

# THE END OF HIS TIME.

By JAMES KNAPP BEEVE.

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## CHAPTER III.



"I can't recommend the governor to pardon him."

When the door had closed between them and Chalmers found himself again in the open air he felt himself in need of physical action to relieve the mental stress under which he had held himself so long. A walk would do him good, and as he started toward the hotel to which he had sent his luggage he took definite satisfaction in crunching the frozen snow of the pavement briskly under foot.

It was after midnight and the aspect of the city had changed. The lights gleamed as brightly as ever in the tall towers, but the merry-makers were gone from the streets. Virtuous and respectable folk had gone to their homes and only the wayfarers and the guardians of the peace remained. Here and there a burst of light and noise came out from the suddenly opened door of a drinking place, as a tizzy reveler came reeling out. A beggar brushed past him and asked for alms. In the square, where had shone such a brilliant scene but a little time before, the shadows of the foliage now rattle queer flickering shadows on the smooth snow, and in their half light a wretched unsexed out-cast of the streets lurked and leered at him. "Poor devil," he muttered to himself as he tossed her a coin, "we're all in trouble together," and his thoughts were of his brother, in his narrow cell, and of himself, and of the black-haired woman whom they both loved, but whom now neither perhaps would ever see.

Having put his hand to the task, Chalmers now shrank from nothing that was needful to further his purpose. His first duty in the morning was to see Mr. Rodney; this he preferred to do at that gentleman's house rather than at the bank, where he was so well known and where he felt that he would be stared at curiously. The bank president was courteous, but firmly negatived his proposals.

"I am sorry for you, Chalmers," he said, "but I can't do a thing to help you. No, I can't recommend the governor to pardon him. It wouldn't be right. No, I don't care about the money, the bank can stand that well enough; but it's the principle of the thing. Lots of young men right here in this town are following in George's footsteps, and they've got to be scared out of it. It's the only way to stop them."

"I did not understand, Mr. Rodney," said Chalmers stiffly, "that stock gambling—speculation—would call it—was so wholly opposed to your own practice."

"Speculation is blotted!" exclaimed the president, with unforgotten astonishment. "I hope you don't take any stock in that cock and bull story your brother told to Miss Tennant. I thought that was only for the purpose of getting her down easy, so I didn't say a word—though it was mighty hard work to keep still—when she came here to me with the deeds of every blessed thing she owned and wanted to square his accounts. That girl's a tramp, I tell you, Chalmers. But do you suppose I would see her little fortune go to replace money that had gone into the rapacious maw of this Mills, Leonic, as she calls herself? No, sir; I ain't that kind of a man."

"I presume you know what you are saying, Mr. Rodney," replied Chalmers with calmness, startled though he was by the president's implications. "But remember, if you traduce my brother needlessly or attribute to him matters that you cannot substantiate in his present defenseless condition you will have to answer to me."

"Look here, Chalmers," returned the other; "neither you nor I are fools, and we both know something of the world. Now listen to me a minute. If George had bought stocks during the slump last fall (as I understand this story goes), when certificates were selling for about the value of waste paper, and had got hold of more than he could carry, and had come to me and made a clean breast of it, don't you suppose I would have helped him out, even if he had been dipping into the bank's funds for the purpose? I wish to gracious somebody had had the sense to go in then, and to drag me and the bank after them. But we were all afraid—thought the bottom had dropped right out."

The president ended with a sigh at the recollection of the lost opportunity; the sight of Chalmers' white face, pale and fixed as marble before him, recalled to him the subject in hand.

"No, sir," he resumed, "that wasn't it at all. I don't want to hurt you, but you might as well know the straight story now."

He looked at his companion interrogatively, and the latter nodded to him to continue.

"The thing had been going on for three years, and might have gone on for as many more, or until the bank was ruined, if it had not been for one of these government bank examiners, who are always poking into other people's business. He saw that things were going wrong, and told me so first. Then we called George into my private room, and he owned up to the whole thing at once. You see, it had gone so far he couldn't hope to cover his tracks much longer."

"How do you know where the money went? What proof have you?"

"Everybody knew that but ourselves, and we might have known it if we hadn't been blind as bats. He had furnished a suite of rooms for this Leonic within a stone's throw of the best houses on Enclid. They say she has everything

there that money can buy. Our money, too, mind you," he added quickly. "And as for diamonds and other claptrap of that sort, he gave her enough to set up a shop."

"Can you give me the exact amount of my brother's defalcation?"

"Yes, sir, of course. But I would rather not. We specified certain matters, sufficient to insure conviction, in the indictment, but we didn't tell the public the whole story. We have personally made good the entire loss to the bank now, and we don't care to publish just how badly we were hit through our own stupidity."

"As you please," answered Chalmers. "I only asked in order that I might reimburse you. I have instructed my bankers in New York to have sufficient funds ready, and if you will name the amount I will give a slight draft for it."

"On my word," said the president, more kindly than he had last spoken, "I appreciate your offer, Mr. Chalmers, and the motive that prompts it. I am sure you do. But we cannot accept your proposal. I presume you will endeavor to have your brother pardoned. Personally I would wish not to put a straw in your way, but I can't look upon this as a personal matter, and if we took this money, allowing you to square his account—that is, so far as money can square it—the next thing would be that some of our weak headed directors would sign your petition, and so the whole moral effect of the affair would be lost; and—it may sound harsh, but I believe what I say—it will be better for the young man to let him serve out his term. If you give a slight draft for it, it will go to the dogs, but if you let him stay until the end of his time he will be sobered down by that."

"You are sincere in that?" asked Chalmers. "You think it could do any man good to spend ten years, ten of the best years of his life in such a place? Aside from the necessity of punishing crime, you think that sort of punishment can have a salutary effect? Don't you know that prisons make criminals?"

Mr. Rodney would have been glad to avoid further discussion of the subject, but there was a quiet insistence in the other's manner that forced him to answer.

"Really, I don't know much about it," he replied; "it's mostly theory with me, as with the majority of people. I presume. Maybe there is something in it that hardens a man."

Chalmers' aggressiveness had vanished as quickly as it appeared. There was no reason why he should quarrel with this man about his theories and beliefs, much reason perhaps why he should not do so for George's sake.

There was really no reason, either, why he should doubt Mr. Rodney's statement as regarded George's affairs. He reflected that since they had both reached manhood they had not known each other intimately. They had not been much together, nor confided much in each other as to the intimacies of their lives. So much as Chalmers had seen of his brother outwardly when they met, his life appeared circumspect, if perhaps a little less serious than might have been desired; and he was sufficiently versed in human nature to know that a man is seldom just what he appears to be upon the surface. During the morning he received sufficient confirmation of this to have convinced even a greater skeptic, but it did not serve to abate his zeal in his brother's behalf, but on the contrary rather intensified it.

## CHAPTER IV.



"I would forgive him everything," said Mile Leonic, the queen of the city's half world, had evolved into this sphere from the obscurity of a small Ohio village solely by the force of some degree of physical beauty and a great degree of audacity. As Laura Leonard she had been unknown except to the rustics of her village; as Mile Leonic her name was on men's lips as a wonderful sire. She blazed out in her firmament as a sudden flame, and men rather flattered themselves than otherwise that they should be ennobled thereof. To be known as a habitue of her home served to give one a certain standing among certain circles. To be privileged to bring her to a jewel, to send a statuette for the adornment of her rooms—for Leonic had developed luxurious and expensive tastes that Laura Leonard could never have known—and to have her say, "Look! this is from my friend C—"; is it not fine? was almost glory enough for some of the callow youth who worshipped at her shrine, for Leonic was exclusive.

But this was not enough for George Chalmers. At heart he was something of a Bohemian and he despised less conveniences. When he had first met Leonic he had not only been enchanted by the bold and brilliant aspects of her physical beauty, which time and the attrition of city life only polished and made more perfect, but as well by the irresistible dash and go of her personality. She was neither dull nor coarse of mind, and knew how to retain as well as to attract the admiration of men. So, as their intimacy grew, young Chalmers cursed the puritanical sentiment that hedged them about, and strove by lavish generosity to make up to her in some measure for the loss of those things that he could not do for her before the world.

So far as his relations with Lina Tennant were concerned, of course this affair with Leonic would be over some day, and he expected to settle down finally into the substantial, matter of fact citizen. Then he could not hope for a better wife than Lina would be, but he wished she had something more of Leonic's chic.

Leonic did not mean to harm the young fellow. She knew that he spent a great deal of money for her, but it did not occur to her to question its source. Perhaps it would have made no differ-

ence, anyway. Perhaps she would have let him go on just the same. But, again, perhaps she would not, for she really cared for him. In his treatment of her she had been different from other men she had known. He never seemed ashamed of her friendship. He seemed to recognize her right to a place in the world, her right to the very place that she held—if that was the one place to which she was best suited. Society had no right to prescribe her lines. How could the world know whether she would fit into any one of its dull, accustomed grooves? How can the world know that of any of us? He would have been glad to have fewer lines himself.

(To be continued.)

## EXAMINING A WITNESS.

New General Butler Discredited the Testimony of a Conductor.

General Butler as counsel for the plaintiff in a damage case against one of the Boston street railway companies, some years since, turned a point in his client's favor and won his case by an alibi and original move. The accident in question had taken place in a crowded street, and the testimony was contradictory and confusing. The conductor of the car, on the witness stand, swore point blank against the plaintiff. His evidence was concise, and he claimed to have seen all the occurrences of the affair and described them minutely, disputing the general's client at every turn. It was manifest that if the conductor told the truth the plaintiff had no case.

The general took up the cross examination, but the witness stuck to his story.

"What is that?" said the general, pointing to the bell punch suspended from the witness' neck.

"Bell punch," was the answer.

"And what is a bell punch?" innocently inquired the lawyer. And then followed a lengthy explanation of how the machine rang the bell to attract the passengers' attention that the amount was being recorded by the machinery on the inside. The whys and wherefores, the necessity for the thing and the company's rules were gone into until the court was well nigh out of patience and the jury were plainly wearying.

"And what do you do if a mistake is made and you come out short when you and the machine are at variance?" was the general's query.

"They make us pay the difference," was the answer.

"Won't they take your word for it?"

"No."

"Well, if they won't take your word for a nickel they needn't expect this jury to believe you," said the general, and they didn't, for they gave the plaintiff a substantial verdict.

I would not have any readers think the general intended any slur upon street car conductors, who are as honest and honorable as the rest of us. The general had a way of "getting there," no matter who was hit.—Boston Globe.

## Fickleness. Thy Name Is Maine Girl!

The other day a Lewiston young lady made an agreement with one of her admirers to go out walking that evening. Later she met another, whom she invited to call that same evening. She had forgotten the first. Then when a third one of her beaux made his appearance she agreed to go walking with him. In the evening the first young man came for her. She went, and soon the second arrived, and being told that she was out he said he would go and meet her.

When she saw him coming, she remembered her engagement, excused herself from the first young man and walked with the second. They came to a confectionery store, and she remained outside while he went in after chocolates. The third young man came along while she waited, and she graciously promanaged off with him. Now she says she will be more careful of her appointments.—Lewiston Journal.

## Pine Trees on Volcanoes.

Every one who admires trees must be interested in the result of Professor Heilprin's studies of the pines that clothe the slopes of the great volcanic mountains of Mexico.

These huge peaks seem to have pierced their way upward through a mantle of pine forest, which clings to their sides up to a height of nearly 34 miles.

The vertical range of the pine in Mexico is remarkable. It is found among the sun loving palm trees at the foot of the mountains, and it stands defiant of the cold close to the perpetual snows that cover their summits.—Youth's Companion.

## Columbian Stamps For Etiquette.

An elderly lady in a modest manner leaned over the counter of a west end drug store, and pointing to a letter with a Columbian stamp asked:

"Will you please tell me if these stamps are good for just common use?" When assured that they were so intended, she bowed politely and remarked as she left: "I didn't know I thought they were to be used perhaps for etiquette."

"I have to answer that same question 10 times a day," said the clerk, "but I wonder what she meant by etiquette."—Baltimore Sun.

## KINDNESS WELL REPAID.

How a Little Act of Consideration Won Distinction For a Traveler.

An Englishman making the grand tour about the middle of the last century, when travelers were more objects of attention than they are now, on arriving at Turin sauntered out to see the place.

He happened to meet a regiment of infantry returning from parade and took a position to see it pass. A young captain, evidently anxious to make a display before the stranger, in crossing one of the numerous water courses with which the city is intersected, missed his footing, and in

trying to save himself lost his hat. The exhibition was truly unfortunate—the spectators laughed and looked at the Englishman, expecting to see him laugh too. On the contrary, he not only retained his composure, but promptly advanced to where the hat had rolled, and taking it up presented it with an air of unaffected kindness to its confused owner.

The officer received it with a blush of surprise and gratitude and hurried to rejoin his company; there was a murmur of applause, and the stranger passed on. Though the scene of a moment and without a word spoken, it touched every heart, not with admiration for a mere display of politeness, but with a warmer feeling for a proof of that true charity "which never faileth."

On the regiment's being dismissed the captain, who was a young man of consideration, in glowing terms related the circumstance to his colonel. The colonel immediately mentioned it to the general in command, and when the Englishman returned to his hotel he found an aid-de-camp waiting to request his company to dinner at headquarters.

In the evening he was carried to court, at that time, as Lord Chesterfield tells us, the most brilliant court in Europe.

Of course during his stay at Turin he was invited everywhere, and on his departure he was loaded with letters of introduction to the different states of Italy.—Philadelphia Times.

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