

# LOVE IS BEST

By Florence Hodgkinson

## CHAPTER I.

A large house in one of the most fashionable London squares; an upper room, furnished something between a study and a boudoir; a small fire burning in the grate—for, in spite of the April sunshine, the wind was in the east—and for sole occupant a young girl, whose age was 18, though she looked a little older, perhaps because she had cried till her eyes were hot and swollen, and her cheeks had lost their delicate coloring—a girl who was the daughter of one of the richest commoners in England, and who yet was as unhappy as the poorest wail in London's streets.

Beryl Lindon had no mother. She could just recall a frail, delicate woman, who loved her very much, but who seemed too sad and sorrowful to show her affection. She had been a tiny child when that mother was taken away, and yet she had been quite conscious that, save for leaving her, the tired woman was glad to go. Her mother's love had been taken from Beryl full early, and no other had replaced it.

Mr. Lindon placed his daughter in a private family at the seaside until she was 10 years old, when she was sent to a boarding school in Brussels. Once a year he had called at the school, and had a brief, formal interview with his daughter in the principal's own sanctum; and 12 months ago he had removed Beryl from the select establishment, and brought her to his stately home in Elchester square.

For one year they had lived together, father and child, yet strangers in heart and feeling; they drew no nearer to each other. Beryl knew perfectly that to the handsome, well-preserved man of the world, still under 50, she was only an encumbrance. He took no trouble to conceal the fact, and his friends took little notice of the shy, frightened-looking girl they thought such a contrast to her fascinating father. She was not "out." It pleased Mr. Lindon to regard her as too young for society, so she had no chance of meeting people more congenial to her than her father's circle. She was terribly lonely, desperately unhappy; but yet, after reading the letter which had come from Mr. Lindon that morning, it seemed to the girl she had never before known what trouble meant, and that if only things could be once more as they were yesterday she would be content.

Her breakfast had gone away untouched—all her meals were served upstairs in her father's absence from home—and she sat over the fire, with a look of such pain on her face as was terrible to see in a girl of 18. Suddenly the door opened, and the housekeeper entered without the ceremony of knocking, unless, indeed, her knock had not penetrated to Beryl's dazed, stunned brain.

Mrs. Markham was a kind, motherly woman, not a lady by birth, but well educated, and with more refinement of feeling than many of her superiors. She had been in Eustace Lindon's employ ever since he took the house in Elchester square 10 years before.

"I came to speak to you, Miss Beryl," she said gently. "I had strange news from Mr. Lindon this morning, and when Nancy came down and told me you'd not touched your breakfast, I thought perhaps he'd written to you, too."

"Yes, Mrs. Markham. I can't quite take it in, it seems too terrible."

The housekeeper sat down opposite Beryl. She was quite as indignant as the girl could be.

"You see, Miss Beryl, your papa's not an old man—47, I believe—and it's natural he should tire of a lonely life. Perhaps his new wife will make things pleasanter for you. You've had but a dull time of it since you left school."

"I shouldn't mind his marrying," said Beryl frankly—"in fact, I think I should be glad; but that he should choose that woman, should put her in my mother's place—it is terrible!"

Mrs. Markham looked bewildered. "Do you mean that the lady is any one we know, Miss Beryl? Mr. Lindon never mentioned her name to me. He only said the wedding would be at once, and he hoped to bring his wife home on May 1."

"He is going to marry Miss Maunders," said Beryl, almost apathetically.

The housekeeper started.

When Beryl Lindon first left school a very showy-looking woman was engaged as her maid-companion. Miss Maunders was supposed to walk with Beryl, look after her wardrobe, and make herself generally useful. From the first day of their meeting Beryl took antipathy to the woman. She felt that Miss Maunders was unworthy her trust and confidence, that she had none of the qualifications she professed; and the girl yearned to escape from the companionship she hated. At last, only three months ago, things came to a crisis, Miss Maunders, whom the household suspected of a liking for stimulants, went into a more violent rage than usual, and actually forgot herself so far as to strike her employer's daughter. At that time Mr. Lindon was away, spending Christmas in the country. Beryl, half beside herself with indignation, appealed to the housekeeper. Mrs. Markham paid Miss Maunders a month's wages and dismissed her on the spot, and she departed, vowing vengeance against Beryl.

And this was the person Mr. Lindon was to make his wife! The housekeeper could hardly credit it.

"Miss Beryl," said Mrs. Markham

slowly, after a long pause, "I simply can't believe it! Are you sure you've made no mistake? Miss Maunders is no more of a lady than I am, or even one of the upper servants, and your papa's a gentleman through and through. It can't be true!"

"You had better read his letter," said Beryl simply. "There seems no reason for doubting it."

## CHAPTER II.

It was a very brief letter, written on the thickest and creamiest of note paper, and barely covering the first page. Few men, let us hope, could have written in such terms to their only child, especially to a motherless daughter.

"Dear Beryl: I shall be married tomorrow to Miss Maunders, and I hope to return with my wife on May 1. You had better make up your mind to show proper respect and obedience to your stepmother, whose authority over you will be complete."

"It's a cruel letter, Miss Beryl," said Mrs. Markham, as she put it back in its envelope, "and may God forgive your father for writing it; but, my dear young lady, depend upon it, it's that woman's work."

Beryl shivered.

"Papa never cared for me," she said slowly. "Mrs. Markham, I have never said a word to any one, but I must now or my heart will break. I can never remember his kissing me, or seeming fond of me, even as a little thing."

"Maybe he wanted a son, Miss Beryl; but he'd no right to visit his disappointment on you. There'll be great changes here, for there's not one of my servants will stay here and call Miss Maunders mistress."

"And you will go, too?"

"I wouldn't stay an hour after she came home; but, as it happens, Miss Beryl, I've not my choice. Mr. Lindon has sent me a check for £50 instead of notice, as he says his wife will prefer to be her own housekeeper. I've saved money in the 10 years I've been here, and I don't think I shall take another situation. If I look round, I dare say I can buy the lease and good will of a small lodging house at the seaside reasonably, and that will seem more independent."

Beryl put one hand appealingly on the housekeeper's plump arm.

"Mrs. Markham, I can't stay here, I'd rather starve! You know what that woman was before, when she was only a servant. What would she make my life like when she is mistress?"

"My dear, it's a sorry business. Haven't you any relations you could go to for a bit, anybody who would take your part, and just tell Mr. Lindon that before you came back he must guarantee his new wife would treat you properly?"

Beryl shook her head.

"I don't think I have a relation in the world."

"Well," confessed Mrs. Markham. "I've been here 10 years, and I've never heard your father mention a relation; but, you see, Miss Beryl, there's the other side. Your mother must have had relations, and her family would be the best people to help you, because, naturally, they'd resent your papa's marriage as much as you do."

"Mamma had no relations," said Beryl. "I'll tell you how I know. The last thing I can remember of her was one day just before she died she begged papa to be kind to me. She said she had been an orphan, and knew how sad it was."

"But she might have had a brother or sister," persisted Mrs. Markham. "Miss Beryl, think quickly over your past life, and try to see if there isn't any one who'd be able to tell you."

"But my past story is so short," said Beryl, "it doesn't want thinking over. I know we lived abroad for a year or two before my mother died. My little sister went first, and mother never got over her loss. I had a nurse who was very good to me. She could have told me all I want to know; but papa sent her away directly after my mother's funeral. I think she went to America."

"Then he took me to a family at Brighton. Doctor Burgess and his wife were not unkind to me; but they had children of their own, and I always felt like the outsider. I know I was quite glad to leave them and go to school."

"Brighton's not a long journey," said Mrs. Markham. "It might be worth while to go and see them."

"I am sure they could tell me nothing. I stayed there till I was 10, and I know Mrs. Burgess told me one day I ought to be very fond of my father because he was the only relation I had in all the world. I think she had known my mother just a little. They were both orphans, and brought up in the same school—a kind of charitable institution."

Mrs. Markham felt in despair of finding any kindred for her young lady.

"There's many would say it was your duty to stay with your father and make the best of things," she went on gravely; "but when I know what that woman is I can't bear to think of you at her mercy."

"If I went away, could my father force me to come back?" asked Beryl.

"No. You are of an age when a girl may choose her own home; but if you leave him he can refuse to provide for you."

For the first time that morning a look of hope came into Beryl's beautiful eyes.

"Then I'll get a situation of some

sort, and go to it before he comes home. That will be quite easy."

"Quite easy! The housekeeper's kindly heart ached for her. She knew too well how hard it is for a girl with no special talents or qualifications to find a niche, and they had only three weeks. The time was all too short."

"I don't want to encourage you to rebellion, Miss Beryl, and yet I can't bear to think of you at Miss Maunders' mercy. If you're quite mad; as your mind, my dear young lady, I'll do my best to help you find something."

Hard as posts generally are to find, specially those worth having, it is often comparatively easy to get into a situation at very low remuneration at the beginning of a school term. It happens now and then that principals have failed to settle with any one in the holidays, and have to take the first person who offers rather than begin school short-handed.

Perhaps this explained Beryl's seeming success, for within a week of first answering advertisements she was engaged by Mrs. Tanner of Easthill-on-Sea, as English teacher in her small but select school in that rising watering-place.

The remuneration was to be £5 a term, at which Mrs. Markham sniffed; but the teacher was to have the option of remaining during the holidays, and so would be at no expense for board and lodging.

"I don't altogether like it," said Mrs. Markham, re-reading Mrs. Tanner's letter critically; "but, Miss Beryl, if only you stay a year, you'll be able to demand better terms in another situation, and I think you'd be happier anywhere than here under Miss Maunders' tyranny."

In truth, that lady was now Mrs. Lindon; but both the housekeeper and Beryl continued to speak of her by her maiden name—Mrs. Markham because she grudged her erstwhile subordinate her rise in life, and Beryl because it was painful to her to give her mother's title to a woman she hated.

Mrs. Markham came to see Beryl off, and had her luggage labelled for Easthill; then, when she had put the girl into an empty third-class carriage, she lingered for a few last words.

"Try and put up with things for the year, Miss Beryl, even if all's not as you would like. And if you're in trouble of any kind, my dear, just write to me. My sister will send on your letters any time, and I'd be proud to help you."

"Thank you." The tears were dimming the girl's sweet eyes as she put her head out of the carriage window and kissed the housekeeper warmly. "I shall be grateful to you as long as I live, Mrs. Markham. Without you I could never have managed to escape from Elchester square, and I think to have stayed there after she came would have killed me!"

The bell sounded, the engine gave a shrill, unearthly sound, meant presumably for a whistle, and the train was off.

Mrs. Markham did not turn away till she could no longer see the white handkerchief Beryl was waving; then there was a suspicious moisture in her eyes.

"God help her, poor little thing, for it seems to me no one else can! It's true enough, as she says, Mr. Lindon never loved her, and now he's married that woman it's as like as not he'd be worse than ever. They say he has 30,000 a year and a beautiful country seat, yet his daughter is content to work hard for £5 a term. It doesn't seem right, somehow."

And it was not right; but Mrs. Markham did not know one fact which would have explained a good deal that puzzled her. Eustace Lindon had an ugly secret in his past, a dark blot upon his character he would fain hide from all the world. He did not admire Julia Maunders, and he had not the least desire to marry her; but men with a secret, who are leading a double life, have often to pay dearly for the guarding of that secret. It happened that Julia Maunders knew a good deal of Lindon's past life, and the price of her silence was a wedding ring.

(To be continued.)

## INVALUABLE GRASS.

A Chinese Bamboo Which Produces Vegetable Opals.

It is the bamboo which furnishes the Chinaman with practically everything he requires through life, from his cradle to his coffin, and that also produces precious stones for him, only the celestial is not aware of the fact, or else attaches no value to it. In some varieties of this invaluable grass a mineral substance composed of lime or silica and potash is frequently discovered, being formed, it is supposed, owing to some kind of disease in the juices or stem of the plant. In the course of time, says the London Mail, this deposit hardens and forms the famous "tabasheer" of the natives, which exactly resembles the opal in appearance, and is, according to Prof. Brewster, of precisely the same character and composition. The Chinese, however, know nothing of its value as a precious stone, but collect tabasheer simply for its supposed medicinal properties. Unfortunately, some of the most finely marked and colored specimens of these vegetable stones are exceedingly fragile. It may be mentioned that in none of the varieties of the bamboo yet raised and found hardy in this country have any traces of a deposit of tabasheer at present been discovered, so that any one who contemplates the establishment of a bamboo plantation in England for the purpose of opal raising is recommended to invest his capital in some other way.

The more a woman understands the more good time she spends in the kitchen.

## State Capital Observations.

Expressions Emulative for the Good of Republican Supremacy.

It is becoming patent to the members of the legislature that they will have plenty to do aside from electing two United States senators. The bills that promise to confront them at the coming session are, many of them, of unusual importance and will require a great deal of time and thought. They will need proper attention.

The custom of the members devoting their entire time to senatorial matters has been severely condemned. The members, however, are not to blame for this custom. With lobbyists engaged in electing senators buzzing about the members' ears at all times of the day and during a great part of the night, it is difficult for them to devote much time to legitimate legislation.

If the members do not get trouble enough out of the railroad legislation, that is likely to come before it, with some crying for another board of transportation and others demanding a commission to be elected by the people, and still others wanting nothing done, they may take a day off and ponder over the congressional and legislative apportionment that is certain to come before them. How to make five districts out of six is as exciting as the pigs in the clover puzzle. A demand has been made for a general revision of the revenue laws. That means three months' study and the same number of months' dodging which is said to be as unpleasant as facing the trouble. The dodger leads an unhappy life. The members who are able to dodge the lobbyists who are pushing legislation in the interests of county commissioners and other county officers may run up to the arms of some one who want a new law for the regulation of fraternal insurance societies. An organization has already been formed to introduce a bill for uniform regulations for such societies.

While the members are hiding out from all these they will be pursued by others working for a free high school law to take the place of the one which has been declared unconstitutional. Then will come the scores of people with interests in claims and the general appropriation bills, others who are determined to have a constitutional amendment, or a new supreme court commission, or a constitutional amendment for an increase in the number of supreme court justices, or who want more stringent liquor laws, or an appropriation for a state exhibit at the Buffalo exposition, or permanent buildings for the state fair.

Then in the meantime the members will have to keep their eyes on those who have instituted contest for seats in the legislature, and when they see one of them coming, dodge into the nearest committee room. There are times, however, when all the members will be present in their respective houses of the legislature and the men with bills to push will watch at the doors and wait patiently until they have the poor members at their mercy.

Ross Hammond of the Fremont Tribune will not accept the rank of colonel on Governor Dietrich's staff. In his Tribune he declines as follows: "The military editor of the Tribune has just received an invitation from Governor Dietrich, commander-in-chief of the Nebraska army and navy, to accept a position on his staff. I am very much in need of an experienced warrior," writes the editor, "with a manifestation of keen discernment growing out of a close perusal of Random Shots, 'one who has distinguished himself on many a battle field, to serve on my staff, and after looking the state over I have come to the conclusion that an old battle-scarred warrior like yourself would be of great service in the campaigns to come.' As the military editor understands it the duty of a colonel on the governor's staff, is to provide himself with a snugly fitting uniform, gaily bedecked with gold braid, and with gorgeous epaulets and pantalets to appear on state occasions with the governor, submissively following him around looking fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell, as Milton would say, but in reality being as mild and inoffensive and useless as a wooden Indian. Peradventure the military editor is admirably equipped for this sort of thing but he demurs. He has respectfully notified the governor that such a job would not fit his style of beauty; that he would not know what to do with his hands and that he would be as awkward as to mar an otherwise gorgeous and imposing spectacle; that he was raised a Quaker and the trappings of war would ill become a meek, non-combatant descendant from William Penn. And so he will leave this business to 'them ez has gifts fer it,' as Coon Dog Wes said when he left his work."

Assistant Secretary of War Meiklejohn arrived in Lincoln last week on a thirty-days' leave of absence, to look after his campaign for a seat in the United States senate. Mr. Meiklejohn will make his home at the house at Fifteenth and M streets, which he has secured for headquarters. In common with the other candidates, Mr. Meiklejohn hopes for a short contest, but also in common with the other candidates, he rather expects a long-drawn-out and bitterly contested battle. George D. has many friends and admirers among the hills and valleys of Nebraska, and every one of them hopes to see him chosen by the coming legislature.

Governor Dietrich has announced the appointment of Horace Clark of Iliaca as superintendent of the girls' industrial school at Geneva. A strong pressure was brought to bring about the appointment of some person. Several delegations were in Lincoln recently for this purpose. Besides Mr. Clark, J. W. Seabrooke was a candidate, as was also Mr. Squires. Mr. Clark is prominent in his county and is believed to be a man of much efficiency.

Congressman Burkett came home to spend the holidays.

H. C. Lindsay, chairman of the republican state central committee, has returned from Washington. It is claimed he went to the national capital to consult the horoscope in regard to his chances for the federal judgeship in the event Nebraska is divided into two districts. The result of the visit has not been made public. Mr. Lindsay has accepted the position of private secretary to Governor Dietrich, but only for a period of six months. There are various rumors afloat in regard to the judgeship, but it is believed that Mr. Lindsay has the inside track for the appointment. If made, Mr. Lindsay's successful efforts as chairman of the state committee are most favorably regarded in Washington, notwithstanding the fact that certain senatorial candidates are inclined to claim the privilege of naming the one to hold the judgeship in the event of their election by the legislature, and it is regarded as practically certain that the administration will feel grateful enough to Mr. Lindsay to reward him substantially for his services.

Of course, the state is not yet divided into two districts, and it is not certain that the division will be made. If it is, the people closely connected with the national administration may use their influence in the appointment. It is believed that the senator, whoever he may be, will have hard work to defeat the will of the administration when he expects to remain in harmony with the administration.

State Treasurer Steufer says that he had completed arrangements for a guaranty bond which will be furnished by the Fidelity and Deposit company of Maryland. The sum he will expend is \$3,000 for one year. In commenting on the fact, Mr. Steufer said he would put up the fee for the bond for one year, but he could promise the members of the legislature that if they refused to provide in some way for this expenditure he would not put it up for a second year. He said an application would be made to the legislature to provide for the cost of the state treasurer's bond, both for that of himself and that of Mr. Meserve. He thought it a saving to the state in the long run to have such bonds as it was in fact the payment of money for examinations of the office at intervals so frequent as to insure perfect accuracy in all departments of the office. Mr. Steufer said that had the policy been pursued in the past the state would have been better off by many thousands.

There is a sentiment among most of the old senators to elect Senator C. F. Steele of Jefferson as president pro tem. Senator Steele has been elected the third time consecutively and holds the honors in this respect. He has been a very popular senator, and so far as heard from all the second term men are supporting him. As there is practically no opposition to Senator Steele it is believed he will be the next president. He is an old soldier. Having served two terms prior to the last election, some of his constituents, especially those in Thayer county, accorded him a third nomination with the tacit understanding that he would be honored with this position. His experience is urged as one reason why he will make a good presiding officer whenever he is called upon by the lieutenant governor to take the gavel.

Charles M. Rigg, who toiled through the Nebraska campaign, returned recently to Lincoln from the east. He visited Chicago and New York. He says he is not a candidate for any position, state or federal.

Treasurer-elect Steufer has announced that he had named Nathan Fodrea of Grand Island as his head bookkeeper. He went to Grand Island and investigated the charges made about political laxness in leasing a paper to fusionists and was satisfied that Mr. Fodrea did not violate his party fealty.

John T. Mallalieu will not assume the duties of superintendent of the Kearney industrial school until February 1. Mr. Mallalieu recently communicated with Mr. Campbell, the present superintendent, by telephone, and this arrangement was made. Mr. Mallalieu deferred the date of change out of courtesy to Mr. Campbell, and the arrangement is entirely satisfactory to both parties. Mr. Mallalieu left the school on February 1, four years ago.

Auditor Weston has selected his bond clerk in the person of Earl Matthews of South Omaha, a son of United States Marshal Matthews. It was reported, though not on positive authority, that Mrs. Stewart, at present in the land commissioner's office, will be retained with a place in the office of the secretary of state.

Senator Currie from the Sixth district was in town a few days before Christmas, but his presence had no connection with the senatorial race. It is probable, however, that the Sixth district will enter the senatorial contest, voting for Senator Currie, in which case he would have seven votes.

Christmas week was a very quiet one so far as politics was concerned, most of the parties interested being too busy with Santa Claus to pay much attention to the senatorial or any other situation.

Antelope Cooked Whole. The New England dinner given at Detroit on December 1 by the Sons of the American Revolution was notable in various respects. Among the features was an antelope cooked whole and carried into the banquet hall by four members of the society.

London's "Tuppenny" Tubes. "The 'tuppenny' tubes are a great institution in London, especially for Americans," remarks a New Yorker, who had just returned from the other side the other day. "They are among the chief attractions, and it is a favorable diversion to purchase a ticket for a shoot through them. The tickets are almost counterparts of our elevated railway tickets in New York. The 'tuppenny' tubes," as he explained, "is the name of the underground railway. They are doing a great business in London, and there will be more of them soon. Americans promise to have control of nearly all the systems."

Referred Him to One Who Knew. A new bit of Washington gossip tells how one day last winter Senator Chandler, of New Hampshire, being about to enter the senate chamber from the public corridor was accosted by one of two little girls, who had wandered in there. "Mister, what does it cost to go in there?" said the child. At that moment Chandler saw Clark, the Montana millionaire, coming around the corner. "Ask that man," said the New Hampshire man, "He knows all about it."

Left His Law Books in His Office. The late Senator Davis was known as one of the foremost students of Shakespeare of the present day, and in his home he had a magnificent library. A remarkable thing about this library was that there was not a single law book in the collection, for during the last twenty years of his life he made it a rule never to bring his business cares to his fireside.

Dewey Arch Goes to Charleston. The navy arch in New York City is not yet to depart into the rubbish heap—though it is to be disposed of as rubbish, for President Guggenheimer of the municipal council says that under the city charter there is no other way. So the South Carolina Interstate and West Indian exposition will receive the arch, which will be taken down with all the care possible, and transported to Charleston, where it will be reconstructed.

LOW RATES TO THE SOUTH. Excursion tickets at reduced rates are now being sold by the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway to the prominent resorts in the South, including Jacksonville, Fla., Mobile, Ala., New Orleans, La., Savannah, Ga., El Paso, Tex., which are good for return passage at any time prior to June 1st, 1901. Information regarding rates, routes, time, etc., can be obtained on application to any coupon ticket agent of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway.

Eat little meat and see that it is cooked. Try Magnetic Starch—it will last longer than any other. Running water often gets its start from a spring.

There is a Class of People Who are injured by the use of coffee. Recently there has been placed in all the grocery stores a new preparation called GRAIN-O, made of pure grains, that takes the place of coffee. The most delicate stomach receives it without distress, and but few can tell it from coffee. It does not cost over one-fourth as much. Children may drink it with great benefit. 15 cents and 25 cents per package. Try it. Ask for GRAIN-O.

The fewer airs some musicians can play the more they put on. Your clothes will not crack if you use Magnetic Starch. A pessimist is a person who doesn't expect the expected to happen.

You Can Get Allen's Foot-Ease Free. Write to-day to Allen S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y., for a FREE sample of Allen's Foot-Ease, a powder, that cures sweating, damp, swollen, aching feet. Makes new or tight shoes easy. A certain cure for Chilblains and Frost-bites. At all druggists and shoe stores; 25c.

It is a remarkable fact that only sensible persons ever agree with us. If you have not tried Magnetic Starch try it now. You will then use no other. No matter how changeable a man may be he always wants a little more change.

Thirty minutes is all the time required to dye with PUTNAM FADE-LESS DYES. Some people seem to think that they have an inherent ability to make mistakes. STOCK MEN ALL GOING.

The fourth annual convention of the National Live Stock Association at Salt Lake promises to be the largest and most interesting gathering of stockmen ever held in this country. Salt Lake City is going to cover itself with glory in the manner in which the visitors will be entertained. The convention will be held in the Assembly hall of the Mormon church and a grand concert will be tendered the delegates and visitors in the Tabernacle on the first evening. The programme of the entertainment committee contemplates events for each evening of the convention and after the convention adjourns, there are excursions to the mines and elsewhere. Colorado is going to send a large delegation and the Denver & Rio Grande railroad will run a special train, leaving Denver Sunday, January 13, which will reach Salt Lake City the next day in time for the committee meetings. The fare for the round trip will be \$18 from Denver, Colorado Springs or Pueblo and one fare from other points in the state. Those contemplating going should engage sleeping car accommodations at once. Write to S. K. Hooper, general passenger agent, Denver, or see any Rio Grande ticket agent. It will be a delightful midwinter trip, and no stockman who is interested in the industry can afford not to attend the meeting.