

Diamond Cut Diamond

OR,
THE ROUT OF THE ENEMY.

CHAPTER XXIV—Continued.

For a moment she could not utter a word, only her trembling hands strayed with a soft caressing movement over the bent smooth dark head—then at last she spoke.

"Geoffrey, my dear, dear boy, get up. I entreat you—let me speak to you." Instinctively he obeyed her. Had he not always obeyed her, and rising as she bade him, sat down by her side upon the garden bench, holding her hands and tightly grasped in his.

"I have so much—so very much—to say to you," she began.

But he would not let her speak—the floodgates of his more, Rose, opened—the long pent-up passion, which had its way at last, and burst impetuously from his lips.

"Yes, and I will listen to you—but not now," he cried, "presently, by-and-by, when I have time to say to you—you then I will hear you—but now it is I who must speak. Oh, Rose, my queen, my darling, I can be silent no longer, nor hide the love you once gave me, and which I have come to you. But now that I have come I will not be sent hopeless away from you again—I cannot live without you, Rose, give me your love, your life—yourself."

Then for a few brief moments her strength failed her absolutely, and she, who was so strong and so brave, became all at once weak, with a woman's most ardent weakness. The light of the dear face so long absent, of the eyes that sought her own so eagerly, the sound of the voice she had missed so long, shaken with the pent-up passion of a love whose devotion of self-repression she so well understood, overcame her in a fashion that she had never reckoned upon. Unrebuked he drew her into his arms, holding her closely against his heart, and sought the lovely lips he had hungered for so long in vain, with his own—and she yielded, as a woman yields to a man, who, owning all her heart, claims all her passion too, as his right—giving herself up to him, and unreservedly to the rapture of that embrace, while he, holding her thus, forgot all else in life save her, and murmured as he kissed her lips, her cheek, her throat—

"My own—my love—my wife!"

And then she awoke, awoke out of that mad trance of an impossible joy to the awful reality of the unalterable truth. That one word "wife" went through her with a shock. The mad passion, which had hurried her was at an end, and a cold shudder, icy as death itself, struck through her from head to foot.

She wrenched herself away from his arms, and sprung to her feet, wringing her hands despairingly together.

"What have I done!" she cried, "with a low cry of exceeding bitter despair. 'Wicked, wretched woman that I am! Would to God I were dead—would to God I were dead!'"

And she fled forward, promptly at his feet, upon the ground, shaken with those great, dry-eyed sobs that tell of a more awful conflict of the soul than where rivers and fountains of tears.

Bliss with terrible presentiment of evil he bent over her and raised her tenderly, so that she knelt up against his breast, struggling to control the unutterable agony of her heart.

"My sweet one, what is it? Do you not love me? Do you not love me? Do you not love me?" he murmured. But she shrank away from him, shivering.

"Ah, Geoffrey!" she cried, "how unspokeably I have wronged you, in concealing from you my unhappy secret."

"Your secret?" he repeated slowly, whilst a dull miserable despair crept over him; and suddenly there came back to him with a flash of horrible recollection the words that his uncle had spoken—"she is a married woman—ask her, and she will tell you."

"Your husband is alive," he said presently, in a strange, far-away voice, that seemed even in his own ears not to belong to him; he was not asked as a question. He said it as a fact.

It did not occur to her to wonder that he knew it. She knelt back, a little away from him, white as death, with her very lips blanched and formless—with her eyes fixed in hopeless we upon him, and her hands clasped tightly together across her breast, like a criminal who awaits the sentence.

"Yes, he is alive," she answered. Nothing more.

A bird was singing in the syringa-bush; a little breeze shivered through the mulberry leaves; a crimson rose, over-blown, fell with a shower of rosy petals, and a little soft thud, that could be distinguished in the silence, came on to the dark sea of her hair.

Geoffrey heard them all with a horrible distinctness. He sat quite, quite still—so still that he might have been turned into a stone. It went through his mind to wonder if death was like this—to marvel that he felt so little pain—that it was so easy to bear. Nothing but a strange cold tightness across his head, and an odd numbness at his heart. Only that—nothing more. How little it hurt! Then, out of the awful silence, came her voice, shaken with a wild despair.

"For God's sake speak to me! Curse me, if you will. Kill me, if you can!—But, speak! Do not look at me like that, Geoffrey!"

And, shudderingly, she hid her face in her hands. "When I am dying," she thought, "the awful agony of those brown eyes will be before me!"

But he answered her nothing—only a low moaning sigh broke from his white lips.

"Oh, for pity's sake, hear me!" she cried wildly. "Hear me, at least, before you learn to loathe me!" Then like a torrent, there burst from her the whole of her miserable story, year by year, without much loss, perhaps, still, with enough of affection and regard to have in time—had she chosen it—tripped into real love. She told of trust betrayed—of affection thrown back upon herself—and of the utter worthlessness of the man to whom she had given her life, and of the gradual awakening of her own mind to the comprehension of his true char-

acter. Yet, all untruthfulness, unkindness, want of refinement and sympathy, infidelity itself; all she would have endured in silence, and have striven to hide from the world's eyes. Had it not been for that last crime—that crowning iniquity, which branded him with a felon's name, and made of him an outcast from the company of all honorable men. Then, in the very moment of detection and discovery came the railway accident; from which, although left for dead upon the ground, the wretched man had recovered, after a long and dangerous illness, during which his wife nursed him at the lonely farm house, near the scene of the catastrophe, to which his inanimate body had been carried. By the time those long weeks of watching were at an end, the news of his death had gone abroad; and she found that with all the world, the man whom he had robbed and cheated also believed him to have been killed.

Then came the great temptation of her life; for the sake of his aged father, and to shield his heartbroken agony, to ward off from him the light of an exposure which he dreaded worse than death, Rose de Brefour carried out the delusion which had accidentally arisen concerning his death. Leon de Brefour was to all intents and purposes dead. He came back from the jaws of the grave altered almost beyond belief. A frightful wound upon his head had rendered him subject to lapses into partial imbecility, with the worst vices of imbecility, his cunning, his cruelty, and his sensuality, seemed but to be accentuated by the injury to his brain. For years this miserable creature had been successfully hidden by his wife, in one place and then in another, never long in the same hiding-place lest attention should be drawn to the singularity of his case, and detection of his identity be the inevitable result.

For the same reason her own home had so frequently been changed, because of necessity she had been obliged to remain within reach of him, and she had therefore altered her dwelling-place every time it had been considered desirable to move.

It had been a terrible life—a life of constant terror, dread, and apprehension, of fear and of terrors unspokeable—only death could end it, and Rose de Brefour, like many others who live only to be punished, had longed to die. All around, death moved away with his relentless sickle—mothers, adored by whole families of loving hearts, bread-winners, invaluable to the children whose lives depended upon their efforts; young men, in the prime of their manhood; maidens, the hope and desire of parents and lovers; only sons and daughters, heirs to position and wealth, hundreds such as these, the useful, the beautiful, the good, were stricken down—but Leon de Brefour lived on. This is the mystery of life, and its supreme mystery. "Why? Oh, why?" cry out all the great multitude of souls in their agony—but the pitiless Heavens answer not, neither is there any voice of compassion from above. It is only the caprice of a mocking fiend who orders these things, as some tell us, is it all fixed by the calm, immutable laws of nature, which were settled and foreordained before the earth's foundations were laid? We do not know, we may not guess, how it is—the secret is not of this world, but the speculations and surmises only lead us further and further into a quagmire of doubt and insecurity. The truth, as we are accustomed to be taught it, is so flimsy and unreal, stands the test of great sorrows so badly, falls to pieces so quickly before the steady light of science and common sense. And yet the "Truth," as we would like to have it, is so cold, and harsh, and repelling, bewilders us so very much, consoles us so very little. Alas! why did God give us the gift of reason, and then leave us in utter darkness? Why, rather, did he not make us as the brutes that perish, who live, and eat, and are happy, because to-morrow they die?

And so, why now, wherefore now might say, this man lived on, lived to be a daily curse upon Rose de Brefour, lived to shut her out for ever, with unutterable despair, from the paradise of love and joy to which one short glimpse had just been vouchsafed to her.

In silence Geoffrey heard her story—listening at first to her with a cold possibility, with a stricken silence. Yet, as he heard of it all, of all her suffering and all her heroic devotion to the old man for whom she lived, and deep pity arose in his heart, and the icy floodgates of his harsh resentment gave way.

When she had ended his eyes sought hers, his hands drew her near to him once again. "Why should this horrible nightmare be upon you? He said feverishly, with a sudden flush on his face, and a strange glitter in his eyes.

"Darling, do not we love each other? Leave this miserable life—this self-sacrifice to a brute to whom you owe nothing—trust yourself to me, come with me; let us go away abroad—to America, Australia, where you will be safe to begin a new and better life together—do you not believe I can make you happy? Will you then fear to trust yourself to me?"

With a quick warning gesture she stopped him lifting her hand suddenly, so that the torrent of his wild words was arrested.

"Hush!" she whispered, "hush! look there!"

He followed the direction of her eyes, behind them, as they sat under the deep shadow of the tree, there came a faint sound, the sound of a man in his wheel chair being slowly pushed up and down by Jacques along the gravel path in front of the house—he did not see them, his face was bent, the sun caught his white hair till it shone like silver—there was something pitiful in his bowed back and clasped hands—some thing of an appeal to compassion in the helplessness of his age and condition. What volumes could not have rebeaked him more utterly than did that sad spectacle of sickness and old age.

DOMINION PARLIAMENT.

What the Legislators of the Country are Doing at Ottawa.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Mr. McDougall was informed by the Premier that the cost to the Dominion treasury of the prohibition plebiscite taken last year was \$180,000, with a few accounts still outstanding.

Mr. Kleopfer was told by Sir Wilfrid Laurier that the total cost of the commission relating to affairs between Canada and the United States was \$38,000. One dinner was given by the Canadian Minister at Quebec at a cost of \$300, and Canada's share of the dinner at Washington was \$600. The amount allowed to Mr. John Charlton for living and travelling expenses was \$1,700. He received no personal indemnity.

Mr. Beattie was told by Dr. Borden that 30,000 rifles were sold by the Government during the year 1898 for 75 cents each. The price included a bayonet and 25 rounds of ammunition per rifle. They were sold by tender after being advertised in several newspapers, and the purchaser was Lieutenant Col. F. Cole, of Montreal.

Mr. Sifton, replying to Mr. Carscallen, said that the amount of his (Mr. Sifton's) travelling and living expenses, paid by the Government, since the first day of July, 1898, till the 28th of February, 1899, inclusive, was \$945, including \$25 for cab hire. The travelling and living expenses of his private secretary during the same period were \$412, including \$450 for cab hire. None of the expenses of servants or friends accompanying him were paid by the Government.

Mr. E. F. Clarke was told by Mr. Paterson that there had been eleven appointments to positions in the Toronto Custom-house since July 13th, 1898.

Mr. Foster was informed by Sir Richard Cartwright, that, as far as the Government could ascertain, discrimination duties were imposed by Germany upon the following Canadian products:—Barley, 35-40 cents per bushel; 48 lbs. oats, 4-25 cents per bushel; 34 lbs. rye and wheat, 9-7-10 cents per bushel; 63 lbs. butter, 9-10 cents per lb.

Mr. Keendry was informed by Mr. Blair that the land upon which a dam is being constructed at Nassau was purchased from the Bank of Commerce for \$20,000.

Mr. Clarke was told by Mr. Blair that the department could not find any record of any application for a licence to Dunn avenue railway crossing in the city of Toronto.

Mr. Foster was informed by Mr. Sifton that a permit lawfully granted by the authorities of the North-West Territories authorized the import of liquor into the Yukon without any further sanction from the Minister of the Interior. To prevent the possible use of forged or fraudulent permits lists were issued by the Government of the North-West Territories were forwarded to the officers of the North-West Mounted Police with instructions to recognize only those upon the list. Such lists comprised all the permits of which the department had been advised.

Col. Hughes was informed by Dr. Borden that the Fenian raid medals might be expected some time in the summer. The prospects were that a conscription medal would be issued to the Canadian militia, but actually granted, he could not say what the conditions would be.

SECOND READINGS.

The following private bills received a second reading:—

An Act to incorporate the Canadian Yukon Railway Company.—Mr. Morrison.

Respecting the British Yukon Mining, Trading, and Transportation Company, and to change its name to the British Yukon Railway Company.—Mr. Fraser, Guyanese.

To incorporate the Russell, Dundas, and Grenville Counties Railway Company.—Mr. Edwards.

To authorize the amalgamation of the Erie and Huron Railway Company and the Lake Erie and Detroit River Railway Company.—Mr. McGregor.

Mr. Richardson moved the second reading of his bill respecting the attachment of salaries of public officers and employees of the Government. He explained that the object was to compel the Government to employ on the same footing as other citizens by rendering their salaries subject to attachment.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier asked that the debate be adjourned until the Minister of Justice could be consulted. He sympathized with the object of the bill. Civil servants should pay their debts the same as others, but the bill, if passed, should be subject to certain restrictions as to the percentage of a man's salary which could be attached each month. The debate was adjourned.

Mr. Sprout moved the second reading of his bill to amend the Criminal Code, 1892, with respect to combinations in restraint of trade, so as to make the bill more stringent. The Act as it now stands makes it an offence to combine to restrain trade "unduly and unreasonably." The words quoted have been inserted by the Senate. Mr. Sprout contends that the effect of these words is to render the Act practically useless. He read a considerable amount of evidence in support of his contention, more especially in connection with the leather business. He wanted the words "unduly and unreasonably" struck out.

Mr. Holmes said that the petition favor of the bill was signed by all the tanners in the country outside the combine.

Mr. Craig said that the so-called leather combine merely gave a rebate of five per cent. to customers who bought the leather steadily for six months. The object was not to raise prices, but only to retain their trade, which was threatened by a gigantic combine of sole leather manufacturers in the United States.

The bill received a second reading. Mr. Bertram moved the second reading of his bill to amend the Trade Mark and Design Act. He explained it was a bill to allow workmen the right to label and register their work. He said he had no objection to the bill. This bill was rejected by the Senate last year, but he hoped that with a year's experience they would have changed their minds.

The bill was read a second time.

YUKON TERRITORY ACT.

Mr. McInnes introduced a bill to amend the Yukon Territory Act. He explained that the object was to provide a speedy appeal when parties were dissatisfied with the decision of the mining recorder or Gold Commissioner.

Mr. E. F. Clarke will ask the Government for particulars regarding the amounts paid within the last year to steamship companies as bonuses for bringing both British and continental adult and juvenile immigrants to Canada.

Mr. Borden of Halifax will move for an order of the House for copies of all telegrams and communications from Fred Peters, Q. C., Sir Herbert Tupper's law partner, soliciting from Hon. Mr. Sifton or any other Minister or any Deputy Minister, or applying or referring to the granting of permits to import liquor into the Yukon district, together with replies to such telegrams or letters.

Mr. Bertram's bill authorizing the use of the union label, which was passed by the Senate last year, received its second reading.

Sir Louis Davies, replying to Mr. Henderson, said that the contract for the Goderich harbor improvements was awarded to Smith & Macdonald, the lowest tenderers, after the work was advertised in 30 newspapers, in different towns and cities, at \$56,700, and that the work is to be completed on the 30th of November.

Mr. E. F. Clarke drew attention to a paragraph in the Montreal Star, stating that 20,000 Canadians had gone to the United States this spring.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier replied that he had only to say that he did not believe the statement of the Star, even though it was backed up by the United States papers.

Mr. Charlton's bill, to amend the criminal code by raising the age of consent from 16 to 18, was read a second time.

Mr. Douglas's bill to regulate the trade in grain in Manitoba and the Northwest was read a second time. He explained that the bill was intended to afford relief from the arrangement made between the Canadian Pacific Railway and other railways and the standard elevator system.

Mr. Sifton would not approve of all the provisions of the bill, and recommended that after its second reading it be referred to a special committee.

Mr. Casey moved the second reading of the bill concerning drainage on and across the property of railway companies, which, he explained, is modelled largely upon the provisions of the Ontario act.

Dr. Sprout's bill to amend the criminal code respecting combinations in restraint of trade was read a second time. The object of the bill is to make the provisions of the code more stringent. Dr. Sprout cited the operations of the leather combine as a reason for passing the bill.

KOW LOON RIOTS.

Chinese Seem Determined to Make Trouble—Persist in Resistance—Captain May's Adventure.

A despatch from Vancouver says:—Details have been received of the trouble between the British and the Chinese at Taifoo, near Mirs Bay, in the Kow Loon extension of Hong Kong. It appears that Captain Superintendent May went to Taifoo for the purpose of seeing how the police mat-shed which was being erected there was getting on, and also to exchange some Chinese soldiers for the police guard. He also arranged to meet the elders of the village. On his arrival he went to the temple in the village and met the elders, but there was such a noisy crowd that it was impossible to discuss anything. Finally the interview terminated abruptly and some roughs raised a row with May's interpreter. May waited until he thought the crowd had cooled down, and then endeavored to retire to his boat. He had with him some Sikhs armed, two district watchmen and one Chinese policeman. Five Chinese soldiers were also waiting outside the temple. On May and his party getting outside some one struck the interpreter on the head with a brick. Bricks and other missiles then began to fly about freely all the members of May's party being struck. The Chinese soldiers got separated from the police by the crowd and as things began to look serious the captain-superintendent assembled the Sikhs in line, and ordered them to draw their swords and charge. In this way they beat back the crowd, who were armed with chairs and various household utensils, and the police were able to get to the boat. Darkening came on, May marched the men back to the mat-house to protect it and the Chinese then began another attack. May then saw that the villagers intended firing the mat-shed, and while they were engaged in doing this he withdrew his men down the reverse slope of the hill and hid them in some reed and cactus bushes. After firing the mat-shed the villagers dispersed, some of them passing quite close to the hiding place of the police. Then May made for Hong Kong. His Sikhs were in an exhausted condition. They had had no food for 24 hours, their religious belief preventing them from eating what food was to hand. Major-General Gaultier, Hon. J. H. Stewart Lockhart and Captain Trefusis left Hong Kong with the Welsh Fusiliers and punished the Chinese.

CRUEL REVENGE.

Mr. Bunk's marriage didn't come off.

What was the matter?

His tailor was an old rival and didn't get his wedding suit made in time.

RAILWAYS OF ONE ENGINE.

In England There Are 10 Railroads With No More Locomotives.

Most people would be inclined to regard it as an impossibility for a railway to be worked with a single locomotive, but there are in Great Britain no fewer than ten railway companies that manage to get through their work somehow with one iron steed. No fewer than fourteen own only two locomotives.

One of the most interesting of these small lines is what is known as the Ravenglass & Eskdale railway, situated near Whitehaven, in Cumberland, which runs from Ravenglass to Boot, a distance of rather more than seven miles. The whole of the railway staff consists only of five persons—two platelayers, engine-driver, fireman and one guard-of-all-work, if we may use such a term.

Between stations the engine occasionally manages to gain a speed of six miles an hour, but the obliging driver is always willing to stop the engine for the convenience of any one who may wish to enter or alight from the train between stopping places.

Perhaps the Leasingwood railway is the smallest in England. It is two miles long, and the extent of its rolling stock is one small locomotive and two passenger vehicles.

The Hundred of Manhood & Selsey tramway is one of the most recently opened light railways, and connects the city of Chichester with Selsey Bill, a small promontory to the east of Portsmouth, jutting out into the English channel.

This funny little railway boasts of no signaling apparatus whatever, and few switches on the railway are controlled by hand levers alongside the line, which have to be worked by the fireman or driver when necessary.

At one place the line crosses the Chichester canal by means of a trestle bridge, which is lifted to let boats under way. It is stated that for the first few weeks after the opening of the line a barge was left underneath in order to catch the train in case the bridge gave way.

On another occasion this troublesome bridge got stuck, and in spite of all efforts could not be lowered. As it was most important that the canal should be taken to the other side of the canal, it was lifted off the line and drawn round the road with a traction engine.