

FETTERED BY FATE

BY ALEXANDER ROBERTSON

"Joliet's Fate," "Little Sweetheart," "Lottie, the Sewing Girl," "Goldmaker of Lisbon," "Wedded to Win," "Diana Thorpe," "Nora's Legacy," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER XX.—(Continued.)

Captain Grant, seeing he had the upper hand, kept on.

"I have searched far for you, Carol, but at last I have found you. Will you go back with me?"

All at once there flashed across the mind of the young girl a thought of the mad and the actions of this man toward her. He had acted as no gentleman would or should act, and she now recoiled from him as if from an adder.

"Leave me, sir," she cried. "I would return to my mother, the only one left to me to love—the only one."

"Oh, say not so, Carol," he exclaimed, passionately. "I will confess that I began this suit without much love, as a man of the world, but I found in you a woman worth winning and I have grown to love you madly. Say that I may have some hope; oh, give me but the faintest hope and I will cling to it as a shipwrecked mariner would to a plank that had been thrown within his reach. I knew not that you disliked me, else I would never have used my influence with your father to hasten our marriage. Forgive me for the past, Carol, and give me a grain of hope for the future. With your love I should be able to do much in this world; without it I feel like a rudderless vessel, drifting at the mercy of fate."

His words were eloquent, his acting of the very finest order, for he saw what he believed to be a good chance, and, as Carol was separated from her lover, hoped to catch her heart in the rebound; but she half-fathomed his motives and shrank from him as though he were a spirit of evil.

"I can never be more to you than I am now, Captain Grant. My heart is too sore to think of love. Leave me in peace to return to my mother," she said, slowly.

His face flamed and a fierce light shone in his eye. It seemed as though he was tempted just then to carry her off even against her will, but on second thought he dismissed the idea.

"As you will, Miss Richmond; your word is law to me. Good by until we meet again," and he vanished in the direction the gypsy girl had gone.

CHAPTER XXI.

"It is my wife. This is retribution. My sin has found me out."

As these words fell from the lips of Lawrence Richmond he stood as if rooted to the spot. The woman who lived in the haunted mill raised her head proudly and her eyes were looking into his so that he found himself gazing speechlessly upon the face of that wife whom he had not seen in all the years that had passed since he drove her away from him with curses that were to be so bitterly repented—curses that were to come back home to roost—curses that had ever since remained in his memory like plague spots, and which would not be erased though at times they almost set him crazy.

The burnt mortgage was still smoldering upon the little fire, but he had completely forgotten it in the excitement still more intense produced by this astounding discovery.

He had wronged this woman terribly in the past, in a manner that had shocked him whenever he thought of it—for he had afterward learned that she was as innocent as an angel and had searched for her, but she could not be found, and the old doubts crept over his mind again, obscuring it—and in that dread moment he only saw what a splendid chance for revenge had come to her.

Should she so desire she could crush him with a single blow. This was why the feeling of horror had entered his brain as he stood there, still clutching her white wrist so fiercely.

Then there flashed upon his mind the late act and words of the noble woman, and his eyes almost unconsciously were turned upon the fire where the document was still smoldering, though past recovery.

"My wife!" he muttered, "my wife come back to me from the dead? Oh, I am dreaming. This is some horrid taunting specter. My wife is dead and I am her murderer."

He groaned with mental anguish, and it stirred the woman's heart to its full depth to hear the man whom she had never ceased to love thus exhibit his terrible suffering.

"Not so, Lawrence. You see before you the unhappy woman who was once your wife. The years have come and gone since last we stood face to face, years of suffering to me, and yet I have patiently awaited the will of heaven. Perhaps there may be more in this meeting than we either of us imagine."

"Not dead, not dead," he muttered, with hushed breath, as he gazed eagerly upon her, "oh, then heaven has heard my prayer. He has sent you to me that the last act of my life should be my atonement to you. There, see me kneeling at your feet, with the pride, the cursed pride that ruined my life and yours, trampled down forever. Oh, can you forgive me for the past, my wretched mistake which I have deplored in tears of blood ever since? I know I do not deserve it, but if you could only forgive me it would be the act of an angel. Pity me, pardon me."

He had sunk at her feet in abject misery. His mind was once more cleared of all doubts. She was deeply affected by this evidence of his contrition, and her whole frame trembled, while the tears streamed down her cheeks.

"Kneel not to me, Lawrence, for what sin you committed against me has long since been forgiven. My act of a minute ago proves that I have never ceased to love you. Ask the great Mas-

ter above to forgive you, but do not kneel to me."

"Oh, woman, every word you utter sinks me into an abyss of shame. I see myself a fool, a knave, a brute. I am not worthy to touch the hem of your garment. May heaven bless you—and forgive me," he moaned.

She made him rise, even assisted him, and, weak and trembling, he sank back into a chair, almost incapable of motion. The fierce will, the strong frame, they seemed withered up by the mad force of this demon remorse.

"Oh, Lawrence, I thank heaven for bringing us face to face again. I have with me proofs that will dispel all those terrible charges of the past—"

"Peace," he said, interrupting her, "I would not look upon one of them for a king's ransom. Oh, did I not find out the truth for myself? Has it not been the consciousness of this that has pierced my heart like a knife at times, rendering me almost mad? Wife, wife, I have atoned in suffering for my sin."

"I believe it, Lawrence. What I have suffered shall remain sealed within my heart; you can imagine it; but never will you hear the story from my lips. The most bitter blow of all came to me when I heard that in your anger you had applied for and received the decree of divorce—that I was no longer your wife."

"That was false, and whoever told you that willfully deceived you. I never applied for a divorce, never received one. So far as the law is concerned, you are as much my wife as you ever were, though the bitter past can never be wiped out—never, and we must ever remain estranged."

"Oh, Father in heaven, I thank Thee for this mercy. Husband, let us then try and forget that bitter past. It has darkened our lives for many years; why should it shadow our whole future?" And she stood before him, a light shining in her eyes and a flush upon her cheeks that had not been seen there for many a day.

Lawrence Richmond seemed dazed.

"Do I hear aright? Are you an angel that you can live down all natural feeling of outraged innocence in the past—that you can kiss the rod that smote you? Ah! what a soul is there back of this, a noble, womanly soul, and I am unworthy to receive you. Do not touch me, for I have done you the worst wrong a man could do a loving woman, his wife—thrust you out into the cold world as though you were accursed."

"Hush, Lawrence. Let peace reign between us, and when Carol comes she will bless our reunion. Poor child, she has troubles enough of her own."

"And I am the miserable author of them, but if heaven spares me I will make the future speak for itself. I will from this moment cast off the miserable cloak that has hidden and almost strangled what good thoughts were in my heart, and show a new nature to the world. My poor wronged wife, would it be too much if I dared to kiss your hand in token of this new peace and the forgiveness you extend to me?"

For answer the old lady put her arms around his neck and held up her face for him to kiss. He trembled like an aspen leaf, and then, bending down, gently kissed her.

The past was healed, the abyss spanned, and in the future they could go forward hand in hand down life's decline. He could make no reparation for what he had done, but it was enough for her that he had expiated that wrong in sorrow and remorse.

They tell us woman's nature has never been understood; that it is unfathomable, and so it would seem.

From this calm and joyous contemplation of the future they were suddenly aroused by the entrance of Carol, in tears.

CHAPTER XXII.

"We are lost!"

Such was the cry that fell from the lips of Nora Warner as she realized the dreadful nature of their situation.

The great gate was locked, and Jack had failed to find the key. Then there had come that mocking laugh, and, turning, they had beheld the mad-house doctor close behind them, his evil face wreathed with a demonic smile of triumph, as they could readily understand, and, to cap the climax, the alarm bell had commenced to ring out its brazen notes of warning.

The poor girl had suffered so much of late that her spirits were readily quenched, and she believed that all was lost. All she could do was to cling to the arm of her lover, who would soon be so powerless to save her, and look as if horribly fascinated at the fiendish doctor.

Fortunately for her she had in Jack a master mind, one quick to act and ready to perceive. He saw at once that there was only one chance left for them. In less than five minutes the minions of the demon doctor would be swooping down upon the spot.

"The key—search for it."

These words fell quickly from his lips in a hoarse whisper, and of course, were intended for the girl. His thoughts were bent upon other subjects, and suddenly, like a tiger, he sprang at the doctor.

Nora Warner saw them clinch and fall heavily upon the earth, and then, with a mental prayer for her lover, she turned to hunt for the missing key.

That Jack had the best of the fight so far she readily believed, for the doctor had been taken rather by surprise, and had been taken rather by surprise, and she did not fancy that he was able to cope with her lover, for whose prowess she seemed to have a great admiration.

Besides, it was quite certain that the mad-house doctor would have made an

outcry so as to have drawn some of his keepers to the spot, had he been allowed the liberty of doing so, and the fact that he did not gave Nora hope.

She had an indistinct recollection of having from the grated window of her cell seen some one place the key on several occasions in a different hole from that which usually contained it, and her thoughts were very busy as she endeavored to remember where this receptacle was.

All at once it seemed to flash across her mind like an inspiration. She uttered a low cry of delight and hope, mingled with fear lest the key should not be there, and, springing forward, inserted her hand in the orifice.

"Thank heaven, the key was there! Eagerly she drew it out. All then was not yet lost. She lost not a second in inserting it in the lock. It was a ponderous key for her hands to turn, but excitement had lent her new strength and she was a giant for the time being. The key turned, the gate was open."

When she realized this fact the young woman uttered a cry of joy, and hastily taking out the key inserted it in the lock outside so that they could place a barrier in the way of pursuit by locking the gate after them, which it must be admitted was a very wise move on the part of the girl.

Meanwhile, how progressed affairs with Jack? Remembering all the cruelties he had heard of and witnessed, Jack was visiting his just indignation upon the mad-house doctor. He had just about finished his work when a cry of alarm from Nora reached his ear, and looking up he saw in the moonlight three of the keepers rapidly bearing down upon them from the direction of the house.

Casting the limp and apparently lifeless form of the sadly demoralized doctor from him, he sprang to his feet. Two keepers were only a dozen yards away as he bounded through the opening while Nora held the gate open for him, and no sooner did she see that he was safe than with all her strength she closed the ponderous structure.

Jack was quickly at her side and seeing the key in the lock comprehended her strategy. Just as he turned this the three keepers on the inside hurled themselves against the covered gate, but they had been a few seconds too late.

With a laugh Jack hurled the heavy key far away among the bushes. Then, holding his revolver in one hand and assisting Nora with the other, he rapidly left the spot.

It would be some time at least before a regularly organized pursuit could be started, for they would have to first resuscitate the doctor, and Jack chuckled to think what a sweet task they would have before them, as he remembered how black the mad-house doctor had become in the face before he was done with him.

The neighborhood of the mad house was singularly lonely, not a house being in sight either up or down the river, but Jack knew where he was aiming for, having studied the country well when he came and before applying for the situation.

Along through the dense undergrowth they made their way, leaving the mad house further behind them all the while, but although for a time all seemed going well, danger was not far away.

Suddenly Nora laid her hand upon the arm of her companion and brought him to a full pause.

"Listen!" she said, hoarsely.

They stood like statues for half a minute, their ears on the alert for sounds. Then Jack recognized a cry as one he had often heard among the swamps of the South. It was the long-drawn bay of a bloodhound.

The doctor had set loose his dogs.

"Come," said Jack, hastily, "let us fly. The doctor himself must be with those who are in our rear, and, should they come up with us, they would just as soon let the brutes attack us. Can you run, Nora?"

She showed him that she could, but the thickets barred their progress considerably. They had the satisfaction of knowing, however, that their pursuers were no better off, for they could hear the impatient noises given vent to by the hounds as they struggled in leash.

Jack still had his arm around his companion, but had long since replaced the revolver, as he needed his good right hand to assist him in his passage through the thickets, and, besides, he would probably have plenty of warning ere the pursuers came upon them.

(To be continued.)

Blood Spots Foretell Rain.

In the northwest corner of Wilkes County, Georgia, there is a very high hill, upon the crest of which stands the old antebellum residence, known as the Thomas Barksdale place. In 1856 two friends—Armistead Stokes and James Henly—had a misunderstanding. One morning Stokes went over to Henly's home, which was in front of the Barksdale residence, and asked Henly to walk out to the road with him, as he wished to talk over their differences. The two men walked together till they reached a gate nearly in front of where the Barksdale house now stands. Stokes opened the gate and Henly walked through, but without stopping to fasten the gate. Stokes quietly but quickly plunged his knife into Henly's heart. The latter staggered a few steps up a path by the roadside, fell and expired.

It is now said by reliable parties, according to the Atlanta Constitution, that up to a few years ago whenever there was a damp spell of weather it was preceded by a dark spot on the ground near the gate where Henly fell and met his death, and when the weather is clear and dry the spot disappears.

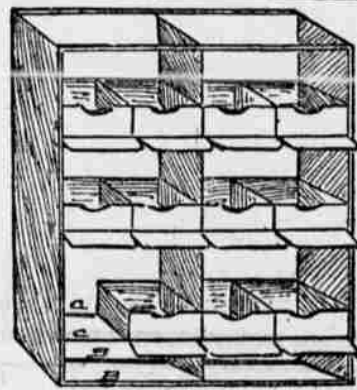
It is ever true that he who does nothing for others does nothing for himself.—Goethe.



Improved Nest Boxes.

The accompanying drawing reproduced from Orange Judd Farmer, illustrates very well the improved nests designed and successfully used by William Proctor, of Essex County, Mass. They are very easily made and the plan of construction is as follows: Take three boards, one inch thick by 12 inches wide, and of any convenient length. The boards are placed far enough apart to admit of two nests side by side.

Strips two inches wide and one inch thick, represented in the diagram as b b, are nailed across both top and bottom to hold the uprights in place and make the frame firm. Supports for the nest boxes are wires, designated by c c in the diagram, and to put them in place holes are augered through all the boards, which is best



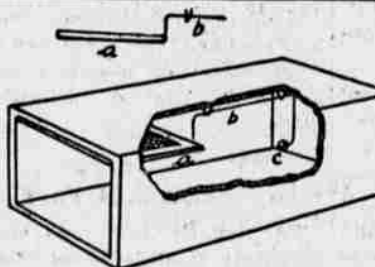
PRACTICAL NEST BOXES.

done before the rack is put together. Strips might well be used in place of the wires and would give additional strength. If wire is used, it will prove most satisfactory if kept tight.

The nest boxes are made of one-half inch lumber. They are 11½ inches wide, 12 inches long and five inches deep. The bottom is made to project six inches, providing a step for the hens to alight on. The space above the boxes would depend partly on the breed of poultry, but with boxes five inches high a 14-inch space between wires will be sufficient. The improved nest boxes have the advantage of being light, easily made and readily cleaned.

Rabbits in Apple Orchards.

One of the incidents and expenses of orcharding on a large scale is the constant warfare necessary to wage on rabbits so likely to work great destruction to young apple trees. Wellhouse & Son, of Topeka, Kan., for their orchard in Osage County, used a carload of lumber on the con-



EFFECTIVE RABBIT TRAP.

struction of 1,700 rabbit traps. For four orchards they have 2,000 traps.

These traps consist of a box 22 inches long, made of ordinary 6-inch lumber, 1 inch thick, closed at one end, and with an inward swinging wire gate, a, in the other end, which is shut by contact of the rabbit with a trigger, b, after he has fairly entered and taken the bait at c. About 4 feet of lumber and 4 feet of No. 12 galvanized iron wire are consumed in the making of each trap, which costs complete from 12½ to 15 cents. This trap, as now constructed, is considered well-nigh perfect, cost and efficiency considered, and is the result of twenty years of experimentation in making traps, and studying the nature and habits of the rabbit.—Farm and Home.

English Tobacco.

It is not generally known that tobacco is grown somewhat extensively in several districts in England. So also is Indian corn. The great bar to success in the culture of the tobacco plant during recent years is the want of the sun, but it is a fact that many cigars smoked in London are formed of material grown within a radius of forty miles from Bowbells.

Minnesota Dairy Figures.

The report issued of the State dairy and food departments shows that the 681 creameries of Minnesota, which have been inspected during the past season consume every day 5,400,000 pounds of milk. The figures for the year show that 75,000,000 pounds of butter are produced by these creameries and sold for \$17,500,000, of which \$12,500,000 went directly into the pockets of the patrons of the creameries. The 681 creameries are furnished with milk by 420,000 cows out of the 915,000 cows in the State.

A Big Grain Farm.

Oklahoma claims to have the largest farm in the Southwest. It is the 101 ranch in the Ponca reservation, and is so big that it is necessary to plant several varieties of wheat in it—one of which ripens several days later than the other—in order that all of them may be harvested at their prime. On this farm the wheat fields are of one thousand acres each, the cattle pastures are of one thousand to 1,500 acres each, and pasture six thousand head annually, the corn rows are one and a half miles long, requiring five hundred mules and three hundred men to handle the crop, and it takes thirty self-binders three weeks to cut the wheat crop and a dozen or more steam threshers forty days to thresh it. There are fifty thousand acres in the ranch.

Possibilities of Poultry Business.

The next thing in New York may be an egg corner. The eggs laid in the United States every year by hens are worth fully \$145,000,000. The poultry sold brings \$139,000,000. To haul to market all the eggs that all the hens lay every year would take a train of cars 886 miles long. This would reach from Washington to Chicago, where everybody eats one egg a day, or a total of 2,000,000.

The great American people are only beginning to realize what a boon they have in the great American hen, and they are cultivating her and her progeny. They are providing incubators to raise her little ones that she may not be interrupted in her work of delivering the daily egg for the daily consumption of not only the Chicagoan but all other townsmen.—New York Commercial.

Fine Potatoes in Maine.

"I doubt if any of you people down here in Washington ever saw anything like the sort of Irish potatoes that we raised in Maine this past season," said Mr. A. C. Gardiner, of the Pine Tree State.

"We have one county—Aroostock—that is the banner potato county of the Union, and this year it broke all its previous records in the production of the Murphys. Don't set me down as a retailer of romance when I tell you that I saw among a number of giants grown there one specimen that weighed four and a half pounds. Plenty of three-pounders were in evidence, and the big ones were just as palatable and luscious as those of smaller size."—Washington Post.

New Sugar Plant.

The Agricultural Department is inquiring into the statement of Consul-General Guenther that a new plant has been discovered in South America that promises to supplant the sugar cane and the sugar beet. The plant contains a large amount of saccharine matter and a high percentage of natural sugar properties which are easy to extract. It is said to be easily cultivated in climates like those of the southern portion of the United States. According to experiments made by the discoverer, the director of the agricultural institute of Anuncion, this plant is said to yield a sugar which is from twenty to thirty times as sweet as ordinary cane or beet sugar.

Wide and Narrow Tires.

At an experiment station it has been demonstrated that it requires 40 per cent more power to draw a load on a wagon with 1½-inch tires than one with a 3-inch tire. With a Baldwin dynamometer careful tests were made with a loaded wagon drawn over bluegrass sward. In a wagon weighing 1,000 pounds it was found that a load weighing 3,272 pounds could be drawn on wide tires with the same force required to move 2,000 pounds on narrow tires. Moreover, the wide tires did not injure the turf, while the narrow ones cut through it.

Water for Horses.

Horses require a considerable amount of water daily, the quantity varying with different seasons of the year, the amount of work performed, etc. The time of watering, whether before or after feeding, is a matter of little importance and, generally speaking, may be regulated to suit the convenience of the feeder. Horses become used to either method of watering, and irregularity should be avoided, as sudden changes are apt to prove disturbing.

Pigs Eat Charcoal.

It is said that charcoal is a very valuable hygienic agent for pigs. It is a corrective, and acts as a preventive against various diseases arising from disordered digestive organs. If some charcoal, or even ashes, are put in the pigsty, the pigs will soon show they like it.

The Farm Surplus.

The farm surplus should never be sold in its original condition if it can be changed to something else with profit. Hay, when fed to dairy cows, and only the butter is sold, leaves a portion of the profit on the farm, as the butter is derived mostly from the air, and it is to this fact that creameries which return the skim milk and whey to their patrons have done much to increase the fertility of some farms by rendering the manure of the farms more valuable.