



CHAPTER XVI.

Dulcie was lying on the floor by the side of the bed, stretched out full length, with her face buried in her folded arms. She had not put a dress on in place of the wet one she had taken off, and her bare, plump shoulders gleamed white against the red and gold of the druggist. She was not crying. She had sobbed out all her passion, till she had no strength to sob any more. Yet the pain was there still, the cruel aching pain that seemed to be tearing at the roots of her very life. Would it ever go away? Would she ever again feel glad, and carefree, and happy, as she had once felt? It seemed impossible. The agony that she had suffered before, when she had first lost her lover, had not been half so keen as this agony she was suffering now, when she had won him back again.

It seemed to her that she dared never to show her face as Percy Stanhope's wife, as if all the world would know how false she had been to the truest friend woman ever had, and hate her for it. "Oh, that I had never come here!" she thought, turning her throbbing head from side to side in a vain search for ease. "Everything would have been right if I had only stayed away! Oh, Eddy, Eddy!" She could hear the crows outside her window, holding their nightly convulsions. The low, sweet chirp of the cuckoo came up from the rain-washed fields. Inside the house all was quiet. Now and then a door would slam, and once Mrs. Hardinge, passing across the hall, called out something to Eddy; save for this, everything was very quiet. The stillness was terrible to Dulcie. She lay and listened for some sound to break the hush, till she felt as if she were going mad. As she lay there, the pale evening light fell upon her, upon the dusky head and the white, bare arms and neck and shoulders. She burned and shivered by turns. One moment her cheeks were milk white, the next they were crimson. Her head was throbbing so much that she could not think clearly; she could only suffer. Strange fancies came into her brain, and she knew quite well that they were unreal, fantastic, and yet they tormented her.

"I am never to know peace again," she wailed to herself in a kind of despair. "This is how I shall be tormented all my life, because I was false to Eddy." Old days were back with her, days when she had tumbled in the bay, days with Esther and Lyon Durrant, her brother. Lyon had been dead years, and she knew it; yet that did not hinder her seeing him exactly as she used to see him. She was sitting in the spacious old parlor at the farm, and Eddy's mother was pling her plate with home-made cakes. She was lying in the big white-curtained bed in the room above the pantry, and her cheek was close against Esther's cheek, and she could feel her gentle breathing as she slept. Her eyes smarted with tears, she felt as if she were choking. And all the time she knew that these were but memories; that that dead past was over and done with. It had nothing to do with the changed, miserable present; it never could have anything to do with the future. The most trivial things came to her remembrance, and heid her fast, so that she could not think of the one thing of which she so wanted to think.

She got up and bathed her face in cold water. That seemed to clear her brain and refresh her. Then she flung a shawl round her, and sat down on the side of the bed to think. She remained there a long time, a creature tossed and torn between two master yearnings. Her whole soul cleaved to Percy Stanhope with a love as strong as death. It frightened her, this wild, intense passion; she had never dreamed she could ever feel anything like it. There was more pain than pleasure in it, more dread than either.

"It would kill me to give him up, I think," she said to herself, looking out at the gathering night, with fever-bright, smarting eyes. "Yet how could I endure to make her suffer, as I suffered when I first came here?" She could not forget Esther; she could not get the thought of her anguish out of her mind. Between the two loves her heart wandered to and fro, and could not find rest. As she sat there she heard a clock in the lower part of the house striking ten o'clock. The sound sent a thrill through her. All at once—without her having had any former thought of doing such a thing—it struck her that she should just have time, if she hurried, to catch the twelve o'clock express.

"I will go to my uncle," she said, half aloud, slipping down off the bed and searching about among the things on her table for a light. "He will tell me what I ought to do; and, when I am gone, perhaps Percy will go back to her." She could not keep back a sob as she said it. It was like tearing the heart out of her body to go, yet she felt in some strange way constrained to do it. Quickly, with panting breath, and hot, nervous hands, she packed up her things, throwing them into the boxes anyhow. A few minutes she thought she should want to take with her at once she stuffed into a small bag that she could carry in her hand.

As she was gathering her ornaments together, she came across a set of pearls that her uncle had given her on her birthday. Esther had admired these pearls, she remembered; and she put them on just as she did when she had finished her task, and showed herself in a dark stuff dress, and a little black velvet hat, with a veil tied close about her. When she wore a line—just one line—on a pearl on one of her visiting cards and held it with the pearls in her case: "The mother on her wedding day, from Percy." She sat down to try to still the throbbing of her heart, which seemed to be beating up into her throat, and to be beating with the pulsations of the blood. She was so nervous and trembled so much that she could not hold the pearls. She knew she was in a bad way, but she knew too much for her. In truth the sight of that precious day-old face might have

all was quiet again. A few minutes after that, Dulcie passed down stairs unseen and unheard, and out by the back gate into the road. It was a still, damp, starless night. As she walked along, between the high hedges, with the blank gray of the sky above her, a very horror of nervous fear took possession of her. A shiver of foreboding crept through her veins to her heart. No one was within sight, the few houses that she passed were in darkness. Every now and again the bark of a dog would shake the silence. Once, as she leaned to rest for a few minutes against a gate, she thought she heard voices and stealthy footsteps; but that perhaps was only her fancy. But to her it was just as real as the shadowy fields, the ghostly trees, and the slippery dew-wet beneath her feet in the lane. They were all a part of the horror of the night—the horror that seemed to be beating in upon her brain, and folding round her heart, and stifling her.

It was a long, weary walk to the station. Her feet felt like lead, and her head throbbed feverishly. When at last she reached the foot of the stone steps leading up to the platform, she had to rest and get breath before she could climb them. She found the station almost deserted. The one or two people walking about took no notice of her, and she was thankful for it—thankful to be able to creep into a second-class carriage without meeting any one she knew, or any one who knew her. Then the train dashed on again, right into the heart of the night, and she leaned her head against the cushion behind her, and closed her eyes wearily.

There were two middle-aged men in the carriage who looked like farmers, going up most likely to the early market. They were talking together about an accident that, it appeared from their remarks, had lately happened on that line. Dulcie scarcely understood all their words. They spoke with the slow Kentish accent, and she was not paying much heed to them or to their conversation. "Poor chap," one of them said; "belike he thought little of dying when he started."

"It came on him sudden," the other struck in. "And some say 'as it 'ud be good for us to die like that." "Nay, nay, man, I can't think that myself; else why should we pray every Sunday to be saved from sudden death?" "Some one had died sudden, then. Some one, perhaps, who was happy, and wanted to live," Dulcie thought. "What a sad, sad world it is, to be sure!" Then she shut her eyes again, and the throbbing pain in her head, growing worse with every jolt of the carriage, deafened her ears to the talk going on about her.

How would it have been if she had listened—listened and understood? CHAPTER XVII. When Percy Stanhope left Dulcie he had gone direct to the station. He took the shortest way to it across the country, so that he reached it fully half an hour before his train was due. This half hour he spent sitting on a bench outside the ticket office. The stuffy first-class waiting room would have stifled him. He was feeling strangely exhausted, both in mind and body. Lord Harvey came across him sitting there, and stayed to speak to him. He thought him stiff and distant to a degree.

"It has been an abominable day," Percy said, "and I feel tired out!" "You look tired! You have been to the Elms, of course! How is Miss Durrant?" "Quite well, thanks," flushing a little. The other looked at him in surprise. His coat was wet, and his boots muddy. He had evidently walked a long way. Where could he have been, if not to the Elms to see Esther? But Lord Harvey was not a man to trouble himself about other people's affairs. He was far from being in high spirits himself that evening. The pain at his heart—the pain that not all his pride or will could subdue—had cast its shadow over his face. He looked graver and sterner than usual, a man averse to a fault, as he lifted his hat to Percy, and turned away.

In five minutes more the London train steamed into the station. Then Percy Stanhope roused himself. The train, not a very long one, appeared full from end to end. He opened the doors of several carriages, and finally got into a smoking compartment, which, for a wonder, was empty. He wanted to be alone for a while to think. He had been in a whirl of passion in which thought was impossible, but now he was cooling down, and there was the future to be considered. Two, three stations were passed before any one came to disturb him; the fourth was a junction. When the train slackened speed, two gentlemen opened the door of his carriage and got in. One of them was a young man, slightly lame. He had to be helped up the step by his companion, and, when he got in, he stood a moment, as if in pain, before he could sit down. As he rested thus, his eyes fell upon Percy Stanhope's face, and instantly his own blanched to ghastliness. He staggered, and would have fallen forward but for his companion's arm.

shaken the nerves of a far stronger man. In another minute all was confusion. Strong hands—nervous and tender in their strength now—lifted out the quiet figure that had something stark and chilly about it. They carried the body into one of the waiting rooms, and sent for a doctor. One lived close by, and was on the spot immediately. He entered the room at once of all save the station master and his wife; but the man who, three-quarters of an hour before, had taken his ticket for London, had reached his journey's end. Percy Stanhope was dead.

The verdict was "Death from natural causes." Then Squire Stanhope came and carried home his dead son. He was an old man, frail and ailing; for six months or more he had never left his rooms; but when he knew that his "boy" lay dead he got up, as if his "strength was as the strength of ten," and went to him. That was on the twenty-first of May. The twenty-second was to have been Percy Stanhope's wedding day!

CHAPTER XVIII.

At the Elms all was confusion. Dulcie's flight had struck Esther like a blow. The first thing in the morning she had gone to her room to see if she was awake and better. She found the door open; two large boxes packed in the center of the room; the drawers and wardrobe empty! Standing on the threshold, she looked about her in dismay. "Dulcie!" she called; but no one answered. Indeed she could see for herself that there was no Dulcie there to answer. Everything had that air of desolation and confusion peculiar to a room or a house that has just been vacated. The bed had not been slept in. The window was open, and the long lace curtains hung limp with the heavy night dews. On the dressing table she found the little leather case, containing the pearls and poor Dulcie's one little, ill-written, hurried line—"For Esther on her wedding day, from Dulcie." She knew then that she had gone away not to come back, and she slipped down upon her knees before the low table, and burst out crying. She grieved at a score of reasons for this sudden and cruel departure, but the one real reason she never gave a thought to.

"Something has happened to her," she thought at last, in despair what else to think. "It was not illness, last night, but trouble that made her so strange." Then she got up and went straight to her sister's room. A foreboding had seized upon her that perhaps Berta had had some hand in it all. Mrs. Hardinge had just risen. She was doing her hair before the glass, and glancing at the pages of a new novel that lay open on the table before her while she did so.

"What is it now?"—rather sharply at sight of Esther's wet eyes and crimson cheeks. "Oh, Berta, Dulcie is not in her room, and all her trunks are packed, and—breaking into fresh sobs—"she must have gone away last night, after we thought she had gone to bed. She is in some great trouble, I am certain." Mrs. Hardinge stood amazed. The color faded from her face, then rose and settled sternly. "That is just like Dulcie. You'll believe in her friendship for you now, will you not? For my own part, I only hope we may find that she has gone alone"—meaningly—"but I am very much afraid we shan't."

"Berta, you'll break my heart some day! How can you be so suspicious, and so—so cruel?" Esther had sat down, still holding the little case in her hand. She was trembling nervously, and the color came and went in her face like a rising and falling flame. "What can have come to her? She seemed all right yesterday when she was going out. I've seldom seen her in better spirits. I'm certain she had no thought of leaving us then. Have you said anything to her, Berta?"—raising quick, resentful eyes.

"No, indeed. I've had something better to do than waste my talk on her. But I am not blind, if you are, and I've not liked those long walks she took lately every day, about the size time, too. I know Dulcie too well to believe that she took them alone!" Esther's lips curled scornfully. "I fretted her almost past her patience, I hear her sister talk like this. She had known beforehand that she should get no sympathy from me, nothing but doubts and suspicions, so she was dreadfully uneasy about Dulcie."

"I wish Percy would come," she thought, twisting the pearls round and round in her fingers. "He would know what had best be done." "To-morrow would be her wedding day, and through all the hopes and dreams that fluttered round her heart, there came and went a vague, restless disquiet." She was still troubled about Dulcie, too. Yet this trouble could only "rise so far and no farther" for her great love bent it and all else back into brooding calm. Percy was coming. He would comfort her. Nay, his very presence would atone for all. It had been her whim to wear on the last night of her old life, the dress that she knew he always admired. She even remembered to fasten a red rose in her bosom such as she had worn that other night.

Esther, not able to read or to rest, stood before one of the windows looking out at the fading light. Honey-suckle and dog-roses clustered over the hedges; the air blew sweet over the clover, and the lambs were bleating in old Farmer Ryan's pasture field just across the road. As she stood there the sky deepened its hue; stars came out, lustrous, far-off diamond rays. The sweetness of a sweet English May-time was over the land. Tears came into the girl's eyes as she looked, and her heart gave a throb of intense joy, which was a prayer in its thankfulness. In the dining room on the other side of the hall, the wedding breakfast was laid out—a costly feast daintily spread, glass and rare old china and solid silver helping out the show. The family had dined in the breakfast room, so that all this might not be disturbed. Indeed, the whole house was in confusion. Esther's boxes half filled the spare bedroom; her wedding finery lay all over the chairs in Mrs. Hardinge's sitting room. One had to take care of one's steps in going through the house that night. "Jeep, you might just look over the timetable," Mrs. Hardinge said, quickly. "I think they must be coming by the last train." "Eight-forty is the last train," Mr. Hardinge told his wife, without stirring from his seat. "If they are coming by that, they will be here in about twenty minutes. It is just like now!" (To be continued.)

AGRICULTURAL



benefited by having its proportion of nitrogen increased, but it will gain nothing in mineral matter. The land devoted to apples should receive fertilizer or manure every year, and when there is a heavy crop of apples in sight the fruit should be thinned out in the early stages of growth.

A barn cistern will be a very great advantage where a large number of cattle are wintered. The cistern should be placed on high ground, so that the water can be piped directly to the cattle stalls. The cistern should be built under ground. It may be built out of the ground six feet or more; use the earth that comes out of the bottom to bank up the outside. The earth banking should be five feet thick and well sodded. This will keep the water cool in summer and warm in winter. A cistern fourteen feet deep and seven feet in diameter will hold 130 barrels of water, and can be built for \$50. The fall of the year, before the ground becomes saturated with water, is a good time to dig one. The inlet pipe should run down within one foot of the bottom. The inflow of water from every rain and the constant drawing of the water will keep the body of water stirred, and thus keep it pure. The rain water that falls upon a barn forty by twenty-six feet will keep the cistern full.—Baltimore American.

Clean Milk. A correspondent of the Practical Farmer says: To have clean milk, it must always be kept so. Commence when milking. Mr. sister, who has spent four years on the Isle of Jersey, says the way they milked their Jersey cows in that country. It was through muslin stretched over the pail. An attachment to slip over the pail can be made as follows: Take a piece of spring steel, bend to a size smaller than milk pail; ends not to be fastened; cut cloth a size larger than pail top, and when hemmed around steel it will be the right size to cover pail. Stretch over pail when milking; will keep out all hairs and dirt that drop from cow. Can be easily put on and taken off.

Thinning Apples. Most of the early apples are abundant bearers and are apt to be small. Those that are sweet are not good for most until ripe, but Early Harvest and the Twenty Ounce apple will bear picking when two-thirds grown and make excellent pies. If this is done in all parts of the tree, plucking a few apples where they are fullest on the bough, it will make what apples remain much larger and better, besides supplying early apples for household use, says an exchange.

Crop Experiments. The area of ground that can be used for conducting a number of experiments need not be large. An acre will give sixty-four plots each 25 by 25 feet square, and a comparison of different crops, under various methods of cultivation, will give more practical experience and information to those interested than can be gained by many years' cultivation without regard to system or regularity.

Keeping Fowls Out of Mischief. Something more than feed is necessary to keep fowls from running to the garden or the newly planted corn field, and scratching among the dirt. Men do this, less to secure the grain than to rid themselves of vermin by thoroughly dusting themselves. If a place close by the henhouse is kept plowed, and is strewn twice a week with grain, and harrowed, fowls will rarely leave it for anything.

Summer Pruning. Attention should be paid to summer pruning fruit trees. A topping of the growing shoots just before they finish growth will generally cause them to set fewer buds for the next season. Besides this it is the best time to prune in order to thicken the trees.

Poultry Notes. Better fatten and eat the stunted chickens. Do not mix the bone meal with the food. Sell poultry alive during the next two months. Keep eggs in a cool place until they are marketed. Sell the young ducks as soon as they are ready for market. Mixed with milk buckwheat makes a good fattening ration.

He Knew. Military Instructor—Now, can you tell me what a soldier's duties are when he is not fighting? Recruit—Studying the manual of arms and having his picture taken. Instructor—Good. You ought to be made a corporal at once. No Poetry for Him. Suitor—Your daughter has my heart. It went out to her the first time I ever saw her. Her Father—Bosh! Nonsense! The doctor examined her yesterday and said it was enlargement of the liver. Harp playing should become more of a fad. Flaps are so large that girls can't cover them in green cloth, and pack them through the streets. Every one believes that he has the making of a hero in him, and that circumstances are to blame that the hero is not brought out.

Comfortable Fruit Ladder. Upon the ordinary fruit ladder, one must stand for a long time and endure the strain and endure the cutting into the feet of a small round. A fairly broad, flat step gives firm and comfortable support to the feet. The ladder can be made light, too, as the one shown in the illustration. Make one in winter according to this pattern, while you have plenty of time, and it will be ready for next season's fruit picking. The top of such a ladder can narrow to a point if desired. The main piece must be of some light material free from knots and other imperfections. Dress all the material together, then paint. If kept under shelter when not in use it will last many years.

Fertilize the Orchard. It is certain that any crop will exhaust the soil in time, whether of grain, grass or fruit. On some farms may be seen orchards of apple trees over half a century old. Every year these trees have produced fruit, and in return have received nothing in the form of fertilizer. It is estimated that an ordinary apple crop removes from an acre of soil about 50 pounds of nitrogen, 40 pounds of phosphoric acid and 75 pounds of potash. When clover is grown in the orchard the land is

A RED APPLE

Induced a Balky Horse to Move After Other Things Had Failed. If there is any one thing more than another upon which the average man, who has some time in his life been acquainted with somebody who owned a horse, prides himself, it is his ability to make a balky horse pull. The remedies for balky horses are numberless. Every man has his own sure cure, and nothing will attract a larger crowd or call forth more confidential suggestions than an overloaded equine who has arrived at the conclusion that forbearance has ceased to be a virtue, and determined to make a stand for his rights.

While a huckster was driving south on Main street, near Fourth street, yesterday afternoon the dejected-looking horse which drew the dilapidated wagon fell on the slippery pavement. It was not a hard fall. The animal just sank quietly down on the pavement and batted its eyes lazily at the crowd which quickly gathered. It was a clear case of balk. The slippery pavement was merely an excuse.

The driver examined the animal and satisfied himself that no bones were broken. Then he caught hold of the bridle rein and tried to coax the horse to its feet. The horse did not bulge a muscle. The driver kicked it in the ribs. The result was the same. He applied the whip, but the horse made no effort to rise. By this time there were fully 200 people gathered about the prostrate horse, and suggestions began to pour in from every side. "Twist his tail," said one. "Put a twitch on his nose," suggested another. "Tie a string around his pastern," was the contribution of a third. These are samples of the scores of remedies which were offered and tried, but none of them worked. The animal was beaten, coaxed, sworn at and tortured, but without success. For half an hour they worked with it. Several times it was lifted to its feet, but sank back again to the pavement each time as soon as released. The crowd blocked the street and traffic on the cable cars was suspended. At each unsuccessful attempt to move the obstinate animal the crowd burst forth with cheers.

It began to look like a hopeless case. Finally a man crowded his way through the spectators until he reached the inner side of the circle. He carried in his hand a large red apple. This he held within a couple of feet of the horse's nose. The animal pricked up its ears, sniffed the air and reached for the apple. It moved a couple of feet further away and swayed tantalizingly in the air. With a mighty effort the horse sprang to its feet and rushed for the apple. The man who carried the apple backed through the crowd, followed by the horse. For half a block the animal followed the apple, and the cheers of the crowd. It was finally rewarded, and contentedly munched the fruit as it walked away with the wagon.—Kansas City Times.

Then He Was Told Enough. The Cincinnati Enquirer reveals a secret about the manner in which Lieut. Norton, of the United States navy, secured his admission to the naval academy. It appears that he was found to be a little short of the requisite height, and the examiners, who were pleased with his spirit and his general qualifications, were finally prevailed upon to give him six months in which to grow the needed half-inch. He returned home and took all kinds of gymnastic exercises, but stretch himself to his utmost, he still lacked a quarter of an inch. When it came time for him to report, he took two trusted friends with him, telling them that he needed their assistance. On the morning of the day for the final examination, Bert was up bright and early, and awaking his chums, presented one of them with a piece of pasteboard and the other with a graduated plank. Placing the pasteboard on his head, he commanded one to hold him and the other to whack him over the head with the plank. The blow was not hard enough to suit him, and he gave the command again: "Harder!" Still he was not satisfied, and gave another command: "Once more, boys, and let her be a good one!" Whack! came down the plank on young Norton's head, and he settled back into his chum's arms unconscious. The boys worked over him awhile, and when he regained consciousness, his first act was to feel of the top of his head, when a glad smile spread over his face. He had a well-developed case of "swell head," which increased his stature fully half an inch, and thus prepared, passed the scrutiny of the examiners without trouble.

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