

The Wife's Secret, OR A BITTER RECKONING

By CHARLOTTE M. BRAEM

CHAPTER XXI.—(Continued.)
"So you have been a rich woman, Pauline," he said, turning to her kindly. He did not know yet how far this estrangement had been intentional on her part, and he would give her the benefit of the doubt. "I, too, have fallen on prosperous times. Now, what are you going to do? Shall I see you home? Or shall I call on you to-morrow, when you will be quieter and calmer? Or will you come and look at my little place now?"

Then, for the first time, Pauline raised her head; and again Jack saw the expression of the carved tigers' heads as she answered her husband.

"I will not accompany you anywhere; I would sooner kill myself—I hate you!"

The shocked clergyman would have spoken; but Pelling stopped him courteously but firmly.

"You must pardon me; but this is my affair, as you must acknowledge, and mine only." Then turning to the raging woman, he went on: "In these circumstances further discussion would be useless; and only Jack, who was watching him closely, guessed what wonderful self-control he was exerting to keep himself from exposing and upbraiding the woman to whom he spoke. 'I will give you the address of my solicitor, and all future communications must be made through him.' He wrote the address on a leaf of his pocketbook, tore it out, and placed it on the table beside her. 'And now, Mrs. Pelling, may I see you to your cab?'"

She rose and drew herself up defiantly, and then swept from the vestry; and Pelling followed her in polite attendance.

"And now, Mr. Dornton," he said, "if you will favor me with your company, I shall be glad to give and receive explanations."

After wishing the clergyman "Good morning," the two men jumped into the cab which brought Pelling from the station, and drove to a hotel. They talked on indifferent subjects until they were in possession of a private room, and the waiter had finally retired, after receiving orders for luncheon in half an hour. Then Pelling turned to Jack and began:

"It seems to me that you and I are fated to cross each other's paths, Mr. Dornton. I have heard you spoken of pretty often lately by a Mr. Mallett, a particular friend of mine."

"Indeed?" said Jack, uncomfortably, not relishing this sudden and intentional introduction of the Malletts' name; for, since his conversation with Lord Summers, Jack felt less proud than ever of his own share in the rupture with Ethel. He thought, too, that Mr. Pelling would not have heard much to his credit from that source.

"I see what you are thinking," Pelling observed; "but you are wrong. Mr. Mallett has spoken of you to me only as a promising man in your profession. The other matter that is in your mind I took the liberty of finding out for myself. Now, I have a proposition to make to you."

CHAPTER XXII.

Pelling paused and looked attentively at the young man. He knew there was not much generosity in giving Ethel up, as he could not marry her himself during the lifetime of his wife, and, having plenty of true manliness, he did not mean to make any show of the miserable pain that was gnawing at his heart; but he felt he should like to know what sort of man this was whose path he intended to smooth for him as far as lay in his power; and, while he thought of this, the memory of Ethel's face, pained and sorrowful as he saw it when she made to him her confession of love for this Dornton came suddenly before him, and he knew that the greatest kindness he could do her would be to restore her lover. Presently he said, abruptly:

"You have nearly broken Ethel's heart."

Jack flushed furiously, and half rose from his chair. Pelling motioned to him to keep calm.

"I asked you to be patient with me," he reminded Jack. "My motive should excuse me to you. The pith of the whole matter is this—the engagement between you and Ethel broken off in consequence of your infatuation for my wife, or had you ceased to care for my wife, I ask you for a truthful answer."

"I can't for the life of me understand by what right," began Jack, hotly.

"For heaven's sake, don't waste time in splitting straws when so much is at stake!" Pelling said, impetuously. "You can't understand my right to interfere? I will explain. I love Ethel Mallett as I never loved, never shall love, never believed it possible to love; and until this morning I had the hope of making her my wife some day, when she had had time to forget you. I think my love for her gives me the right to do what I can to secure her happiness; and I believe her happiness rests with you. I can't have her myself, or I do not think I could be unselfish enough to give her up. I might, but I don't think it. Now to return to our point—was your infatuation for my wife the only cause of the estrangement between you two?"

Jack was greatly impressed, as he understood now why Pelling spoke with so much effort, and he felt touched by his devotion. Added to this was the feeling of shame that had oppressed him ever since his talk with Lord Summers. "Come—you needn't mind confessing your weakness to me," Pelling went on, encouragingly. "Bless you, man, I know how Pauline can twist any man round her finger if she likes to try! I suppose she was smitten with you, and you spread her nets to snare you, and you, not seeing the snare, found yourself enamored of her without knowing how it happened. And I dare say, if the truth were known, when the first mad burst was over, and you thought out

things quietly, you would have given a good deal never to have seen her at all, and wished you had behaved differently to Miss Mallett."

Jack jumped up, his face beaming, and wrung Pelling's hand.

"I could not say it myself, but that is really just how it has been with me. I am not good at expressing my feelings; but I know you are behaving very well to me—much better than I deserve—and I thank you. And now what do you wish me to do?"

"Go right away for a few months. Write to me now and again, and I will take care that Miss Mallett hears whatever is likely to be of use to you. Give her time to forget the indignity you have put on her and her love. I shall be on hand in the character of a benevolent patriarch, and the moment I see signs favorable to our plot I will bring about a meeting. The rest will lie with yourself."

"How can I thank you?"

"You owe me no thanks. Relieve your mind on that point. What I am doing I do out of my sincere wish for Miss Mallett's happiness. If you really think you owe me anything pay it in kindness to your wife after you are married. Here is luncheon. We will talk by and by of your immediate plans."

When they had finished luncheon, and Jack had left, Pelling laid down on the hard horsehair sofa, with his hands under his head, gazing steadfastly at the ceiling; and it was not until the evening, when the waiter came to light the gas, that he was roused from his deep reverie. He then pulled himself together, called for his bill, and having settled it, went out into the wretched night.

When Pauline left her husband at the church door she knew that her scheming had been futile, and that she could never again show her face at Mallingford; but it was not that which caused her the agony of mind she was suffering.

She had lost Jack. The one pure, unselfish cup of joy she had longed to taste had been snatched from her lips at the moment of raising. She was stunned with despair.

She paced up and down the platform at Charing Cross station, watching for Babette and concocting plans for obtaining what ready money she could before the grand denouement came. She knew her jewels must be worth at least five thousand pounds, and, though some of them were heirlooms, and others had been bought with money obtained by her dishonesty, she would not scruple to apply them to her personal use. Then she would draw at once two thousand from her bankers. She would go and do this personally lest they might scruple to pay so large a sum on a check. And so she laid her miserable plans, refusing to listen for one moment to the prompting of her better nature, which would even now suggest her return to the husband whose only sin had been his poverty.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Notwithstanding all Pelling's efforts, the story soon got into the newspapers, and, it being the dull season, was seized upon with avidity by the gossip purveyors. It was "dished" and "redished" day after day, with numberless distortions, exaggerations and additions. One society journal had it that the beautiful Miss M— of M— Park, in Exbridge-shire, had attempted to poison her husband, to whom she had been secretly married only a month or two, in order to become the wife of a celebrated R. A.; with whom she had fallen deeply in love; while another declared that the husband presented himself at the altar with pistols, and, dragging his wife's successor outside the sacred edifice, insisted upon a duel there and then, and wounded him dangerously in the shoulder, and that the unfortunate man now lay in a most critical condition, while the husband had carried off his reluctant bride, a veritable prisoner, on board his yacht, for a twelve-month's cruise in the Pacific.

At last Pelling, annoyed beyond measure at these absurd stories, decided to lay bare the truth. With the assistance of his lawyer, he drew up a concise statement of the real facts, giving his own and Pauline's name in full, but suppressing Jack's. He carefully conveyed the idea that Pauline believed him to be dead, and gave the circumstance to her change of name as sufficient to account for his not having discovered her existence since his return from Africa. This he sent to two of the daily newspapers, and thus divested of all mystery, the story lost its charm, and no longer afforded any interest.

Pelling sent one of these newspapers, with his own letter specially distinguished, to Ethel by post, and the next morning he called in Buckingham street to make matters clearer.

Ethel's frank candor once more overcame the difficulties of the situation; she stood at the top of the stairs with her hands outstretched and her face bright with friendly interest.

"I have been longing to see you," she began, warmly, as they entered the room; "we have both so much that is wonderful to tell each other!"

She looked at him steadfastly as he stood in the light from the window, and what she saw in his face quickened her pulse with a sudden pity, but she would not give way to the impulse that urged her to console him. She went on, a little hurriedly at first:

"I can see that your pleasant news is in some way mixed up with painful thoughts; so, as mine is altogether pleasant, I shall speak first. To begin—papa came home last night, and he has brought the most wonderful news; it is like a fairy tale! I don't suppose you know yet that your wife is my cousin?—Captain Pelling started at the words—"I knew you would be greatly pleased. My father is not really Mr. Mallett—his true name is Sir Geoffrey Mallett, and he is your wife's uncle. In some extraordinary

way, which papa will explain, the whole of the Mallingford property comes to him in the event of Pauline's marrying under twenty-five without her guardian's consent; so, you see, we are going to be very great people. I believe my mother was not so well born as papa, and the late baronet was so angry when he heard of the marriage that he disinherited papa, who at once changed his name and worked hard to keep his wife, I hope you are not angry with us because we are going to take away your wife's wealth. Of course that is only nonsense! I know you are not angry; I've heard you say often how glad you would have been to share what you have with her."

Ethel paused. Pelling did not speak, and she felt a little anxious. She had unintentionally stumbled upon the subject; but she knew it could not be avoided between them, so she screwed up her courage and went on:

"Perhaps I should not say what I am going to say; but no real harm can come from straightforwardness. We have been such good friends in the past that we need not stay to pick and choose our words to each other, need we? I want to congratulate you on the recovery of your wife; but there is something in your face that checks me. Will you tell me all about it?"

"I can't tell you all about it," he said. "I only know that my wife refused to have anything to do with me, and that she is now in Paris."

"If I were you I should go to Paris, too."

"I suppose I ought—in fact, I know I ought—and I have tried to make up my mind to go; but I cannot."

For an instant he dropped his head upon his hand, and a great rush of pity set Ethel's heart beating oddly. He pulled himself together with an impatient exclamation.

"What a bore you must think me!" he said, quickly. "Let us drop the subject. If I ever find you can help me in any way, I will come as you at once. As things are now, the less said the better. And so you are to possess the wealth which Pauline has forfeited? I am very glad—very, very glad—on all accounts but one."

"And that is?"

"It will make Dornton's task harder." The blood rushed over Ethel's face in a quick flush, and it left again as quickly.

"I don't know what you mean," she said.

"I mean that Dornton was beguiled by my unhappy wife into doing as he did, that he was not master of his own actions, and that he would give a very great deal to be assured of your entire forgiveness. He has loved you all through his mad folly. He told me so himself on the very day of the wedding, before he could have known anything of the change in your worldly affairs; so, when you think of him in the future, you must not believe he was governed by mercenary considerations."

"Thank you for your kind defense of him," she responded, rising as her father entered the room. "I will remember to do as you say," and she turned gayly to the door. "And now let me introduce you to Sir Geoffrey Mallett of Mallingford Park."

A few weeks later Ethel and her father were settled at Mallingford. All the necessary legal formalities had been gone through, and the county families had called upon Sir Geoffrey and his daughter. Lord Summers had suggested that the baronet should have a public reception; but Sir Geoffrey had sternly and emphatically opposed any such demonstration. So father and daughter had come down and been met at the railway station by the family carriage, and had gone quietly to their respective rooms, after shaking hands with a few of the old servants whom Sir Geoffrey remembered in his brother's time, and had eaten their first dinner at Mallingford as if they had but just returned from a short visit. (To be continued.)

Population of the Philippines.

The density of population in the Philippines is 67 per square mile. The inhabitants are usually found on or near the coast, except in the island of Luzon, where about half the people live in the two rich valleys in the interior. Only one-seventh of the civilized population live inland, but the wild peoples are confined almost entirely to the interior. In the archipelago there are 13,400 barrios or villages, with an average population of 500 inhabitants. The average size of the barrio varies widely in different provinces. A number of adjacent barrios form a pueblo or municipal unit, and thus there is practically no rural population. Three-fifths of the population live in villages of less than 1,000 inhabitants and 4 per cent in towns of over 5,000. There are four towns with a population exceeding 10,000 each, and 35 with a population exceeding 5,000. Manila is the only incorporated city in the islands, and its inhabitants number 219,928.

Bored There.

"Didn't you used to board with us up to Mrs. Gaddy's?" asked the thin-necked man.

"Yes," replied Brightman, curtly.

"Why, don't you board there still?"

"Because I was."—Philadelphia Press.

He Waited No Longer.

"You may refuse me now," said the persistent suitor, "but I can wait. All things come to him who waits."

"Yes," replied the dear girl, "and I guess the first thing will be father; I hear him on the stairs."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Progress.

"How are you coming on with your new system of weather prediction?"

"Well," answered the prophet cheerily; "I can always get the kind of weather all right, but I haven't quite succeeded in hitting the dates exactly."—Washington Star.

Said at the Breakfast Table.

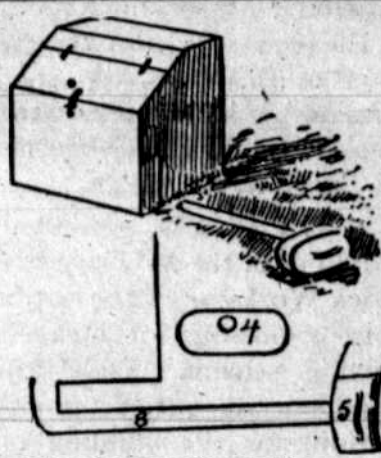
"Explorers say there's something awful in the silence of the polar regions."

"Well, why don't they take their wives along?"—Atlanta Constitution.



Good Smokehouse.

The thrifty farmer prepares his own pork for home consumption, and if he is short of cash with which to build an up-to-date smokehouse he will appreciate the following plan, which will enable him to carry out his ideas at small cost. Buy an old but good upright piano box, and after making it smoke tight with paper, set it in the desired place and dig a trench so that the piping will enter at one end of the box through the bottom. Then take an old wash boiler with a good copper bottom and have a tinsmith make a hole in one side near the bottom, and in this fasten a piece of tin water pipe



PIANO BOX SMOKEHOUSE.

or four-inch stovepipe. Then buy additional lengths of pipe and make the connections yourself, having an elbow to go into the box.

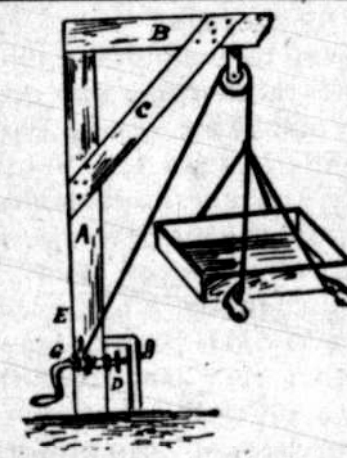
Make the smoke fire in the boiler, the smoke will pass into the box, and, on a small scale, one will have a first-class smokehouse. At little heat is required to keep up the fire sufficient to give the desired amount of smoke, there is no danger of the wash boiler being too frail for the purpose. The illustration shows the plan perfectly, the details of the piping being shown in the lower part of the cut.—Indianapolis News.

Amount of Corn Required.

It is well enough to lay down the rule that ten pounds of corn will make one pound of pork, but rules may not give the results expected unless applied under certain conditions. Some breeds of hogs will produce more pork on the same food than others, and even with a selected breed there will be some individual animals that will increase more rapidly than others. In the winter season, if the hogs are exposed, twenty or thirty pounds of corn may be required to make a pound of pork. Care and management are important, as well as breed and food.

Hoister for Wagon Box.

For main post (A) use scantling 4x4; top piece (B) use 2x4; for brace (C) 2x4; length and height as desired; have brace (C) on both sides; use common wood windlass (D) with inch rope.



FOR HOISTING THE WAGON BOX.

Abuses of Cold Storage.

Cold storage has apparently been overworked. At first the principle of cold storage was used to carry perishable foodstuffs over the period of plenty and distribute them through the following months of famine. But according to investigations of Boards of Health in some of the larger cities, cold storage plants contain food that has lain there from six months to two years because market conditions have not suited the speculators, and they are holding for greater profits. The result is that consumers are likely to eat some very old stuff that may not be conducive to good health, and that farmers and other producers are likely to suffer unfair competition when offering new wholesome products.

Pickled Posts.

Preservation of wood is becoming more general every year, says the Kansas City Journal. They are even extending this pickling business to fence posts and telegraph and telephone poles. It works out well in both of these. In the pickling of ties, the railroads are using a great many of the softer woods, those which ordinarily wouldn't last more than two or three years. By the treatment of chemicals, though, their life is extended to at least ten years. The movement first had its origin about 1880, when attention was called by the government that there was becoming a scarcity of timber in various sections of the country.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



Free Seed Distribution.

The annual protest of seed men against free distribution of seed by the Department of Agriculture has been sent to the President. It is signed by twenty-nine seedsmen, embracing the whole territory between the Rocky Mountains and the New England coast. The protest states that the original intention of the law was to obtain seeds unknown in the United States that might prove valuable, and in this way increase our agricultural productions, but that this statesmanlike proposition has been grievously distorted, with the result that in the main the most common kinds of garden seeds have been distributed.

No doubt a great abuse has crept into this matter of free seed patronage. It has been used by a great many unscrupulous politicians to make themselves solid with certain voters. Like all other public questions, there are two sides. The distribution of sugar beet seed grown on the Pacific coast for experiment all over the country is a good feature that will offset some of the undesirable ones. Not all the seeds distributed are common garden truck.—Field and Fireside.

Feeding Cottonseed Meal.

Many mistakes are made in the feeding of cottonseed meal, feeders forgetting for the moment that it is an extremely concentrated food and needs a pretty strong stomach to handle it; hence it should be fed sparingly to young stock. As a food by itself it will not do for any considerable period, but as one of a mixture it has great value even at a price as high as \$35 a ton, provided the other grains used are not too high in price. A fine mixture is corn meal, the grinding of the corn and the cob together and the cottonseed meal. Or, bran may be used when the corn is ground without the cob but in the latter case the ratio should be two parts of the cottonseed meal to one part each of the corn meal and the wheat bran.

Home-Made Corn Cutter.

A New England paper gives this as an idea coming from Australia. The device is not exactly new, as it has been in use and described in America here and there. The implement is



HOMEMADE CORN CUTTER.

made by bolting the blade of a strong heavy scythe to a sledge or sled, as here shown. One of these machines is claimed to cut about two and a half acres per day. Americans will make some improvements on it, especially in the manner of gathering the stalks when being cut.

Cost of Putting Up Silage.

The question is often discussed as to the cost of putting up silage, says Michigan Farmer. From a large number of records kept among Illinois farmers it was found to cost about 56 cents per ton. In some cases the cost was as much as 76 cents per ton, while in others as low as 35. In filling a Michigan silo this season where the horn was heavy and had to be hauled about 100 rods to the silo it cost 37 cents per ton. The cost should vary with the distance the silage is to be hauled. If silage is to be put up economically an ensilage cutter should be used that will take the corn and handle it rapidly.

Production of Mutton.

An excellent authority on sheep growing says: "The environment that conduces to the production of the most rapid-growing mutton is not the one to produce fine wool, and the greatest perfection can be attained in either wool or mutton, as in anything else, only by the single eye. Let no one with the best types of male and female in both wool and mutton breeds have any mixing with regard to where he is going to stand. Crossing is a transitional state that must evolve into a fitting survival of types of distinct attributes and special qualities to suit particular circumstances and environment."

Don't Forget the Squash Bug.

As the squash bug winters in the adult state under rubbish, etc., cleanliness becomes advantageous in avoiding injury the following season. Where the pest has been troublesome, collecting the cucurbit vines after the crop is taken and destroying them will be the means of killing or starving many of the immature bugs.

Germany Good Customer.

Germany is a good customer of agricultural America, especially her crops and products of the South. Last year she bought raw cotton to the value of \$109,000,000; oil cake and cottonseed meal, \$4,100,000; lard and oleomargarine, \$17,000,000; raw tobacco, \$5,000,000; corn, \$7,200,000; wheat, \$9,000,000.

Farm Problems.

What do you do for thumps in pigs? When is the best time to water a horse?

What does it cost to produce a pound of beef?

How much grain and hay should a work horse be fed?

1555—John Philpot, Archbishop of Westminster, convicted of heresy and burned.

1582—The Gregorian calendar adopted at Paris, omitting 10 days.

1642—New Zealand discovered by Tasman.

1644—Christina assumed government of Sweden.

1648—Oliver Cromwell ordered all stage plays stopped in England.

1653—Oliver Cromwell declared lord protector of England.

1683—Isaac Walton, author of the "Complete Angler," died.

1745—Dresden surrendered to Frederick II. of Prussia.

1754—Mahomet V. of Turkey died.

1764—T. H. Perkins, owner of the first railroad in the United States, born.

1770—Beethoven, the great musician, born.

1774—North Carolina adopted a constitution.

1775—American Congress first determined to build a navy.

1775—General Howe ordered the meeting houses in Boston torn down and used for fire wood.

1776—Congress adjourned from Philadelphia to Lancaster.

1782—The British troops evacuated Charleston, S. C.

1787—New Jersey and Pennsylvania ratified the Constitution of the United States.

1796—General Anthony Wayne died.

1799—General George Washington died.

1804—British Consul in Honduras forbade mahogany to be exported on American vessels....Spain declared war against Great Britain.

1809—Divorce of Empress Josephine.

1810—Lucien Bonaparte and family place themselves under protection of England.

1816—First savings bank in the United States opened in Boston.

1820—Outbreak of Civil War in Chili.

1832—Treaty of navigation and commerce concluded between United States and Russia.

1836—Patent office and postoffice at Washington, D. C., burned.

1838—Chartists meetings declared illegal in England.

1840—Remains of Bonaparte, removed from Cherbourg to Paris.

1848—Postal convention concluded between Great Britain and United States....Destruction of the Park Theater, New York City, by fire.

1850—Many killed and injured in the explosion of the steamboat Anglo Norman at New Orleans.

1854—St. Lawrence River opened to American vessels....Seventeen lives lost in sinking of steamer Westmoreland in Lake Michigan.

1861—Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, died.

1862—Fredericksburg, Va., captured.

1864—Fort McAllister captured by Union forces.

1865—Thirteenth Amendment to U. S. Constitution proclaimed.

1871—Alabama arbitration commission meets at Geneva....William M. Tweed, the Tammany "Boss," re-arrested.

1874—Edwin Booth made his first appearance on the stage following his retirement after the assassination of President Lincoln.

1884—World's Fair opened in New Orleans....Attempt made to blow London Bridge up with dynamite.

1891—Violent earthquake in Sicily....United States concludes arrangements for reciprocity with Japan.

1894—Great loss of life in a volcanic eruption in the New Hebrides....Eugene V. Debs sentenced to jail for contempt of court.

1895—Samuel Gompers elected president of the American Federation of Labor.

1897—Attorney-General McKenna appointed justice of the United States Supreme Court.

1901—Philippine tariff bill passed House of Representatives....Marconi signalled across the Atlantic by means of wireless telegraph.

1903—The Cuban reciprocity bill becomes a law....W. J. Buchanan appointed United States minister to the republic of Panama.

1904—Three killed in explosion on United States battleship Massachusetts....Ex-Mayor Ames of Minneapolis, charged with malfeasance in office, set free after a disagreement of the jury at his third trial.

This and That.

This being in love takes up more time than an aching tooth.

When a man is with a crowd of girls, he will do a lot of foolish things.

"Old age," said an old man to-day, "is the worst joke ever played on me."

Man learns from every experience, except an experience with a woman in it.

Are you as active in paying a bill you owe as you are in collecting a bill due you?