

TOTAL LOVE.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA
INTERNATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION.

CHAPTER XIV.—(CONTINUED.)

"You will not die, I bore it, and still live; and it is so much harder for me, because I have to bear it all alone. You have your religion to help you, Margie. Surely that will bear you up! I have heard all you pious people prate enough of its service in time of trouble to remember that consolation."

"Don't, Alexandrine. It is sinful to scorn God's holy religion. Yes, you are right; it will help me. God himself will help me, if I ask him. He knows how much I stand in need of it."

"I am glad you are so likely to be supported," returned the girl, half earnestly, half-contemptuously. "Are you satisfied in regard to Mr. Archer Trevlyn?"

"I will not credit it!" cried Margie, passionately. "He did not do that deed! He could not! So good, and noble, and pitiful of all suffering humanity! And beside, what motive could he have?"

"The motive was all-powerful. Has not Mr. Trevlyn, by his own confession, loved you from his youth up?"

"Yes."

"And Paul Linmere was about to become your husband. Could there be a more potent reason for Archer Trevlyn to desire Mr. Linmere's death? He was an obstacle which could be removed in no other way than by death, because you had promised your father to marry him, and you could not falsify your word. All men are weak and liable to sin; is Trevlyn any exception? Margie, I have told you frankly what I know. You can credit it or not. I leave it with you; decide it as you think best. It is eight o'clock. I will go now, for it is time for your lover to come for you."

"O, I cannot meet him—not to-night! I must have time to think—time to collect my thoughts! My head whirls so, and everything is so dark! Stay, Alexandrine, and excuse me to him. Say I have a headache—anything to quiet him. I cannot see him now! I should go mad! Let me have a night to think of it!"

Alexandrine put her hand on the soft hair of the bowed head.

"My poor Margie! It is hard for you. Hark! there is the bell. He has come. Will you not go down?"

"No, no, no! Do what you judge best, and leave me to myself and my God."

Alexandrine went out, and Margie, locking the door after her, flung herself down on the carpet and buried her face in the pillows of the sofa.

Miss Lee swept down the staircase, her dark, bright face resplendent, her bearing haughty as that of an empress. Arch was in the parlor. He looked up eagerly as the door opened, but his countenance fell when he saw that it was only Miss Lee. She greeted him cordially.

"Good evening, Mr. Trevlyn. I am deputized to receive you, and my good intentions must be accepted in place of more fervent demonstrations."

"I am happy to see you, Miss Lee. Where is Margie?"

"She is in her room, somewhat indisposed. She begged me to ask you to excuse her, as she is unable to come down, and of course cannot have the pleasure of going with you to the opera."

"Sick? Margie sick!" he exclaimed, anxiously. "What can be the matter? She was well enough three hours ago."

"O, do not be uneasy. It is nothing serious. A headache, I think. She will be well after a night's rest. Cannot I prevail on you to sit down?"

"I think not, to-night, thank you. I will call to-morrow. Give Margie my best love, and tell her how sorry I am that she is ill."

Alexandrine promised, and Mr. Trevlyn bowed himself out. She put her hand to her forehead, which seemed almost bursting with the strange weight there.

"Guiltily or not guilty," she muttered, "what does it matter to me? I love him, and that is enough!"

CHAPTER XV.

HE long night passed away, as all nights, however long and dark they may be, will pass away.

Margie had not slept. She had paced her chamber until long after midnight, utterly disregarding Alexandrine, who had knocked repeatedly at her door, and at last, overcome by weariness, she had sunk down in a chair by the open window, and sat there, gazing blankly out into the night, with its purple heavens, and its glory of sparkling stars.

Nothing could have tempted Margie to have credited such a story of her lover, had it not been for the overwhelming evidence of her own senses. Ever since the night of Paul Linmere's assassination, she had at times been tortured with agonizing doubts. From the first she had been morally sure whose lips had touched her hand that night in the graveyard; she knew that no other presence than that of Archer Trevlyn had the power to influence her as she had been influenced. She knew that he had been there, though she had not seen him; and for what purpose had he been there? It was a question she had asked herself a thousand times!

There could be no doubt any longer. She was forced to that conclusion at

last; her heart sinking like lead in her bosom as she came to acknowledge it. In a moment of terrible temptation, Arch Trevlyn had stained his hand with blood! And for her sake!

There was a violent warfare in her heart. Her love for Archer Trevlyn had not sprung up in a day; its growth had been slow, and it had taken deep root. Oh, how hard it was to give up the blissful dream! She thought of his early life—how it had been full of temptation—how his noble nature had been warped and perverted by the evil influences that had surrounded him, and for a while the temptation was strong upon her soul to forgive him everything—to ignore all the past, and take him into her life as though the fearful story she had just listened to had been untold. Marry a murderer!

"Oh, God!" she cried in horror, as the whole extent of the truth burst upon her: "Oh, my God, pity and aid me!"

She sank down on her knees, and though her lips uttered no sound, her heart prayed as only hearts can pray when wrung with mortal suffering. Archer Trevlyn must be given up; from that there could be no appeal. Henceforth he must be to her as though he had never been. She must put him entirely out of her life—out of her thoughts—out of her sleeping and waking dreams.

But she could give him no explanation of her change of mind. She had passed her word—nay, she had sworn never to reveal aught that Miss Lee had told her, and a promise was binding. But he would not need any explanation. His own guilty conscience would tell him why he was renounced.

She took off the rose-colored dress in which she had arrayed herself to meet him, and folded it away in a drawer of her wardrobe, together with every other adornment that she had worn that night. They would always be her painful reminders of that terrible season of anguish and despair. When all were in, she shut them away from her sight, turned the key upon them, and flung it far out of the window.

Then she opened her writing desk, and took out all the little notes he had written to her, read them all over, and holding them one by one to the blaze of the lamp, watched them with a sort of stony calmness until they shriveled and fell in ashes, black as her hopes, to the floor. Then his gifts, a few simple things. Those she did not look at; she put them hastily in a box, sealed them up, and wrote his address on the cover.

The last task was the hardest. She must write him a note, telling him that all was over between them. The gray light of a clouded morning found her making the effort. But for a long time her pen refused to move; her hand seemed powerless. She felt weak and helpless as a very infant. But it was done at last, and she read it over, wondering that she was alive to read it:

"Mr. Archer Trevlyn, Sir: Yesterday afternoon, when I last saw you, I did not think that before twenty-four hours had elapsed I should be under the necessity of inditing to you this letter. Henceforth, you and I must be as strangers. Not all the wealth and influence of the universe could tempt me to become your wife, now that my eyes are opened. I renounce you utterly and entirely, and no word or argument of yours can change me. Therefore, do not attempt to see me, for with my own consent I will never look upon your face again. I deem no explanation necessary; your own conscience will tell you why I have been forced to make this decision. I return to you with this note everything that can serve to remind me of you, and ask you to do me the favor to burn all that you may have in your possession which once was mine. Farewell, now and forever."

"MARGARET HARRISON."

There remained still something more to be done. Margie knew that Archer Trevlyn would seek her out, and demand an explanation from her own lips, and this must never be. She could not see him now; she was not certain that she could ever see him again. She dared not risk the influence his personal presence might have upon her. She must leave New York. But where should she go? She had scarcely asked the question before thought answered her.

Far away in the northern part of New Hampshire, resided old Nellie Day, the woman who had nursed her, and whom she had not seen for twelve years. Nellie was a very quiet, discreet person, and had been very warmly attached to the Harrison family. She had married late in life a worthy farmer, and giving up her situation in New York, had gone with him to the little out-of-the-way village of Lightfield. Margie had kept up a sort of desultory correspondence with her, and in every letter that the old lady wrote she had urged Margie to visit her in her country home. It had never been convenient to do so, but now this place was suggested to her at once, and to Lightfield she decided to go.

She consulted her watch. It was 5 o'clock; the train for the north, the first express, left at half past six. There would be time. She would leave all her business affairs in the hands of Mr. Farley, her legal adviser and general manager; and as to the house, the maiden aunt who resided with her could keep up the establishment until her return. If she ever did return.

She packed a few of her plainest

dresses and some other indispensables, in a trunk, arrayed herself in a dark traveling suit, and rang for Florine. The girl looked at her in silent amazement. Margie steadied her voice, and spoke carelessly enough.

"Florine, I have been obliged to leave home very suddenly. My preparations are all complete. I thought I would not wake you as I had so little to do. Tell Peter to have the carriage at the door at six precisely, and bring up Leo's breakfast, and a cup of hot coffee for me."

At six o'clock—having written a note to Mr. Farley, and one to her aunt, giving no explanations, but merely saying she had been called away—she put on her bonnet, entered the carriage and was driven to the depot. And before nine-tenths of New York had thought of leaving their beds, she was being whirled rapidly northward, her only companion Leo, who, watchful and alert, lay curled up on the seat beside her.

CHAPTER XVI.

ARCHER TREVLYN had not slept that night. Some sense of impending evil, some demon of uneasiness oppressed him strangely. He tossed about until daybreak, then he rose, dressed himself, and went out.

Everything was still on the streets except the clatter of the milk carts, and the early drays and huckster wagons. The air was damp and dense, and struck a deadly chill to the very marrow of this unseasonable wanderer. He walked a few squares, and then returned to his hotel, more oppressed than when he went out.

Did ever time move so slowly before? Would the morning never pass? He wrote some urgent letters, read the damp morning paper, without the slightest notion of contents, and went down to his breakfast, to come away again leaving it untasted. Eight o'clock. The earliest possible hour at which it would be proper to call on Miss Harrison was eleven. Three mortal hours first! How could he ever endure it? She might be very ill. She might even be dying! Archer, with the foolish inconsistency of love, magnified every evil until he was nearly beside himself with dread, lest she might be worse than Miss Lee had represented.

Nine o'clock struck; he was walking the floor in a state of nervous excitement which would have forced him ere long to have broken all rules of etiquette and taken his way to Harrison House, had not fate saved him the necessity.

A waiter entered, and brought in a letter and a package. He snatched them both, and saw they were directed in Margie's handwriting. For a moment his heart stood still with a deadly fear. Great drops of perspiration covered his forehead, and he dropped letter and package to the floor. Why was she writing to him when she must expect to see him in a few hours? And that package! What did it contain?

He picked it up, and tore off the wrappings. The betrothal ring rolled out and fell with a hollow sound on the floor. The ring he had put upon her finger—the ring he had seen her kiss more than once! He looked over the contents of the box hurriedly; every little thing he had ever given her was there, even to a bunch of faded violets!

But the letter? He had almost forgotten it, in pondering over the dread significance of the return of his presents. He took it up and broke the seal with slow deliberation. It would not tell him any news, but it might contain an explanation. His face grew pale as ashes as he read, and he put his hand to his heart, as though he had received a blow there. Twice he read it through, and at the last reading he seemed to realize its dread portent.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A SOCIAL RECREATION.

Entirely New Method by a Few Friends Tired of Dancing.

Women who are in straits for unique methods of entertaining might do worse than to listen here, says the Philadelphia Press. The scene is laid in Philadelphia and the action in all its detail transpired in the heart of this city, so proverbially far-famed for the slowness of its social gait and limitations of its pleasure-going capacities. There was a certain club of "blase" bachelors whose average age was probably about 18. Those worn-out veterans, who already know all there is to know, determined to give a dinner, which should be distinctly unique, so for weeks the prime movers thereof cast about them for the happy thought which would insure the success of their "feed." At last they found it. Then they bid some choice and favored brother spirits to the feast, demanding of them only one thing—i. e., that each guest should bring with him something he had stolen. The night arrived and with it the company, and then the scheme upon which the novelty of the entertainment depended was put into execution. As each man (?) took his place he was asked to produce his transferred contribution. Immediately forth from every pocket came a spoon. It is safe to say that all the prominent eating-houses of the city were represented in that collection of souvenirs, the favorites being in the lead, of course. One ice-cream soda stand was all unwittingly poorer by six of these donated spoons. And the youths for the time being forgot their ennu and were "boys again."

Let friendship creep gently to a height; if it rush to it it may soon run out of breath.

They Might Have Yawned.

"It is asserted now," he said, thoughtfully, "that a Chinaman never yawns. If that is so—"

He paused and for a moment seemed buried in thought.

"If that is so," he repeated, turning to his companion, "I feel that I may assert with perfect safety that no Chinaman ever met you when you were in a story-telling mood."

Then he chuckled softly to himself and felt avenged for the hour that he had put in listening to tales of precocious infants.—Chicago Post.

Rome Wasn't Built in a Day.

Neither are the obstinate maladies, to the removal of which the great corrective, Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, is adapted curable in an hour. To persist in the use of this standard remedy is no more than just. Biliousness, constipation, malaria, rheumatism, kidney complaints and nervousness are among the complaints which it eradicates.

An honest man can never be a friend to a thief.

Smouldering fires of old disease

lurk in the blood of many a man, who fancies himself in good health. Let a slight sickness seize him, and the old enemy breaks out anew. The fault is the taking of medicines that suppress, instead of curing disease. You can eradicate disease and purify your blood, if you use the standard remedy of the world,

Ayer's Sarsaparilla.

Mississippi inventions.

The noticeable inventions of Frans Mississippi inventors last week we find a car of the jenny pattern granted to W. Dickey of Des Moines, Iowa; a wrench granted to E. B. Sterling, Kansas; a steam machine issued to C. H. Hillebrand of Lemars, Iowa; a letter box to E. J. Hower of Trinidad, Iowa; a simple tire lightener issued to Sidney, Iowa; a telephone allowed to E. L. Coleman of Portland, Oregon; a metallic telephone granted to J. R. Coleman of Des Moines, Iowa; a patent granted to Dr. Wm. L. Ross of Nebraska, receives a patent for a smoke container which is adapted to be used in residences.

The curious inventions is a bicycle frame which can be folded up; a letter box that the mail is automatically removed from the box to the mail bicycle alarm actuated by the front wheel; a car adapted to be hinged below and be out of sight when not in use; a bicycle attachment comprising a frame having one wheel to be attached to an ordinary bicycle to make a tandem; an engine using motive power by means of the sun; while a Chicago received a patent comprising a bicycle which is strapped about a person upon which he rests in lying down.

Any of the above patents mailed upon receipt of 10 cts by J. C. United States Patent Office, Bee Building, Omaha, Nebraska.

Curiosities of the Law.

Looking gent—"What's the matter with you?"

"I'm going to have my man arrested. He inveigled a woman out of me on false pretenses."

"You arrest a woman for that?"

"Yes."

"Law is a curious thing. A regular fury of a woman in me into marrying her by false pretenses she was an angel the law not only won't let me marry her, but makes me support her."

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Letters affirm that spirits harden the face of the voice.

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