

LOVE AND LAW.

By the author of BONNY'S LOVERS.

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

"Was this what you were working for?" I demanded, with a sudden jealous suspicion.

"Perhaps I was!" she answered loftily. "I hope she will never be sorry that she chose wrong."

"I hope not!" I assented cordially.

"A real gentleman," repeated Miss Woodward—"as free-handed and free-spoken as a prince—a gentleman who knows how to treat a woman, even if she is only a servant—a gentleman I'd work my fingers to the bone for, and so would a good many more!"

"You did your best for him," I could not help saying. "You have nothing to reproach yourself with."

It was true, as Widdrington had said, that all the women were fascinated by handsome, dare-devil Charlie. What wonder that Nona had felt his power? I could only be thankful that the fascination had not gone deeper.

"No; I've nothing to reproach myself with," the maid assented. "And I'll pray night and day for my young lady, that she may see her mistake before it is too late."

And with this parting shot the resolute virago marched sternly from the room without a word of farewell civility.

I finished my interrupted letters, and then sought Nona. She met me with a dismayed face.

"Such a strange thing has happened," she exclaimed. "Woodward has left at a moment's notice. She would not give any explanation of her going, only said that she was sorry to inconvenience me, but circumstances obliged her to leave at once; and she has gone."

"The most extraordinary proceeding," chimed in Miss Elmslie. "I told Nona that she could insist upon Woodward's remaining until she had found another servant. If it had not happened that a young girl from the village is at liberty to take her place at once, it would have been most inconvenient and awkward; and Woodward was such an excellent maid. I suppose

common thief. You will not allow it—promise me you will not."

"It will not be so bad as that," I assured her. "Of course he must be made to surrender the will. However, we will not talk about him any longer. This is my last evening, you know, and I have a thousand things to say. The time is too precious to waste, my darling."

I left the Rectory on the following day. The next few months were passed in a dream of happiness which left me little thought for Charlie Branscombe or his concerns. Occasionally, it is true, I was brought into relations with Widdrington, for my connection with the office could not be abruptly terminated, and in the matter of Forest Lea I felt that I had a special responsibility to discharge. The detective was actively following up clue after clue as they came into his hands. His pride and his professional interest were thoroughly roused by his first failure, and he was bent on completing the case in which he had already worked so hard. Mr. Charles Branscombe had not left England—so much Widdrington was sure of. Probably far from home and the numerous friends and adherents who were always ready to help him.

"I shall run him down yet," Widdrington confidently asserted. "He must be starved out sooner or later." In the meantime Forest Lea was shut up and deserted, at the Rector's constant regret; and only a vague impression of the truth floated about the neighborhood, where my darling still remained, under the friendly protection of Mr. and Mrs. Heathcote.

She had promised to be mine in the summer, when the first anniversary of the good old Colonel's death had come and gone. Then we were to have a pretty wedding in the village church—a wedding all flowers and sunshine, such as became our hopes and our happiness.

I was fully occupied in preparing for that supreme event. I was refresh-

—he was making straight for here," he explained. "I saw him before me over the fields not ten minutes ago, and I'll swear I hardly lost sight of him. He must be in the house; there isn't another place this way—not even a shave of wood to hide him—and Smith and Varley would have stopped him further down. He must be in the house."

"Maybe, ye can ask," retorted the damsel indifferently, reaching out her hand towards a group of pods, as if dismissing the subject.

The officer went his way, with just another admiring glance at the pretty figure in the charming green avenue.

The door at the cottage stood wide open; a black cat was dozing in the sun; all was quiet and sleepy; there was not a sound about the place. The officer's loud knock brought a stupid servant-girl with a snub nose and a wide-open mouth to answer his reiterated question.

"Where's the—the young gentleman who came in here just now? I want to speak to him."

"There's no young gentleman here," she replied—"only my master and misses, and they're both old."

"Where are they? Tell them Mr. James Brown wants to speak to them."

The girl preceded him into the parlor at the end of the passage, after knocking at the door, and gave his message verbatim—

"Mr. James Brown wants to speak to ye."

A decent old man of the retired tradesman class, disturbed in his afternoon nap, looked up with blinking eyes at the impatient constable, whilst his comely old partner put down the stocking she was darning, and prepared to interview the visitor.

"Good afternoon, sir," she said, civilly. "Won't you take a seat; it's warm walking."

Was it real innocence or only a sham? Mr. Brown was not going to be taken in; these people were probably allies of Mr. Charles Branscombe—old servants or something of that sort. The old gentleman's yawn was too demonstrative, and he did not mean to let the old lady's civility put him off the scent—he was quite up to that game. He glanced sharply around the room, behind the old man's ponderous arm-chair, at the cupboard door, even up the chimney, before he answered in his most official tone—

"A young gent entered this house about ten minutes or maybe a quarter of an hour ago, Mr. Charles Branscombe by name. I've got business with him—very particular business, if you'll let him know."

"Mr. Charles Branscombe," echoed the old man; "he's not here, and hasn't been, to my knowledge."

"Then it's without your knowledge," retorted Mr. Brown, who was getting cross. "I'll take my davy he's somewhere on the premises; and, as I hold a warrant for his apprehension, I shall have to search for him—with your leave or without it."

"You're an ill-mannered upstart—that's what you are," exclaimed Mr. Walker, very wide awake now, and starting up to face Mr. Brown. "And I dare you to search my house—warrant or no warrant, I'm an honest man, and I've nothing to do, with your scamps; and if I was ten years younger I'd kick you out faster than you came in—that's what I'd do"—warming as he went on.

"Hush, Samuel!" interposed the dame, laying her hand upon his arm, as he shook his fist in the intruder's face. "Never mind his manners—it's only his ignorance. We don't mean to resist the law; if he's got a warrant, let him show it, and he's welcome to search if he likes. He'll soon see it's no use. My husband is old, sir"—aside to Mr. Brown, as the old gentleman walked to the window, and wiped his forehead with his handkerchief—"and he's apt to be hasty when he's waked sudden out of his sleep. Let us see your warrant, if you please, sir."

(To be continued.)

IN THE ODD CORNER.

QUEER AND CURIOUS THINGS AND EVENTS.

Strange Creatures, the Peculiar Characteristics of Two Fat Toads—What Young Wasps Feed Upon—Among Tahiti's Savages.

To Thyrza.

Without a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what Truth might well have
said,
By all, save one, perchance, forgot,
Ah! wherefore art thou lowly laid?

By many a short and many a sea,
Divided, yet beloved in vain!
The past, the future fled to thee,
To bid us meet—no—ne'er again!

Could this have been—a word, a look,
That softly said, "We part in peace,"
Had taught my bosom how to bloom,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.

And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepared a light and painless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shall see
Who held, and holds thee in his heart?

Oh! who like him had watched thee here?
Or sadly marked thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere Death appear,
When silent sorrow fears to sigh?

I'll all was past! But when no more
'Twas thine to seek of human woes,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,
Had flowed as fast—as now they flow.

Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere called but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours?

Ours too the glance none saw beside,
The smile none else might understand;
The whispered thought of hearts allied,
The pressure of the thrilling hand;

The kiss, so guileless and refined,
That Love each warmer wish forbore;
Those eyes proclaimed so pure a mind,
Even passion blushed to plead for more.

The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
When prone, unlike thee, to repine;
The song, celestial from thy voice,
But sweet to me from none but thine;

The pledge we wore—I wear it still,
But where is thine—Ah! where art thou?
Oh! have I born the weight of ill,
But never bent beneath till now!

Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
The cup of woe for me to drain,
If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again!

But if in words more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss,
To wean me from mine anguish here.

Teach me—too early taught by thee!
To bear, forgiving and forgiven;
On earth thy love was such to me,
It fain would form my hope in heaven.
—Byron.

Strange Creatures.

In a greenhouse in this garden I have two tame toads, named Martha and Jane respectively. Also there is a tiny one called Babetto, but she can hardly be counted, as she is small and seldom on view. These toads are strange and interesting creatures, differing much from each other in appearance and character. Martha is stout and dark-colored, a bold-natured toad of friendly habit; Jane, on the other hand, is pale and thin, with a depressed air which suggests resignation born of long experience of circumstances over which she has no control. Some of this depression may be due to the fact that once, entering the greenhouse in the twilight, I trod upon her accidentally, a shock from which she seems never to have recovered, although, owing to the adaptive powers of toads, beyond a slight flattening she took no physical harm from an adventure which must have been painful. Indeed, I am not sure that of the two of us I did not suffer most, for I know of few things more upsetting than the feel of a fat toad beneath one's foot. Anyhow, since that day Jane has never quite trusted me. These toads I feed with lob-worms, or sometimes with woodlice and centipedes taken from traps made of hollowed-out potatoes, which are set among the flower pots to attract such creatures. In the latter case, the insects must be thrown before the toad, which never seems to see them until they begin to run, although, its ears being quick, it can sometimes hear them as they move along the floor behind it. When the toad catches sight of an insect its attitude of profound repose changes suddenly to one of extraordinary animation. Its swivel eyes seem to project and fix themselves upon the doomed creature off which it is about to lunch; its throat begins to palpitate with violence, and its general air betrays intense and concentrated interest. Presently, from contemplation it proceeds to action. By slow but purposeful movements of its crooked limbs it advances, pauses and advances again, till at length it reaches a position which it considers convenient. Then, just as the centipede gains a sheltering pebble, a long pink flash seems to proceed from the head of the toad. That is its tongue. Another instant and the pink thing has twisted itself round the insect and retired into the capacious mouth, and there, once more wrapped in deep peace and rest, sits the toad, its eyes turned in pious thankfulness to heaven, or, rather, to the roof of the greenhouse.—Rider Haggard in Longman's.

Sights in Constantinople.

Constantinople teems with monuments and relics of past ages, which time has consecrated and not destroyed and which await the contemplation of the visitor. The column of Constantine the Great, erected in 330, still towers, blackened and mutilated, but erect, in the center of his ancient forum. Impressive remains of the gigantic triple wall and of the moat still stretch from the Golden Horn to the Marmora. The ruins of Justinian's palace still rise from the edge of the sea and the palace of the Heblomon still crowns the seventh hill. The monastery of Chora, now Kathrie Djami, and a dozen other Byzantine churches still present all the peculiarity of the Byzantine architectural school. The subterranean cisterns, the most enormous ever constructed anywhere, still exist, the chief or Royal cistern—now called by the Ottomans Yeri Batan Seral, or the underground palace—still standing, with its 336 marble columns in perfect symmetry. In the museum are the famous sarcophagi from Sidon, two especially, those of "Alexander" and of "The Weepers," unsurpassed among all the existing legacies of ancient art. Most precious of all the gifts of antiquity is the bronze serpent of Delphi, cast by the Greeks in 476 B. C., placed by them in the favorite shrine of Apollo, brought hither by Constantine 330 A. D., and still showing distinct, as if cut today, names of the immortal cities which fought against and defeated Xerxes. Most venerable of churches, Sancta Sophia, still soars heavenward with its marvelous dome and its affluence of mosaic and its unequalled church history of more than 1,350 years.

Giant Trout in a Barrel.

From Greenville, Me., at the foot of Moosehead lake, comes a strange fish story. Cyrus Higgins of Olamont went fishing at Moosehead in a brook running into the lake, and for a time caught only little bits of trout. Then he felt a mighty tug at his hook, and thought he had hold of a laker that had wandered up the brook on the high water. After much effort, however, he found himself unable to haul in his line, and began to investigate, thinking the hook had become fouled on some object at the bottom of the pool. With the aid of a salmon gaff he raised a barrel to the surface, and was surprised to perceive that his line led into the bung-hole of the barrel. Further investigation showed that there was something moving about inside the barrel, and that whatever it was it had hold of the hook. The barrel was then broken up, and out leaped an enormous trout; not a laker, but a real red-spotted brook trout the size of a laker. Higgins' theory is that the trout went into the barrel when small, and, protected alike from fishermen and other enemies and with plenty to eat, it had grown and grown, until it became a giant among the speckled tribe.—New York Press.

What Young Wasps Feed Upon.

From the Chautauquan: The wasp is not a vegetarian like the bee, and our cement-maker has before her the problem of supporting her young with meat rather than with bread. As her eggs are laid out in hot weather and as enough food must be stored in the cell with the egg to mature the young insect, the question is how to preserve the meat fresh for so long a time. She meets the difficulty thus: After a tube is finished except one end, which is left open, she flies off on a hunt for spiders. She finds a fat, healthy one, pounces upon it, stings it and carries it off and places it in the mud cell. She repeats this process until she has placed as many spiders in the tube as, according to her judgment, will be needed. She then lays an egg in the

cell and walls up the opening. The remarkable thing about this performance is the magic effect of her sting. Whether it is the result of a subtle poison or whether it is a special spot in the spider's nervous system where the sting is inserted we do not know. Certain it is that after being thus stung the spider lives on in a paralyzed condition for weeks and even months. It can move only slightly and remains helpless in its mud sepulcher until the wasp egg hatches into a voracious grub, which at once falls to and eats with great relish the meat thus miraculously preserved. Whether the wasp sting renders the spider insensible to pain or not is a question not yet settled. However, the chances are in favor of the theory that it does. Anyway, we need waste no sympathy on the spider, the most bloodthirsty of all the little people of the field and woods. There is a sense of retributive justice in the thought of a spider helpless and at the mercy of a small insect which it would have mercilessly devoured had it been able. So we need not accuse our alert, industrious cement-maker of any unreasonably cruelty if she, like us, insists upon a meat diet for her young, nor need we have any fear of her sting, for she seldom uses it as a weapon of offense or defense.

Among Tahiti's Savages.

At Tahiti, in the Society Islands, partly by reason of the extreme fertility of the soil which furnishes a subsistence without labor the inhabitants are idle and dissolute. They flatten their noses, and bore a hole through the middle partition of that feature to accommodate ornaments of flowers or feathers. Their ears are bored also, and the teeth of sharks and of human beings are inserted. Chiefs are distinguished by large circular markings in tattoo over the whole body, while common folks are tattooed only about the loins. Another queer custom requires all women, except those of the royal family, to cut their hair short. All over Polynesia the practice of infanticide is quite general, but in Tahiti it is particularly prevalent, young children being commonly strangled. Some mothers on the island are known to have done away with as many as ten of their children in this manner. Pigs, on the other hand, are greatly pampered, being fed by the old women and actually suckled by the young women. They are stuffed like capons with bread-fruit dough, and are slaughtered at festivals, but, as a rule, their flesh is reserved for consumption by the upper classes. The only other important domestic mammal is the dog, which is of a small species and has no bark at all, being bred chiefly for meat and not as a household guardian.

Weapons made formidable by the attachment of sharks' teeth are used by the natives, while small instruments of a similar description have been customarily employed for torturing and cutting up prisoners of war.

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A Poor Mental Diet.

Keats: Do not suffer your mind to dwell on unpleasant reflections—that sort of thing has been the destruction of my health. Nothing is so bad as want of health—it makes one envy scavengers and cinder shifters. There are enough real distresses and evils in wait for every one to try the most vigorous health. Not that I would say yours are not real—but they are such as to tempt you to employ your imagination on them rather than endeavor to dislodge them entirely. Do not diet your mind with grief—it destroys the constitution.

Substitute for a Corkcreeper.

Corkscrews are not always at hand when wanted. When this is the case use an ordinary large screw, with a string attached, to pull the cork.

A Natural Inquiry.

Softleigh—A brilliant—aw—Idea stuck me last evening, doncher know? Miss Cutting—Indeed! And did it have a fender on it?

PRICELESS PICTURES.

DISCOVERED IN TAKING DOWN PICTURES OF GEORGES.

Are the Work of Verrio—They Were Defaced by Nail Holes, but Damaged Parts Have Been Reproduced by Restorers.

An interesting discovery has rewarded the researches of Lord Esher and other officials at Hampton palace, England.

There has always lurked a suspicion that the walls of the famous Queen Anne's drawing room, which is in the center of the east wing of Wren's famous building, which room forms the apex on which the three great avenues of trees known to the whole world converge, contained more than the second rate portraits of the Georges. Never, however, was it supposed that an important work by that once famous decorative artist Verrio had been concealed since 1735, owing to a stupendous act of vandalism, which it is presumed was carried out by Queen Caroline in 1735, probably to prevent the apotheosis of Queen Anne from meeting her eyes in her drawing room when she became queen. And again in 1833 the beautiful paintings now discovered were covered up. The date is known by the extraordinary act of the paper hanger of that time, who, in covering up Verrio's work, scratched his own name and the date of the paper-hanging. In taking down some of the portraits of the Georges, which were intended for Kensington palace, it was noticed by an official that the top right-hand corner close to the ceiling seemed abruptly cut off from the general scheme of the beautiful ceiling, which every one has seen and admired, and which represents Queen Anne, in the chariot of Justice, dressed in purple, lined with ermine. Over her head is a crown, held by Neptune and Britannia, while surrounding and floating in the clouds are various allegorical figures representing Peace and Plenty, etc. The discovery now made shows that the whole of the walls were originally painted by Verrio in the same manner, the subject being Queen Anne's apotheosis as Queen of the Sea in the four great quarters of the globe. The importance of the "find" was not really known until Haines & Sons, the queen's picture restorers, began to clean away the century and a half's dirt and dust which had accumulated under the wall paper, when it was seen that the very dirt that obscured the pictures had really preserved their beautiful colors and designs and it is only now, when the walls have been nearly restored, that a true appreciation of the discovery can be made. On carefully stripping the red colored paper off the walls it was found that the vandals who first obscured the pictures had done immense damage by cutting away much of Verrio's mural painting to insert the battens on which they stretched the tough canvas to hold a great silk damask covering. By carefully nursing every bit of the design the restorers have been able to reproduce these fragments of the picture which were torn away by the workman's plaster hammer. The green silk damask covering was Queen Caroline's (George II's wife) design for the covering of Queen Anne's pictures, and over this she hung the pictures of her own picture, which she brought from Kensington palace. Many shreds of this silk covering were found attached to the battens. In 1833 this silk became tattered and faded and was taken down to give place to ordinary heavy wall paper stretched on lute canvas. The workmen at the latter date, owing to the dirt, may not have noticed the splendors of the work on the walls; however, no notice was taken of it at the time. In Queen Caroline's time it evidently was forgotten that rich paintings were under the silk covering, for whenever it was necessary to hang a new picture or rehang another, or put up a piece of tapestry, nails to hold these were ruthlessly driven into the paintings at the back, and the restorers have found thousands of holes all over the works. Luckily, however, the holes have mostly escaped the faces and figures of the paintings. Every one who has visited Hampton Court palace knows the king's great staircase and its heroic paintings by Verrio representing the Triumph of Bacchus. It may be safely said that the new Verrios in Queen Anne's drawing room are infinitely better in color and design than those on the staircase by the same artist. The room is now closed to the public, but will be open to all as soon as the restoration is complete.



"WHERE'S THE YOUNG FELLOW GONE TO?"

she has had some quarrel with the servants—and she never had a good temper."

"I wonder," began Nona, and then stopped suddenly.

"What do you wonder?" I asked.

"Nothing," she laughed, "only an odd idea of mine."

"Tell me your ideas; I like to hear them all."

"I was wondering whether Tillott's leaving had anything to do with Woodward's. I know she liked him, and thought him a great improvement on Charles; but then he was so much younger. Of course it was very silly of me to connect the two events."

"I don't know about that. I think it was very sagacious of you," I answered.

"Then there is something. What are you laughing at? What is it?"

"You are right, my dearest. Woodward's and Tillott's departures do hang together."

And then, Miss Elmslie having discreetly retired, I told Nona the whole story from beginning to end, only enjoining on her the secrecy which the dear little indiscreet Miss Elmslie could never have been trusted to preserve.

Nona's astonishment was unbounded. "What a plot!" she exclaimed. "It is like a book; and Woodward, who seemed so quiet and so respectable, was helping it all. And that man Tillott was a detective. How strange it all is! I feel as if I were in a dream. The will was really stolen then, not lost, and—and now I understand; you puzzled me so when you persisted you had seen me at Molton, and that I had taken your bag. I was puzzled, and—and a little angry"—blushing.

"Yes, you were thoroughly mystified," I agreed.

"Oh, I do hope," said Nona, "that Alan Widdrington, will never, never find Charlie—poor Charlie, who was my playfellow and friend, and my poor uncle's pet and darling, treated like a

my newly-acquired home—a lovely old house in Kent, amongst the hoppers and woods of the Weald—and sparing no pains to make it a fitting nest for the sweet, gentle dove who was to preside over it.

In such happy occupation, with frequent visits to the Midshire Rectory, the months passed quickly away. I had no personal part in the next act of the drama which concerned Mr. Charles Branscombe, and must leave its chronicle to another pen.

CHAPTER XVI.

A little maid in a blue cotton gown and a white muslin cap was picking peas in a cottage garden. She was taking her work in leisurely fashion, sitting on a three-legged stool with her basket in her lap, and gathering the pump pods as they dangled close to her hand. The vines grew high that year, and the little maid as she sat was almost hidden in the green valley; not so much hidden, however, but that a hot and flustered police officer saw her as he tramped heavily up the path, and burst out an abrupt question—

"Where's the young fellow gone to?"

She looked up with a pair of tranquil blue eyes, growing round with astonishment, as she repeated after him, in a strong country accent—

"Young fellow? What young fellow d'ye mean?"

She looked so fresh and so pretty, and the yellow fringe which peeped out from under her cap was so infantile in its innocent simplicity, that Mr. James Brown felt a momentary impulse, in spite of his frustration, to chuck her under the cool rounded chin, and even perhaps help himself to a kiss from her red lips. If he hadn't been so hot and so worried—where the dickens could that young rip have got to?—he would certainly have taken advantage of his opportunities. As it was he pursued his investigation and resisted the temptation.

"A young fellow in a light tweed suit