, it is said, allowed their Easter egg collections to go to Paris and be placed on Exhibition in the Russian section of the Exposition, and the French dramatic temperament is deeply stirred and moved by this testimony to the intimate and cordial relations between the two nations. From the Easter eggs are being hatched fraternal sentiments and touching enthusiasm with regular incubator expedition and despatch. Many of the eggs are exceedingly interesting as objects of art.

The first received by the present Czarina was given to her in the year of her coronation. It is a large, golden egg, enamelled in rose color, and contains a tiny and perfect model of the state carriage in which the young bride rode to the Moscow cathedral, on her wedding day. The coach is of gold, cushioned in red enamel, and hung with tiny silver curtains which can be drawn on gold wires. The Imperial crown in beautiful diamonds ornaments the panels.

The last Easter egg added to the Czarina's collection was presented this year and incloses a splendid jeweled heart set in rare, many colored gems, and surrounded by twenty-five tiny miniatures, portraits of the members of the Russian royal family.

Among the collection of the Dowager Empress is one egg that commemorates a family storm, and a royal problem. Nicholas II., the present Czar, when a boy, had, as all the world knew, a most irrational and vehement love affair. Society was shocked, the heir apparent's fond parents were distressed and altogether there was a very interesting exhibition of the tempest that Cupid can, upon occasion, stir up in a royal family. Nicholas was hurriedly sent around the world to complete his education, and, as usual, time and absence reduced the royal heart to its normal condition, but the Empress grieved greatly over the separation from her son, and on Easter of that year, the Czar gave her an egg, inside of which was a model of the ship in which her rebellious lad was sailing away from heart entanglement. A gold smith of famous skill had spent ten months making the ship, which was of solid gold, mounted on a beryl stone, and was complete and accurate in every detail, down to the smallest cable.

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We beg to inform our customers and the public generally that we have adopted the Cash System, which means Cash or its Equivalent, and that our motto will be "Large Sales and Small Profits."

We take this opportunity of thanking our customers for past patronage, and we are convinced that the new system will merit a continuance of the same.

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