A DEAD PAST

By MRS. LOVETT CAMERON

CHAPTER XXVI.—(Continued.)

She was dying.

Could any one of those who watched her doubt it? For the first day, indeed, it seemed as though the bitterness of death was already over. But with the deceitfulness of the disease which consumed her, she rallied. She came back to life, and to a certain amount of strength; she was able to be dressed and to sit propped with cushions in an arm chair, before the fire. A bright color tinged her wax like cheeks, her eyes shone and glowed with a strange preternatural brilliancy, and yet she was going to die, they all knew it; it was death robbed of all his horrors, death clad in a beautiful and altogether wonderful garment, but it was death all the same.

Keppington Hall was a changed house. Instead of solitude and silence, and desolate empty rooms, there were the hushed steps of many feet along the passages, and fires in many rooms, where the saddened little group of friends, who had rallied about her, had taken up their quarters, meaning to remain by her till the end, or at least until her husband should come to her. To find Brian was the difficulty. Rosamond, who had seen him last, only knew that he had returned to London, and only hoped that he might be there still. The house in Lowndes Square was shut up. Roy could think of no better plan than to telegraph to his club. They did so, but no answer came. The telegram lay there a whole day, then the lawyer's clerk called and fetched it, together with several letters, and took it round to his master's office. The lawyer found it the following morning. According to his instructions from his client, he opened it; then being altogether shocked by its import, and fearing to deal too sudden a blow to the husband, he telegraphed the substance out to Mentone, not to Desmond, but to his cousin, Edgar Raikes. A great deal of all too precious time was thus wasted while this took place.

At Keppington they watched and waited, longing for news. Poor Mrs. Succurden's dismay and consternation, upon learning that the little maid whom she had bullied and scolded, was no other than the wife of her master, was most pitiable. She lamented her blindness, and wailed over her past conduct in a fashion that was almost ludicrous. More especially was her remorse great in the matter of the broken crystal goblet.

"To think," she cried, "that I should have been so dreadfully angry at her breaking that glass goblet, when all the time it was her own, and she was free to smash it into powder if she chose, and nobody dare say a word!

"I would not be so very unhappy at that, Mrs. Succurden," said Rosamond, who happened to be the recipient of her complaints. "It was certainly not your fault that Mrs. Desmond chose to fill so humble a position in her husband's house; it is no use regretting the past; what we have to do now is to see if by any chance we can save her poor frail life now."

But though Rosamond spoke brightly and hopefully, she did not believe in her own words. As Roy entered the octagon room, bearing the small, frail form that was but a feather weight in his arms, she felt that it was impossible that in anything so white and fragile the flame of life should ever blaze up again into vitality.

Tenderly and gently Roy put her down in the big armchair, filled with cushions, that had been prepared for her. She smiled at him gratefully, but for some moments she was too exhausted to speak. Her breath came quick and short, her head sank back wearily against the pillows, and her thin little hand, which she lifted for a moment between herself and the fire, fell back again nervelessly into her lap. Roy, standing a moment behind her with wild anxious eyes fastened upon her, felt all at once that he could not bear the sight. There came a great choking lump in his throat, a singing in his ears, and a blinding mist before his eyes. He turned away swiftly and noiselessly, and left the room.

Presently Kitten looked up. No one was with her but Rosamond. Mrs. Earle knelt in front of her chair upon the hearth rug, the red fire glow shone upon her beautiful face, and upon the pitiful, tender eyes which she bent upon the sick girl.

A little while ago, perhaps, Kitten might have been startled at the sight of her, she might have shrunk away, turning from her with a great and miserable jealousy. But she was past all that now. Nothing surprised her or seemed wonderful now, nothing even distressed her. She looked at her steadfastly, with those strange eyes, that Rosamond had likened to a human soul, and then glanced upward to where the colored miniature of handsome Rosamond Gray, in her drooping beaver hat and feather, smiled down happily upon the two women who had held Brian Desmond's heart between them.

"You are Mrs. Earle?" she said softly.

For all answer Rosamond lifted the wasted fingers for a moment to her lips.

"And you love Brian?"

"My dear, all that is past long, long ago. Do not trouble yourself about it," she murmured soothingly.

"Is love ever past?" Kitten said dreamily, almost to herself.

"Yes, yes," broke out Rosamond impetuously. "Thank God, yes!—or else it were too great a burden for a woman to bear."

The ready tears rushed into the elder woman's eyes, but Kitten's grave eyes were dry, only she looked away into the fire glow and sighed.

"I left him to you," she said softly, after a pause.

"Dear child!" cried Rosamond eagerly, "if I had only seen you or known you, if you had but come to me, I would never have let you leave him. In time the madness would have died out of his heart, and he would have loved you, and you only. Is it not a wife's duty to be ever with her husband?"

Kitten shook her head, and a small, sad smile stole into her face.

"Do you think it was duty I should have looked for? Ah! no, I was not good enough. It was only happiness that I wanted. Can the one make up for the other? Never, never! When I knew that he loved you, then I would not stay to see the hollow mockery of a love that was never mine. I thought I would go, and that he would be happier, and I—I could, perhaps, forget."

She spoke very softly and sadly. There was no emotion in her voice. It was as though she was telling the story not of herself, but of some other woman who had loved and suffered.

Rosamond crouched before her, holding the two small hands in her own. Hot tears of pity dropped thickly upon them. It seemed to her all too sad and too pathetic, the faithful, childish heart, that having lots its illusions, had gone away alone to die, sooner than live on with only a shadow of its own dead hopes.

"And it is I who have brought you this woe," she sobbed, with a bitter self-remorse, hiding her face upon Kitten's lap. Kitten's small, thin hand rested lightly upon the dark, bowed head.

"No, do not say that. Once I was angry and jealous, once I almost hated you, but I was wrong, oh, yes, I was very wrong, for it was unjust. Was it your fault that he loved you first and best—is it ever a woman's fault? And she always has to bear all the punishment. Always, always, the sins of the man are laid upon her, as well as the burden of her own. Oh, yes, it is very hard, very hard, but it was not your fault."

"Say that you forgive me," pleaded the other, clasping the white hands between her own. "It is true that it was not my fault. When I came back free I sent for him, thinking he had kept his promises to me, and that he would be free, too. When he told me that he was married it was like a deathblow, at first, to me; but I sent him back to you. Still, since I have injured you unconsciously, say 'Rosamond, I forgive you!'"

She repeated the words in a whisper, with a little smile:

"Rosamond, I forgive you."

And Rosamond kissed her.

"Perhaps some day you will remember, you and Brian together, that I gave my life so that you might be happy."

"No, dearest, you yourself will live to be happy, and Brian will learn to value the treasure he has so nearly lost. We have sent for him. He is coming; at any moment he may be here. Believe me, you will be happy yet."

But Kitten only shook her head.

"No. For me there is nothing more, only sleep. Life's poor play is over."

CHAPTER XXVII.

The expres train was hurrying northwards on the Great Northern line. The pace was terrific; fields, villages, towns even flew by at a lightning speed, for the train was best of the day, and there were but few stoppages between London and York. No one was ever heard to complain of the speed of this particular train before; and yet, to-day, there was a passenger in a first-class carriage, who seemed scarcely to sit still, so great was his irritation at the few brief and necessary stoppages, and so terrible was his impatience to be at his journey's end.

"Two minutes lost in the last half hour," he muttered angrily.

"They will make it up in the next," answered his companion soothingly.

"To think of the days that have been wasted! If I had only never gone out again to the cursed Riviera—and now I may be too late!"

"We must hope for the best," answered his friend, but he, too, looked anxious and troubled.

In the further corner of the same carriage where sat the two cousins was a gentleman, who now and then cast furtive glances at them from behind his newspaper.

Some little discussion having arisen previously, concerning the opening and shutting of the windows, this gentleman, after the train had passed York and got upon the branch line, where the stoppages were frequent, and no doubt most irritating, took an opportunity of addressing himself to Edgar Raikes, who sat nearest to him.

"You are perhaps acquainted with this part of the country, sir?"

Edgar replied that he knew it very well indeed. The stranger was an immensely tall man, of rough exterior; he wore a huge red beard and was bronzed and battered in appearance, like a man who had led a life of much exposure to every sort of climate.

"Perhaps, then," he continued, "you can kindly inform me what sort of place is Smackton-on-Sea?"

"It is a very dull place, sir," replied Raikes.

"Ah! — and the accommodation there——"

"Is clean, but very homely and unpretentious; there is only one hotel, and that is a second-rate one."

"Then what I want to know, sir," replied the big man, bringing down his red fist upon his knee, "is what the deuce can take a fashionable woman there in the mouth of January? The maid servant, sir, gave me certainly one piece of information; she told me that her mistress was staying with some people of the name of Grantley."

Edgar Raikes looked up quickly.

"Grantley, did you say?"

"Yes; but who is Grantley? The girl said 'people.' That's easily said. Is Grantley plural or singular, woman or man, sir? That's what I want to know, and that's what I am going to see."

"I know a gentleman of the name of Grantley," said Mr. Raikes, rather hesitatingly. "Sir Roy Grantley; if your wife is staying with him and—and his wife, I am sure that she is in very good hands; perhaps—if you would kindly favor me with your name——"

"Certainly; my name is Talbot," replied the other, readily.

"I know Mrs. Talbot; I have often met her. I assure you, Mr. Talbot, that if she is staying with—with—the persons you have mentioned you need have no anxiety."

It was wonderful what a pain it gave him even to allude to the woman whom he believed to be Sir Roy's wife.

"Edgar," he began somewhat nervously, "you are the best friend a man ever had."

"My dear Brian——"

"I know there is nothing you would not do for me."

"Nothing, my dear old chap. What is it now?"

"Will you leave me to go home alone? I cannot, I think, bear to get there—to meet her—unless I am by myself."

"I will do better than that," said his cousin promptly, and in spite of his utmost efforts, his heart beat with a sudden gladness that was a dismay to him. "I will stop at Smackton-on-Sea. It is the next station now, and I will join you by the first train in the morning. Mr. Talbot," he said aloud, to their fellow traveler, "I have half a mind to stop with you at Smackton to-night, and renew my acquaintance with your charming wife."

Mr. Talbot expressed himself overjoyed. "Do so, my dear sir, do so by all means," he cried heartily. The train was slackening its speed. Edgar began gathering his rugs and sticks together.

"And I shall see her again," he said to himselrf. And as he said it, his heart was filled with a wild and insane delight.

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At Keppington that morning there were anxious hearts who waited with gloomy forebodings to see what the day would bring forth.

Kitten lay still in her armchair. She was too weak now to be moved. Rosamond and Roy took it in turn to watch by her. Upon the lips of each, as they passed each other with hushed footsteps upon the threshold of her room, there was ever the same question:

"Will he be in time?"

And as they stood for one half minute together, Rosamond heard all at once the distant sound of wheels upon the gravel drive.

"Listen, there is a carriage."

Rosamond stood quite still at the open door and waited. Soon she perceived a lumbering one-horse fly that was creeping slowly up toward the house, but, to her surprise, it came not from the station, but from quite the opposite direction. She could not imagine who it could be bringing. Certainly, however, it could not be Brian.

Gertrude Talbot was filled with delighted astonishment at the spectacle of the very person whom her insatiable curiosity had been dying to discover.

"My dear, it must be—it is she!" she cried breathlessly, clutching at Margaret Grantley's arm, as the fly came slowly up to the front of the great white house.

"Who is it?" whispered Margaret back.

"Mrs. Earle, of course! Then I stake my existence that Brian Desmond is here, too!"

"Then—then—where is Roy?" stammered Margaret, bewildered.

Roy came quickly forward.

"Margaret—here?" he looked from one to the other in bewilderment.

Col. Trefusis drew Rosamond away. Roy took their place in the open doorway. He looked stern and angry. There was a frown on his brow, and the lines of his mouth were hard and fixed. Margaret had seen him look like that before.

"What is the meaning of all this?" he said, coldly and hardly. "What brought you here, Margaret, and you, Mrs. Talbot? Had you not the sense to keep away from this house? What was Felicia about to let you come?"

"Oh! don't be angry, Roy." He was so like his father now that it frightened her. "Indeed, it was not Felicia who sent me; but what do you suppose Felicia will think of you, she who should become your wife? And, Roy, pray come back with us. We have been so anxious about you, Felicia and I, and what good can you do here? You cannot surely be wanted. It cannot be right for you to stay here. Come back with us to Felicia."

Then Roy answered her.

"Once and for all, understand me, Margaret. Neither Felicia, nor any other woman, will ever be my wife. Once, long ago, I wanted to marry the girl I loved, but you—you were worldly and calculating and you came between me and her—you robbed me of my love and of my happiness. After that, can I ever listen to you again or be guided by what you say to me? As you have made my life, so must that life remain, unloved and desolate to my death. And so I will not come with you now—is it likely? She, the only woman I ever loved, is in her deathbed. Do you think I would leave her? Go home, Margaret, and repent, if you can, of the evil you have brought upon me."

Hard words for her to hear from the boy to whom her life had been devoted. She bent her head in bitterness.

And the fly turned slowly round and went back to Smackton-on-Sea. Neither of its occupants spoke a word on the way home.

(To be continued.)

It Would Seem So.

"Speaking of charity," said the moralizer, "every man should give according to his means."

"True," rejoined the demoralizer, "but instead a lot of men give according to their meanness."

Sympathetic.

"Why did you set your cup of coffee on the sofa, Mr. Newcomer?" asked the boarding house landlady.

"It is so weak," was the reply, "that I thought it would be a good idea to let it rest awhile."

Doubtful Remark.

Dolly—And when our auto was speeding like the wind, just think of his proposing to me!

Dorothy—I'm not surprised. They say running an automobile makes a man reckless.

New Style.

"We will add a bit to the fashion," remarked the gray moth.

"In what way?" asked the white moth.

"Why, some people will be wearing open-work overcoats this autumn."

The roots of the hair penetrate the skin about one-twelfth of an inch.

FARMS AND FARMERS

Enormous New Pear.

London Gardener's Chronicle in a recent issue illustrates a new pear now being introduced by the distinguished pomologist, M. Charles Baltet, Troyes, France. M. Baltet thinks this pear, for which he proposes the name "Roosevelt," is destined to bring about a revolution in fruit gardens and orchards.

The tree is said to be a robust grower, and very productive, either as a standard or as a dwarf, grafted on quince stock. The pears grow very large, sometimes measuring over five inches in diameter. The cut is supposed to be about half the natural size of the best fruits. The flesh is snow white, melting and of a delicate, sweet and agreeable flavor.

The color of the ripe fruit is light

yellow shading to lemon, with bright red spots on the sunny side. The season in Northern France is from September to November, being in good eating condition through the whole month of October. M. Baltet has tested it for years, and does not hesitate warmly to recommend it. His great reputation will go far to encourage trials of this sensational variety.—Farm Progress.

Provide Warmth for Hogs.

Says a swine-grower in the West: You think of the hog as being covered with a two or three-inch layer of pure fat. You think of that fat as being a poor conductor of heat and cold, letting little body heat escape and letting little of the cold of the weather get at the real hog.

If you stop to think, you will remember that hogs are hot-weather animals. All summer they spend much time in the sun, and in winter they pile up so as to keep warm. They come from the house or pen steaming in the cold air of winter. They shiver with the sudden chill.

Somehow that fat does not act as a non-conductor. The hogs sweat in the dead of winter as they pile up in a cold place. It would, therefore, seem probable that it would require more feed to keep hogs out in the cold than it would in a warm place.

Experiments have shown that a saving of about 25 per cent in the feed bill is made when hogs are sheltered so they are comfortable. It is better for the hogs to be warm enough so that they do not lie in a pile all the time. They move about more and take needed exercise, and are less liable to catch cold when they do not get up a sweat and then go out in the cold to feed.

Good Corner Post.

There are a good many ways to make corner posts, but they are not all good ones. I send a sketch of one which I think is the best I ever saw. Posts on corners and short bends in a line of fence will lean if not braced. This one does not have to be braced, as it braces itself. This is the way it is made: Cut a small tree (size you wish for post) that is forked. Cut fork one foot shorter than body. Put post in ground, turn fork on inside corner and place rock under end of prongs. Corner posts made this way will never pull over. To hold fence on banks or hill sides, cut short posts—say three feet long—and dig holes two feet deep above each post. Put in post, then nail plank between short post and fence.—Roscoe Torbett.

CORNER POST.

Cost of Making Butter.

In a recent report, published by the Iowa State Dairy Commissioner, the average cost of producing one pound of butter is given as follows:

In the creamery that makes 40,000 pounds of butter per year, it costs four cents to make one pound of butter, and in a creamery producing 50,000 pounds it costs 3 4-10 cents to make one pound; while in creameries making 150,000 pounds per year, it costs only 1.85 cents. In some of the very large central plants, that are producing over 200,000 pounds of butter per year, it costs 1.4 cents per pound. These figures clearly show that the larger the creamery the cheaper butter can be manufactured, and they also show that it takes about 400 cows, tributary to one factory, before a profitable creamery business can be established.

What Our Farmers Produce.

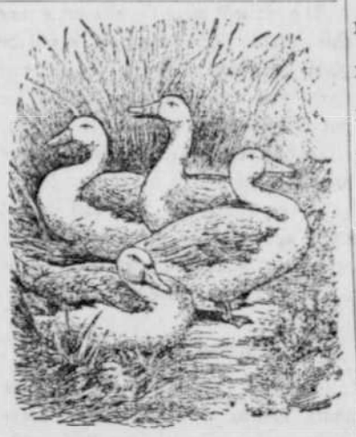
The American farmer raised in 1905 2,708,000,000 bushels of corn, 740,000,000 bushels of wheat, 1,000,000,000 bushels of oats, 35,000,000 bushels of rye, 150,000,000 bushels of barley, 30,000,000 bushels of flaxseed, 250,000,000 bushels of potatoes, 28,000,000 barrels of apples, 3,000,000 bushels of onions, 910,000 bushels of cranberries, 650,000,000 pounds of rice, 280,000 tons beet sugar, 11,000,000 bales of cotton, 58,000,000 tons of hay, 42,000,000 pounds of broom corn and 156,000,000 pounds of tobacco. In addition milk, butter and cheese from 17,570,000 cows, which products alone will be worth in 1906 more than $665,000,000. He values his cows at $482,000,000, to say nothing of the 43,700,000 other cattle, worth in round numbers $963,000,000.

Just to make the figures even up, add another $1,500,000,000 for horses and mules and 47,400,000 sheep and swine in the barns and fields. Next year he expects to handle 1,800,000,000 dozen of eggs.

White Aylesbury Ducks.

The soft white plumage is one of the chief attractions of the Aylesbury breed, and like most white plumage has a tendency to assume a yellow hue if exposed to the sun. The beak will also lose its delicate pink hue and become yellow if exposed to too much sunlight in summer. The bill of the Pekin should be yellow, but the bill of the Aylesbury should be a delicate pink or flesh-color, and birds intended for exhibition must possess this quality or they will suffer at the hands of the judge. Birds raised for exhibition purposes must be guarded against too much exposure to the sunlight in the summer. Of course, these delicate points are of no consequence to the market poulterer other than to show the true type of the breed.

For farm purposes the Aylesbury is to be recommended, second only to the Pekin; it possesses the many good qualities of the Pekin, and can be bred with almost the same success. The advantages claimed for Aylesbury are the ease with which it is acclimated, thriving in every country and climate; its early maturity; its great hardiness; its



WHITE AYLESBURY DUCKS.

large size; its great prolificacy, and the real beauty which it possesses. Raisers recommend for raising exhibition birds one drake to two ducks, or two drakes to five ducks, all being allowed to run together. Duck raisers who raise large numbers for market breed them as they do Pekins, using from four to eight females to one male, according to the season of the year. Fresh blood is introduced every year to keep up the size, and breeding stock is seldom kept longer than the second or third year.—Exchange.

Wasting Feed.

A large proportion of the hay and fodder produced on farms is stacked, but hay stored in the barn will keep in much better condition than when stored in stacks. It is almost impossible to escape loss when it is exposed in stacks. Damaged hay will be wasted by the animals, and there is an additional loss in quantity by exposure that may not occur in the mow. It is better to sell the hay that cannot be stored in the mow than to accept risk of the weather.

Fodder can be as truly wasted when put in the stomach as when trodden under foot. Unhoused cattle have a continuous battle for comfort, and all consumption of food shows no result, for the reason that it is used wholly in keeping life. Moreover, they are stunted by their stay at this unthrifty stage, and will never show as good results afterward.

Fortunate Farmer.

From the annual report of the Secretary of Agriculture, it appears that farm crops in the United States have never before been harvested at such a high general level of production and value as during the present year. Corn has reached its highest production, over 2,700,000,000 bushels, of a total estimated value of $1,216,000,000. Hay comes second, with a value of $905,000,000; cotton is expected to yield $575,000,000; and as to wheat, the short crop of last year is followed by a crop of 684,000,000 bushels, the value of which, $525,000,000, is larger than was ever before reached. It is interesting to notice that the estimated value of milk and butter, $665,000,000, was larger than the value of any crop except corn, and that the product of eggs was valued at only $5,000,000 less than the large wheat crop.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN

1513—Juan Dias De Solis discovers mouth of the Rio Janeiro riv

1515—Louis XII. of France died.

1521—Martin Luther excommunicat

1523—Knights of Malta driven the Island of Rhodes by Turks.

1540—Henry VIII. married to A daughter of Duke of Cleves.

1589—Catherine De Medici died.

1604—Jesuits reinstated in France.

1649—Anne of Austria, Queen R of France, fled from Paris to Germain.

1651—Charles II. crowned King of S land.

1661—First appearance of women s said to have been made at coln Inn Fields theater, Lond

1695—Marshal Luxembourg died.

1698—Whitehall Palace, London, stroyed by fire.

1717—Triple alliance formed by land, France and Holland.

1724—Philip V. of Spain abdicat favor of his son.

1725—Pope Benedict XIII. opens Holy Gates.

1729—Many persons killed or injure a result of a great fog envel London.

1735—Paul Revere born.

1737—John Hancock born.

1740—Benedict Arnold born.

1745—Gen. Anthony Wayne born.

1757—Attempt made to assass Louis XV. of France.

1757—Calcutta retaken by the En

1762—England declared war ag Spain.

1776—Union flag raised at Cambr Mass.

1777—Battle between American British forces at Princeton, N

1781—French invaded Island of Je and met with defeat.

1784—Treaty between United States Great Britain signed.

1787—Arthur Middleton, one of the ers of the Declaration of I pendence, died.

1788—Georgia ratified the constitu of the United States.

1793—State canal of Pennsylvania gun....Alien bill passed in land....Third partition of P arranged between Russia, A and Prussia.

1795—Josiah Wedgewood, inven Wedgewood ware, died.

1798—American Congress made $12,800 to Kosciusko, the patriot who aided in the A revolution.

1801—Union of Great Britain a land.

1804—Insurrection of Irish co New South Wales.

1806—Breslau surrendered to the

1814—Dantzic surrendered to A Wustemberg.

1822—Declaration of independe the Greeks.

1825—Ferdinand IV., King of died.

1828—Fall of the Villele mini France.

1829—Protests received at Was against dispatch or deliv mails on the Sabbath.... killed in a mine explos Lyons, France.

1830—Methodism first introd Germany.

1835—First newspaper issued in N. Y....Charles Lamb d

1842—English began retreat from

1843—Steven F. Mason, ex-Gover Michigan, died.

1848—Girard College, Phila opened.....Insurrection i sina, Sicily.

1849—Discovery of the magne by Dr. Locke of Ohio.

1853—Gen. Aristas resigned an los chosen president of Me Spain enacted stringe against liberty of the pre

1854—French and English fle the Black sea on their w Crimea.

1855—Victoria Bridge across S rence river carried away

1857—Assassination of the A of Paris (Sibous).

1863—State of West Virginia to the Union.

1875—Trial of the Beecher-Tilt begun....Garibaldi refu sion from Italy on accou tion's low finances.

1885—Earthquake shocks felt i land, Virginia and New shire.....Archbishop R Philadelphia invested w pallium.

1891—Emma Abbott, famous singer, died....Settlement tier dispute between Pe Afghanistan.

1893—Last spike driven in the Northern extension to the coast.

1895—Million dollar fire at Tacom ....Many lives lost in gre on English coast....Mrs. Lathrop, W. C. T. U. lead

1898—John D. Rockefeller $100,000 to University of C

1899—Formal delivery of Cuba United States.