DARK DAYS.

(*Continued from First Page.*)

This was the temptation with which I wrestled during those long hours. Again and again I was on the point of yielding. Once or twice I rose to my feet with the fixed determination of destroying that paper, and letting things take their own course. Once or twice I even forced my steps some distance in the direction of home, but each time I turned, went back to the sheltered spot, threw myself again on the ground, and fought the battle anew.

No, I could not do this thing. I was a gentleman and a man of honor. Paltry as the price was when compared with what it might buy, I could not pay it. Although my whole soul was merged in Philippa's welfare, I could not, even for her sake, suffer an innocent man to be done unjustly to death. The crime was too black, too base, too contemptible! I felt sure that, with the man's blood morally on my head, the supremest joys which life could give would not lull my conscience to rest. I knew it would not be long before remorse and shame drove me to commit suicide.

Let the preachers say that sin is easy; that wrong is more alluring than right. There may be some sins which are easily committed, but I dare to say that there are others which the average man, educated by the code of honor, and dreading shame and cowardice, finds it far easier to avoid than to bring himself to commit. No, every sin is not easy!

But all the same my struggle was a mortal one. At times I fancy—it may be but fancy—that even now my mind bears some traces of that conflict; a conflict in which my victory meant ruin to my nearest and dearest. Was I not right when I said that my temptation was an all but unparalleled one? Yet in reasserting this let me humbly disclaim all credit for not having yielded. I strove to yield, but could not.

It was only when I had conquered, and put the temptation from me, that I was able to see how utterly useless such a crime as that urged upon me would have been. Doubtless Philippa, sooner or later, would have learned that Sir Mervyn Ferrand's supposed murderer had paid the penalty of the crime. How would it have fared with us then—then, when reparation was placed out of the question? Knowing as I did every thought of my wife's, every turn of her impulsive, sensitive nature, I was fain to tell myself that such news would be simply her death-blow.

But what was to be done? Finding that I could not compass the treachery which I dared to meditate, I cast about for another loop-hole of escape. What if I were to return to England, and accuse myself of the crime? To insure Philippa's safety I would right willingly give away my own life. It showed the state to which my mind was reduced when I say that I considered this scheme in all its bearings, and for a while thought it furnished a solution to my difficulties! I wonder if my brain was wandering?

I laughed in bitter merriment as the absurdity of my new plan forced itself upon me. I had forgotten Philippa, and what the effect of such a sacrifice would be upon her. I had forgotten that she loved me even as I loved her; that my dying for her sake—for the sake of saving her from the consequences of that gruesome night—would make an expiation, if any were due from her, the most fearful which human or diabolical ingenuity could devise.

No! Neither by sinning against my fellow-man nor by a voluntary sacrifice of my own life could I save her. After all my protracted mental struggles, all my lonely hours of anguish and wild scheming, I was forced to return to the point from which I started. Philippa must surrender herself, and free this innocent man. There was, indeed, no alternative!

And a day gone, or all but gone! The trial on the 20th! To reach England—to reach Tewnham in time to stop that trial, we must travel day and night. Day and night across sunny or starlit Spain—across pleasant France—we must speed on, until we reached our own native land, now lying in all the rich calm of the early autumn. I must lead my wife, my love, to her doom!

I rose from the ground. I felt weary, and as if I had been cudgeled in every limb. I dragged myself slowly back to my home. "She must be told; she must be told. But how to tell her?" I muttered as I went along. My appearance must have been wretched; for I received the impression that several grave-looking Sevillanos turned and looked after me as I passed by. Even as a cowardly felon who drags himself slowly to the scaffold, I dragged myself to the gate of our pleasant home, and on tottering feet passed into that fragrant space in which the happiest hours of my life had been spent.

As I entered, the remembrance of some tale which once I had read flashed through my mind—a tale of the ferocity of a bygone age. It was of a prisoner who was forced by his captors to strike a dagger into the heart of the woman he loved. I know not where the tale is to be found or when I read it.

But it seemed to me that mine was a parallel case.

Pity me!

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LAST HOPE.

They were sitting in the courtyard, my mother and my wife. They looked the embodiment of serene happiness. Their large fans—the use of the fan came like an inspiration to Philippa, my mother acquired it after much practice—were languidly waving to and fro. Philippa's rounded arm was outstretched; her fair left hand was in the clear water which fell from the fountain and filled a white marble basin, in which the gold carp darted about in erratic tacks. She was moving her fingers gently backward and forward; startling the timid fish, and half smiling at their terror. It seemed to me, that my mother was remonstrating at the uproar she was creating in the brilliant coated republic.

The picture is still in my mind. That picture! I can sit now in my chair, lay down my pen, and call up every picture of that time. Nothing, save the grief, has ever, or ever will, fade from my memory.

It was well for both of us that I had fought out the battle with myself in solitude, where no eye could see me, where I could see no one. Even as it was, knowing what a change my news must work, I paused and a ghost of the day's temptation rose before me. But it rose too late. The die was cast. Philippa had seen me, and my mother's eyes followed hers. I braced myself up, and went toward them with as jaunty a manner as I could assume. My mother began a mock tirade on my shameful desertion of Philippa and herself. Her words carried no meaning to my ears. My eyes met those of my wife.

With her I made no attempt at concealment. Where was the good? The worst, the very worst had come. My eyes must have told her the truth.

I saw her sweet face catch fire with alarm. I saw her lips quiver. I saw the look of anguish flash into her eyes; yet I knew that I was helpless, utterly helpless.

She rose. I made some conventional excuse, and went to my room. In a moment Philippa was at my side.

"Basil, husband, love," she whispered, "it has come!"

I laid my head on the table and sobbed aloud. Philippa's arms were wreathed around my neck.

"Dearest, I knew it must come. I have known it ever so long. Basil, do not weep. Once more, I tell you I am not worth such love as yours."

I covered her dear face with kisses. I strained her to my heart. I lavished words of love upon her. She smiled faintly, then sighed hopelessly—a sigh which almost broke my heart.

"Tell me all, my love," she said, calmly. "Let me know the very worst."

I could not speak; for the life of me the words would not come. With trembling hands I drew out the newspaper, and pointed to the fatal lines. She read them with a calm which almost alarmed me.

"I knew it must be," was all she said.

I threw myself on my knees before her. I embraced her. I was half distracted. Save for my wild ejaculations of undying love, there was silence for many minutes between us.

Presently, with great force, she raised my head and looked at me with her sweet and sorrowful eyes.

"Basil, my dearest, you have been wrong. The right is right, the wrong is wrong. See what you have done! Had you not striven to save me, only I should have had to answer for this. Now it is you and me, and perhaps a third—an innocent, stainless life, that will be wrecked."

"Spare me! Spare me!" I said. "As you love me, spare me!"

She kissed me. "Dearest, forgive me. I should not blame you. Only I am to blame." Then, with a sudden essence in her voice, "When do we start for England, Basil?"

Although I expected the question, I trembled and shuddered as I heard it. Too well I knew what England meant. It meant Philippa's standing in open court, in a prisoner's dock, the center of a gaping crowd, self-accused of the murder of her husband! And as I pictured this, once more, and for the last time, the temptation shook me.

I spoke, but I averted my eyes from hers. I could not meet them. My voice was husky and strange; it sounded like the voice of another man. A sort of undercurrent of thought ran through me, that if Philippa would but share it, I could bear any burden, any dishonor.

"Listen!" I said, in quick accents. "We are far away, safe. We love each other. We can be happy. Let the man take his chance. What does anything matter, so long as we love and are together?"

I felt that her eyes were seeking mine. I felt a clinge in the clasp of her hand. I knew that she was nobler and better than I.

"Hush," she said, softly, and speaking like one in a dream, "it was not my husband, not the man I love, who said that. I forgive you for the sake of your great love, for the sake of all you have done, or tried to do, for me. Tell me now, when do we start for England?"

Her words brought back my senses. Never in the wildest height of my passion had I loved Philippa as I loved her at that moment. I besought her pardon. She gave it, and once more repeated her question.

With the calm of settled despair I consulted the railway-guide, and found that if we left Seville to-morrow morning by the first train, we might, by traveling day and night, early on the morning of the twentieth reach the town in which the trial was to be held. I made the result of my researches known to my wife; and upon my assuring her that we should have time to spare, she left all the arrangement of the journey to me.

After this, another painful question arose. Was my mother to be told? Philippa, who may, perhaps, in her secret heart have craved for a woman's sympathy and sympathy in her approaching trial, at first insisted that my mother should be taken into our confidence—a confidence which, alas! in a few days' time would be gossip to the world. I besought her to waive the point, to spare my mother's feelings until the very last moment. We could not take her with us on our hurried journey. We were young; she was old. The fatigue, combined with the grief, would be more than her frame could endure. I could not bear to think of her waiting lonely in Seville for the last news which she knew must come in a day or two from England. Let us say nothing respecting the wretched errand on which we are bound. Let us depart in secret, and leave some plausible explanation behind us.

To my relief, Philippa at last consented to this. Then, after a long, tearful embrace, we steeled ourselves to join my mother at the evening meal, and to bear ourselves so that she should suspect nothing of the tempest within our hearts. We did not very long subject ourselves to this strain upon our nerves. It seemed to me now that every moment spent otherwise than alone with my wife was a precious treasure wasted, a loss which I should forever regret. Scarcely every we pleaded fatigue, and retired to our rest. Such rest!

Philippa bade my mother good-night with an embrace so long and passionate that I feared it would awaken alarm, especially when it was succeeded by my own veiled, but scarcely less emotional, adieu. For who could say that we should ever meet again? I do not believe it struck Philippa that in accompanying her I was running the slightest risk. Had she thought so, she would have insisted upon going alone. But I knew that the part I had played in that night's work would probably bring a severe punishment upon my own head. What did I care for that?

(*To be Continued.*)

DID you ever notice a man who has Dyspepsia? He looks as if he had been watching the sun spots dodging tornadoes, been through several fires eaten alum Baking Powder all his life. He will soon die, and the next generation, as well as the wise ones of this will buy DeLands Chemical Baking Powder and get a pure article. Try it now and don't shorten your life by saving a few pennies.

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Mrs Mary A. Dailey, of Tunkhonnock Pa., was afflicted for six years with asthma and bronchetis, during which time the best physicians could give no relief. Her life was despaired of until in last October she procured a bottle of Dr. King's, New Discovery when immediate relief was felt and by continuing its use for a short time she was completely cured and a gain in flesh of 50 lbs. in a few months. Free trial bottles of this certain cure of all throat and lung diseases at Henry Cook's drug store. Large bottles $1 50

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Advice to others.

Are you disturbed at night and broken of your rest by a sick child suffering and crying with pain of cutting teeth? If so send at once and get a bottle of Mrs. Winslow's soothing syrup for children teething. Its value is incalculable. Depend upon it mothers, there is no mistake about it. It cures dysentery and diarrhoea, regulates the stomach and bowels, cures wind colic gives tone and energy to the whole system. Mrs Winslow's soothing syrup for children teething is pleasant to the taste, and is the prescription of one of the oldest and best female nurses and physicians in the United States, and is for sale by all druggists throughout the world. Price 25 cents per bottle.

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NOTICE—TIMBER CULTURE.

U S Land Office, Bloomington, Neb. Feb. 26, 1885.

COMPLAINT HAVING BEEN ENTERED AT this office by John G. Potter against Hannah M. Spencer for failure to comply with law as to timber culture entry number 2637, dated Sept. 6, 1879, upon the se qr section 8, township 3, range 11, in Webster county, Neb., with a view to the cancellation of said entry, contestant alleging that Hannah M. Spencer failed during the third year of her entry and up to the present time to plant the first ten acres of said tract to trees, tree seeds or cuttings, that she failed during the fourth year of said entry and up to the present time to plant more than any acres of the second five acres of said tract to trees, tree seeds or cuttings, or to cultivate and protect in any manner the trees, tree seeds or cuttings formerly planted; that she has failed during the fifth year of said entry to cultivate and protect any trees, tree seeds or cuttings on said tract; that she has failed up to the present time to plant ten acres of said tract to trees, tree seeds or cuttings; that there are no trees, tree seeds or cuttings growing upon said land at the present time; the said parties are hereby summoned to appear at this office on the 18th day of April, 1885, at 10 o'clock A. M., to respond and furnish testimony concerning said alleged failure.

S. W. SNYDER, Register.
31-34 R. W. MONTGOMERY.

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT ARTICLES of incorporation have been filed in the proper office. The name of said corporation is The Nebraska Lumber Company. Its principal place of transacting business, Red Cloud, Nebraska. Organized for the purpose of transacting a general lumber business, and to buy and sell all kinds of goods and merchandise pertaining thereto, including coal, at the town of Red Cloud, with branch yards and offices at such other towns as the board of directors may designate. With a capital stock of one hundred thousand dollars, to be paid in as directed by the board of directors, within thirty days from time of subscribing same, and power to increase said capital stock to two hundred thousand dollars. The business of said corporation to commence on the 1st day of February, 1885, and continue until the 1st day of February, 1904. The highest amount of indebtedness or liability to which said corporation is at any time to subject itself shall be one half the amount of capital stock paid in. The business of said corporation shall be conducted by a board of seven directors.

February 16, 1885.

E. D. JONES, President.

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