

THE QUICKENING

BY
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CHAPTER XX.

When Tom, seated on Saladin, overtook Ardea on the morning after the night of offenses, she greeted him quite as if nothing had happened, challenging him gaily to a gallop with the valley head for its goal, and refusing to be drawn into anything more serious than joyous persiflage until they were returning at a walk down a boulder-strewn wood road at the back of the Dabney horse pasture. Then, and not till then, was the question of Nancy Bryerson's future suffered to present itself.

"I thought of it last night," said Ardea, nodding toward a cabin near the Major's kennels. "It is just the place for Nancy, if she can not, or will not, go back to her father. After breakfast, I shall send Dinah and a man up to set things in order, and she can come as soon as she likes. She won't mind the loneliness. Japheth will go after her when we are ready; and if you are prudently wise you will have business in South Tredegar for the next few days."

"That looks like dodging; and I don't like to dodge."

"You will have to do many things you don't like," she remarked. "But you shall be permitted to carry your full share of the burden. I mean to let you give me some money, if you can afford it, and I'll spend it for you."

"Charity itself couldn't be kinder," he assented. "And, luckily, I can afford it. But—"

He was looking at her wistfully, and the old longing for sympathy, for the sympathy which has been quite to the bottom of the well where truth lies, was about to cry out against this riveting of the fetters of misunderstanding and false accusation.

"But you would rather spend it yourself?" she broke in, fancying she had divined his thought. "That can not be. The one condition on which I shall consent to help is the complete isolation for Nan. You must promise me you will not try to see her. I am hoping against hope that none of the Mountain View avenue people will find out what you did last night."

"I'll keep out of her way, if you can keep her out of mine. All I care is to know that she is comfortably provided for."

In the comment of the simpler-minded Gordonia folk, the iron-master's son had finally "made it up" with Nancy, and here the note of approval was not wholly lacking. There were good-hearted souls to say that boys will be boys, and to express the hope that Tom would go on from this beginning and make an honest woman of Nancy by marrying her.

But Tom did not know of it. He was in the crucial month of the panic, year, striving desperately to maintain the foothold given to him by the pipe-casting invention, and he had little time for the amenities. So it came about that he escaped for the moment; or, which was quite the same, he did not know he was pursued. Another Northern city, with its full complement of grafting officials, was in the market for some train-loads of water-mains, and again Thomas Jefferson was fighting the old battle of conscience against expediency, this time in the evil-smelling ditches where the dead and wounded lie.

"You are sure you went into it thoroughly, Norman?" he demanded of his lieutenant, when the latter returned from a personal reconnaissance of the field. "The break they are making at us seems almost too rank to be taken at its face value."

"Oh, yes; I dug it up from the bottom," said the henchman. "It's rotten and riotous. The political machine runs the town, and the bosses own the machine. So much to this one, so much to that, so much to half a dozen others, and we get the contract."

"That comes straight, does it?" "As straight as a shot out of a gun. They got together on it, eight of the big bosses, called me in and told me flat-footed what we had to do," said the salesman. "Oh, I tell you, those fellows are on to their job."

"No chance to go behind the returns and stir up popular indignation, as we did in Indiana?" suggested Tom.

"No show on top of earth. The ring owns or controls two of the dailies, and has the other two scared. Besides, they've just had their municipal election."

To prepare for the new exigency, Tom took the afternoon local for South Tredegar. The lump sum required for the bribery was considerably in excess of his balance in bank. Notwithstanding the stringency of the times, he made sure he could borrow; but it was in some vague hope that the moral chasm might be widened to impassability, or decently bridged for him, that he was moved to state the case in detail to President Henniker of the Iron City National. Mr. Vanocourt Henniker could dig ditches, on occasion, making them too vast for the boldest borrower to cross; but Tom's credit was gilded, and in the present instance the president chose rather to build bridges.

"We have to shut our eyes to a good many disagreeable things in business,

Mr. Gordon," he said, genially didactic. "Our problem in this day and generation is so to draw the line of distinction that these necessary concessions to human frailty will not debauch us; may be made without prejudice to that high sense of personal honor and integrity which must be the corner-stone of any successful business career. This state of affairs which you describe is deplorable—most deplorable; but—well, we may think of such obstacles as we do of toll-gates on the highway. The road is a public utility, and it should be free; but we pay the toll, under protest, and pass on."

Mr. Henniker was a large man, benign and full-favored, not to say untutored; and his manner in delivering an opinion was blandly impressive, and convincing to many. Yet Tom was not convinced.

"Of course, I came to ask for the loan, and not specially to justify it," he said, in mild irony which was quite lost on the philosopher in the president's chair. "I wasn't sure just how you would regard it if you should know the object for which we are borrowing, and this high sense of personal honor you speak of impelled me to be altogether frank with you."

"Quite right; you were quite right," Mr. Gordon, said the banker, urbanely. "You are young in business, but you have learned the first lesson in the book of success—to be perfectly open and outspoken with your banker. As I have said, the venality of these men with whom you are dealing is most deplorable, but—"

There was some further glozing over of the putrid fact, a rood bit of it, and Tom sat back in his chair and listened, outwardly respectful, inwardly hot-headed and contemptuous. Was this smooth-spoken, oracular prince of the market-place a pre-destined hypocrite, shaping his words to fit the money-gathering end without regard to their demoralizing effect? Or was he only a subconscious Pharisee, self-deceived and complacent? Tom's thought ran lightning-like over the long list of the Vanocourt Hennikers: men of the business world successful to the Croesus mark, large and liberal benefactors, founders of colleges, libraries and hospitals, gift-givers to their fellow men, irreproachable in private life, and yet apparently stone blind on the side of the larger equities. Could it be possible that such men deliberately admitted and accepted the doubtful standard in morals? It seems fairly incredible, and yet their lives appeared to proclaim it.

Having obtained the shew of war, Tom kept the appointment with Norman, and their joint discussion of the business situation made him too late for the early dinner at Woodlawn. To complete the delay, the evening train lost half an hour with a hot box at a point a mile short of Gordonia. Two things came of these combined time-killings: a man in a slouched hat and the brown jeans of the mountaineers, who had been watching the Woodlawn gates since dusk from his hiding-place behind the field wall across the pike, got up stiffly and went away; and Tom reached home just in time to intercept Ardea on the steps of the picturesque veranda.

"Been visiting the little mother?" he asked, when she paused on the step above him.

"Yes—no; I ran over to tell you that we moved Nancy to-day."

"Oh! Well, that's comfortable. She was willing?"

"Y-es; almost, at first; and altogether willing when I told her that I—that she—" There was an embarrassed moment and then the truth came out. "Perhaps I should have asked you first; but she was quite satisfied when I told her that she owed her changed condition to the person whose duty it was to provide for her. You don't mind, do you?"

"No, I don't mind," he said, absently, and the under-thought dealt savagely with Nan—with a woman who, for the sake of the leaves and the fishes, and the shielding of the real offender, would suffer an innocent man to go to the social gallows for lack of the word which would have cleared him. He laughed rather bitterly and added, out of the heart of the under-thought: "I'm glad I'm not naturally inclined to be pessimistic."

"What makes you say that?" "Because, after hearing"—he changed his mind suddenly, and transferred the hard word from Nan to Mr. Vanocourt Henniker—"after what I've been hearing this afternoon I find myself more in the notion of weeping with the angels than of laughing with the devils."

"What has happened?" she asked, sympathetically alive to his need in one breath, and keenly apprehensive for her own peace of mind in the next.

"An exceedingly small thing, as the world's measurements go. I was in town, and made a business call on Mr. Henniker. He's a member of your church, isn't he? I needed some money to bribe a lot of political grafters in a Pennsylvania city where I'm trying to sell a bill of water-pipe. I went to Mr. Henniker to borrow it."

"And, of course, he wouldn't let you have it for any such wretched purpose!" she flamed out.

"No, you are mistaken; it's just the other way around. I told him what it was for, hoping rather vaguely, I think, that he'd sit on me and make the crime impossible. But he didn't. He took the trouble to try to explain away my scruples; made it seem quite a virtuous thing before he got through. You wouldn't believe it now, would you?"

"But, Tom! you didn't take the money?"

"How could I refuse so good a man? Norman is on his way to Pennsylvania at this present moment, with a letter of credit in his pocket big enough to make the mouth of even a professional graft-water. At least, I hope it is big enough."

She was hurt, shocked, horrified, and he knew it and found pleasure of a certain sort in the knowledge. When a man has done violence to his own best impulses, the thing that some nearest to the holy joy of penitence is the utter holy joy of making somebody else sorry for him. There were unmistakable tears in her voice when she said:

"Tom, why have you told me this—this unspeakable thing?"

"Why—I guess it was because I wanted to ask you how you supposed the Mr. Henniker kind of men square such things with their conscience; or don't they have any conscience?"

"What can I say to help you, Tom? I would do anything that a true friend may be!"

"There might have been a thing; but you have made it impossible. No, don't freeze me again—it's the last time. If I could have won your love—"

For a single instant Vincent Farley's chance of marrying the Deer Trace caldies trembled in the balance. Ardea forgot him, forgot Nan, thought of nothing but the passionate yearning that was drawing her like gripping hands toward the man who had bared his inmost heart to her.

"It is not too late for you to be a man, noble, upright, honorable. Let the world find that for which it is looking, my friend—my brother: the strong man armed who can stand where others faint and fall. Oh, I wish I knew how to say the word that would make you the man you were meant to be!"

When it was said, she was gone and the sound of the closing door was in his ears when he turned and went slowly down the driveway and out on the white pike, lying like a snowy ribbon under the December stars. On the highway he hung undecided for a moment; but an hour later, William Layne, driving homeward from South Tredegar, overtook him plodding slowly southward far beyond the head of Paradise; and it was nearing midnight when he won back, pacing steadily past the Deer Trace and Woodlawn gates and holding his way down the pike to Gordonia.

The railway station was his goal; and when he had aroused the sleepy night operator and gained admittance, he sat at the telegraph table to write a message. It was to Norman, addressed to intercept the salesman at the breakfast stop.

"Cancel Pennsylvania date and come in at once to take management of plant," was the wording of it; and at the breakfast-table the following morning Tom announced his intention of leaving the industrial plow in the farrow while he should go to Boston to complete his course in the technical school.

(To be continued.)

Way-Ko or Wack-Ko?

Every town has its right to pronounce its name in its own way, but Texans never seemed to get together on the pronunciation of the name "Waco." Years ago Texas was represented by two rather ancient senators, one of whom called the town "Way-ko," whereas the other insisted it was "Wauk-ko."

The reading clerk had a merry time. If the word were read one way the opposing senator would make a complaint, and vice versa. It recalls the time when Arkansas was represented in the senate by Garland and Walker. One insisted that the state should be called "Arkansas," just as it is spelled. The other always insisted upon "Arkansaw." John J. Ingalls, who was presiding officer of the senate in those days, had the matter down to such a nicety that he would recognize the one as "the senator from 'Arkansas,'" and the other as "the senator from 'Arkansaw,'" being very careful to give each senator his favorite pronunciation.—Washington correspondence St. Louis Star.

Courtship Class for Jap Girls.

Japan has killed the last doubt as to its modern progress by the organization of a "class of courtship" for girls in each of the secondary schools. The Japanese maidens are taught that if they "should be so unfortunate as to fall in love before becoming engaged they must conceal the fact. Above all they must remember that women never propose. Another thing, they are warned that well bred girls do not exchange photographs with their admirers. In Japan until now there has not been any trouble about courting, and this is the first evidence that the Japanese maidens need instruction in affairs of the heart. Classes to the contrary, however, the point is maintained that there is not a Juliet under the sun who does know the exact formula for dealing with a

CARE OF THE BROOM

MAKER TELLS HOW TO PROLONG ITS LIFE.

It Should Be Swung Back and Forth From a Point Back of Sweeper to a Place at an Equal Distance in Front.

"It makes me sad," said a broom maker, "to see the way people use brooms. The life of a broom could be twice prolonged by proper usage, and used properly it would be vastly easier to use."

"You've seen people sweeping ahead of them, pushing stuff with a broom? Why, the best and most perfectly seasoned broomcorn stock that ever was put into a broom wouldn't stand such treatment as that."

"With such handling splints will break off. The splints remaining, jagged and uneven, bear unevenly on the surface. You never can sweep clean with it after that."

"Then you know the majority of sweepers always sweep with the same side of the broom to the front, and in this way they soon get the broom lopsided, so that they can't use it any other way. There couldn't be a worse way."

"Used in this manner the points of the splints get bent all one way and then they meet together at their ends. They don't bite, they don't take hold of dust as they are meant to do, they don't sweep clean, and when a broom has come to this condition the sweeper is less careful of it, for then it is not so good a broom. Such a broom the sweeper feels that he may push ahead of him; and when he does this with it the broom is finally and irretrievably ruined."

"Of course the correct way to use a broom is with the handle, in its initial position, held vertically, so that all the splints in the face of the broom will take hold at the same time and evenly. In sweeping the broom should be swung back and forth from a point back of the sweeper to a point at an equal distance in front. That is the proper way to use a broom, and then every day the sweeper should turn the broom around, so as to sweep with a different side daily. Used in this manner and turned daily the broom wears down evenly."

"I have seen—a delight to the professional eye and a comfort to everybody who likes to see any implement used to the best advantage, thoughtfully and considerably—I have seen brooms that had been so used that they had worn down almost to the binding threads, but that still bit beautifully. I am perfectly well aware that brooms carelessly used, as commonly they are, wear out faster, with a corresponding benefit to broom manufacturers; but still I do really hate to see anybody misuse a broom."

Pineapple Cream.

Beat the yolks of three eggs slightly, add the juice and grated rind of one lemon, a pinch of salt and half a cupful of sugar. Let simmer on the fire slowly, stirring all the time until it thickens. Then remove and stir in a cupful of canned pineapple grated fine and one and a half tablespoonfuls of gelatine which has previously been soaked in half a cupful of cold water. When the mixture begins to jell stir in half a cupful of cream beaten to a froth and the whites of the three eggs also beaten stiff. Turn into a mold and chill thoroughly until time to serve.

To Clean Algrettes.

The easiest and best way to clean algrettes is to lay algrettes on a towel and take a soft complexion brush, wet with warm water and white soap; rub lightly, the way of the feather, until feather is clean, and rinse in warm water and hang in a cool breeze. It will take from two to four hours for them to thoroughly dry.

Plum Butter.

Wash the plums well, drain and cook without water, until soft; use an equal amount of sugar to the amount of plum. Cook very slowly on the back of the stove until thick and rich. Many object to plum butter on account of its being too strong, but to remedy that one-third apple sauce, which has been put through a sieve, may be added to two-thirds plum, thus making the plums go farther and also getting rid of that sharp taste. Boil the plums till the skins crack in water with a spoonful of soda, to remove the tang.

Coats of All Lengths.

Considerable variety is shown in the new suit coats. The shorter length is receiving the greater attention, but it is likely that the coats of half and three-quarter lengths will reappear later on.

Sardines and Anchovy Sauce.

Spread slices of fried bread with anchovy paste, lay a split sardine on each piece. Fill out the edge with chopped olives and pickles, sprinkle with lemon juice and serve either hot or cold.

WAY TO MAKE OX TAIL STEW

Cut Up the Joints and Serve in Center of Hot Dish With the Vegetables.

One ox tail, one tablespoonful of flour, one teaspoonful of mushroom catsup, one heaping tablespoonful of dripping, one onion, one carrot, one turnip, salt and pepper. Wash the tail well in warm water and cut it up at the joints; the larger joints may be cut in two. Dry the pieces well and mix on a plate the flour, salt and pepper. Rub each piece of tail over with this mixture. Put into a saucepan the dripping and let it get quite hot, then fry the pieces of tail all round in it, and lift them out when done. Pour out the fat that remains and return the pieces of tail to the pan with the onion chopped up, two cupfuls of water and the mushroom catsup, and stew very gently for one and one-half hours. Cut the carrot and turnip into very neat pieces, add them and stew for three-quarters of an hour longer. If well and slowly cooked this is a delightful stew, as the ox tail contains a great deal of gelatine. Dish the meat in the center of a hot dish with the vegetables around it.



As red currants are more expensive than red raspberries, by cooking one quart of currants and two quarts of red raspberries together the juice makes delicious jelly, having a delightful currant flavor, and is of a beautiful rich red color.

After canning peaches a delicious peach marmalade can be made by cooking the peeling and seeds together, then rubbing them through the sieve. The seeds add an excellent flavor. Add sugar to taste and cook to desired thickness. As there is no waste peaches for canning, even at high prices, are within the reach of most everyone.

An excellent currant sauce for cold meats can be made by cooking equal parts of red currants and raisins together. Add sugar and spices to taste.

Fish and Lemon Juice.

Take a three-pound fish. Clean, cut and sprinkle with salt. Leave for three hours; cut fine one good, medium-sized onion, let simmer in a tablespoonful of butter, add one pint of boiling water, pinch of ginger, pepper, mustard; put in the fish; boil slow 20 minutes. Sauce—Beat well the yolks of six eggs, juice of three lemons; add the hot gravy from fish to yolks and lemons, stirring well, so eggs will not curdle; then put back on stove, let come to a boil and place fish in a dish, pour sauce over, put away to cool; garnish with lettuce leaves, add one tablespoonful of chopped parsley to sauce.

Nut Cake.

One-half cup butter, 1½ cups sugar, three eggs, 2½ cups flour, 1½ teaspoons baking powder, one-half cup milk, one cup nuts, any preferred. Rub the butter and sugar to a cream, add eggs well beaten, then the flour sifted two times with powder. Mix with the milk and nuts into a thin batter and bake in paper-lined tin 35 minutes.

Spaghetti a la Mexicano.

A savory and delicious dish enjoyed by the Mexicans. One-half package spaghetti, cooked in boiling salt water, twenty minutes, drain, add one can of tomatoes, strain. Have cooking one pound Hamburg steak with two large onions. Chop fine and add to mixture. Season with red pepper, paprika, adding six olives chopped fine.

To Starch Linens.

In starching linens and similar goods too light for mourning starch and too dark for the white, put in the boiling starch a large piece of tissue paper in shade to match as nearly as possible the dress material. This will dissolve, and when the starch is strained nothing but the dye will remain, making a starch of the exact color desired.

This is a good hint for the woman who does much color embroidery of the stiffly starched variety.

Gold Cake.

One-half cup butter, one cup sugar, yolks of six eggs, one-half cup sweet milk, one-half teaspoon soda, one teaspoon cream of tartar, one and one-half cups flour. Beat butter and sugar to a cream, beat the yolks and add. Dissolve soda in milk and sift cream of tartar in flour.

Apple Custard Pie.

One large sweet apple, grated, one-half cup sugar, one egg well beaten, pinch of salt, one scant pint of milk. Bake in one crust.