

THE CHARITY GIRL

By EFFIE A. ROWLANDS

CHAPTER X.

As early as possible the following morning, Sheila Fraser ordered her horse, donned her habit, and, without waiting for breakfast or groom, left home in hot haste for Craighlands. She wanted to be first at an interview with the duchess. Much depended on how she acted now. "If I can just drop a few hints, and so prejudice her against that girl, not all Mrs. Fraser's sweetness, or her daughter's artfulness, will have much avail. I am a rich woman! I never felt so glad of my money before."

She had diverged a little from the ordinary route to Craighlands, because there was a better road by so doing, and as she trotted along freely, she suddenly came upon a dog cart, in which was seated Beverley Rochfort, looking wonderfully handsome in his fur-lined coat.

"Miss Fraser, this is an unexpected pleasure," he said, as he lifted his hat and motioned the groom to take the reins. "You are out early."

"I am going to Craighlands, to make inquiries," she said curtly.

Beverley only smiled, but she saw at once that he attached a good deal of meaning to this hasty ride. He got down from the cart.

"Drive up and down until I am ready, Jones," he commanded, as he walked up to Sheila's horse and stroked the smooth neck. "Is there, then, so much cause for anxiety?" he asked. "Are you nervous about Lord John, Miss Fraser?"

Sheila pursed her lips. She resented his manner, and she did not quite understand it, either.

"I feel that it would be altogether a pleasant and a wise arrangement if you and I called ourselves friends," Beverley said, after a slight pause. "We have so much in common."

"I don't think I understand you," Sheila was startled into saying.

"I must try and explain myself clearly. I know the reason of your hurried visit to Craighlands. It is not sympathy that takes you there, but something more akin to self-interest. Oh! do not be angry, there is no occasion, for, my very dear young lady, I think you are perfectly right. You see, although I do not credit you with any great amount of sympathy, I am quite sincere. Just now, Beverley went on, "I said I thought it would be not only a pleasant, but a wise thing for you and I to become friends. Union is strength, you know, Miss Fraser; a good old maxim."

"Don't you think you had better leave countdrums alone, and speak out straight, Mr. Rochfort?"

"I will," he answered, quietly. "Sheila, we are both persons of determination and ambition. My ambition takes one form, yours another; but on one point we are alike—we would sacrifice much to gain our ends; would we not?"

Sheila's cold gray eyes flashed as she nodded her head.

"You hate the girl; I hate him! You are determined that John Glendurwood shall make you his wife; I am as equally determined I shall make her mine. Arrived so far, the rest should be easy."

Sheila drew a sharp breath. She loathed him for his shrewdness in having read her mind so clearly, but his words had brought a new aspect altogether.

"It is for you to suggest," she said, speaking swiftly and in low tones. "As you said just now, union is strength, and so—"

"So you agree to be friends, eh?" Beverley smiled.

He had never had the smallest fear of failing. He had not watched Sheila so carefully these past days for nothing. He held out his hand as he spoke and Sheila put hers into it.

"Have you any plans?" she asked, abruptly. She was no longer so eager to be gone. One glimpse at this man's smiling, handsome, evil face told her that he would do all he wished. Even in the midst of the satisfaction that came with a rush, she could not repress a feeling of jealousy and envy that he should love Audrey and be indifferent to her, Sheila.

"I will tell you more when I return from London. My journey there is not wholly unconnected with this matter. And now, I think I must say 'Au revoir.' I sincerely trust you will find Lord John not so bad as rumor reports. Carry my sympathy and regards to her new grace; she is a charming woman, and will make an altogether excellent mother-in-law."

Sheila smiled mechanically, and gathering up her reins, she rode on. She gave a sort of shudder as she went, and the memory of Beverley's dark, glittering eyes, lingered with her. She felt, somehow, so powerless when she was with him.

Sheila always felt a thrill at her heart as she rode or drove up to Craighlands. Now as she passed up the avenue and drew rein at the covered doorway, a man with powdered hair and grave face came forward to meet her.

"Her grace's love, miss, and she begs you will excuse her this morning; she does not feel equal to leaving his lordship's room. She begs, also, to thank you, miss, for having taken the trouble to ride over and make inquiries."

"Does Dr. Sentence think there is any danger?" she asked, and there was genuine anxiety in her voice.

"Dr. Sentence considers his lordship's condition very serious," replied the servant.

Sheila rode back to Dinglewood cross and anxious. She met Dr. Sentence coming down the avenue, and stopped to question him.

"The poor fellow has not recovered consciousness yet," the medical man answered. "I have telegraphed up for Rawson and Locksley. Miss Fraser, it is horrible, a dastardly affair, and for the life of me I can't understand it. Lord Glendurwood never seemed to have an enemy in the world; but upon my word this looks to me like a malicious attack. It has turned out he had next to nothing in his pockets. Of course, his watch was valuable. But who on earth is there about here who could have borne him a grudge for anything he has ever done and

said? I suppose you have sent for further police assistance, Miss Fraser?" he went on.

Sheila confessed she had not even thought of it.

"Are not the Mountherby men sufficient?" she asked.

"This is pre-eminently a case for an astute detective," he said; "and I should telegraph up at once to Scotland Yard, if I were you. As the affair happened in your grounds, of course, it would be pleasant for you to have it sifted thoroughly."

"You are quite right!" Sheila said, warmly, although she could have struck him with her whip for daring to dictate to her. "I will send up to London at once."

CHAPTER XI.

It was long before poor Audrey closed her tired, aching eyes that eventful night; she had shed no more tears after that one passionate outburst; she felt too much pain and anxiety for this natural relief. All she could think of was Jack Glendurwood, lying alone in the bedroom, insensible, half murdered. She accepted her mother's tender comfort, in a vague, dreamy way. All the sudden joy and pride that had sprung into being early in the evening, as she listened to the story of her birth, seemed to have vanished beneath this great sorrow.

The sun was shining high in the heavens when she opened her eyes, and found her mother bending anxiously over her. Constance Fraser gained strength at sight of her child's suffering. She was now the strong, courageous woman; she put aside all her invalid ways, and rose supreme to the moment.

"Look after her well," she said to Marshall, as she donned her outdoor garments, and prepared to drive over to Craighlands.

The duchess, proud, self-reliant, self-possessed as she was generally classed to be, was after all only an ordinary woman, with a mother's heart beating quick and strong in her breast. Her two boys had been her darlings from the earliest days of their childhood; she had never been so fond or so proud of her one daughter, who was too much like her father in nature and character to prove a comfort to the other parent.

The tears came to the mother's eyes as Constance Fraser, after speaking all the consolation and sympathy she could think of, mentioned the countess' name.

"I will stay with you till Gladys comes," she said, gently; "I am sure there is much I can do."

"Gladys will not come," the duchess answered, quietly enough; and then all at once she broke down. "Oh, Constance! My dear! My dear!" she moaned, "what shall I do if I lose both my boys? Duncan's days are numbered—I know it only too well—and Jack, my bonny, my dear, good noble Jack!"

Then Constance knelt beside her and cheered her again.

"You are alarmed by this insensibility; it is nothing; it often happens with concussion of the brain. I prophesy that in a week's time you will have Jack out of bed, or very nearly so. Now I want you to look at me; don't you see a change in my face? Yes, I see you do; shall I tell you all about it?"

And then, as gently, as briefly as she could, Constance bared the secrets of her heart to her friend.

"And you have found your child, Constance? I am glad. I rejoice, my dear, in your happiness. You must let me see her soon. I shall love her for your sake and for poor Frank's; he was a great favorite of mine."

Constance Fraser covered her face with her hands, and when she drew them away it was ashen white.

"Hush!" she said, almost inaudibly; "do not let us speak of him. The pain is too deep, too great. Such horrible remorse comes over me when I begin to think that I fear for my reason. I know now I was deceived, that I doubted him wrongly; but—but that is all I dare let myself know just yet, it makes my heart bleed."

The duchess bent and kissed the sweet, white face.

Constance! My dear, you will do as he asks! It may be his last wish!"

Constance pressed her lips on the brow above those eyes that, only a short time ago had been laughing and sparkling with life, happiness and manly vigor.

"Be comforted," she said, gently, for was he not lying on the edge of that dark, dread river? "It shall be as you wish."

"And—Audrey—my wife—before—I die!" the words were uttered so faint they were scarcely audible.

"And Audrey, my child, shall be your wife at once, without delay."

A smile of joy radiated the poor young fellow's face; he tried to clasp her hand, to murmur thanks, but he could do nothing but lie there, helpless as a child in his utter prostration.

CHAPTER XII.

The following morning, before Constance Fraser had had time to compose her thoughts, and begin to prepare her child for what lay before her, Sheila came into the room.

Audrey was lying very quiet in her little bed, and the other girl noticed, with anger in her heart, how exquisitely lovely was that pale young face, pillowed among the delicate lace-edged linens and shadowed by the pink-lined curtains. It made her even savage, in her jealous hatred, to notice what dauntless the mother already gave to her new-found child.

"I came to tell you," she said, very abruptly, "that I am going to London for a few days. Janet will accompany me. Is there anything that I can do for you?"

Mrs. Fraser shook her head. Sheila went away in total ignorance that the most vital turn in events was to take place immediately.

It was no unusual thing for her to go to London for a few days, as she was a shrewd business woman, and superintending nearly all the movements of her affairs. This time, however, there was nothing that would demand her attention, except this former marriage of her father's widow.

She determined during her absence from Dinglewood to go herself to Broadborough and make full inquiries about Audrey.

"I will not rest till I have full and complete proof that she is Frank Anstruther's child. If only I can be successful and discover any flaw, I think I shall know how to make it disagreeable for Mrs. Fraser and her charity girl."

To Sheila's annoyance she found that Mr. Chester was in possession of every fact relating to Audrey's birth, and in a very short time placed these facts before her.

"There is not a shadow of doubt, Miss Fraser," he said, quietly, "that this young girl is Miss Anstruther. I have been myself to Broadborough and made every inquiry, and if these inquiries had failed, the appearance of the registration of birth and the marriage certificate would settle the question. I have been down to the church where Miss Gascogne married Captain Anstruther, and have procured another copy of the certificate. Here it is."

"Which is so much worthless paper, considering that Captain Anstruther was married at the time and had a wife living," Sheila remarked curtly.

"I am happy in being able to assure you that this romance is not true, and congratulate you that your stepmother has at least one joy left her in life. Fate has treated her harshly, poor lady."

She arose abruptly, and went away. As she re-entered her hotel, she saw a pile of luggage being carried in, and in her preternaturally sharp eye, she recognized the livery of the footman, who was superintending the portmanteaus and huge boxes, as that worn by the servants of the Earl of Dalowater. She whispered to her maid, Becham, to find out if the family were about to stay at the hotel, and passed upstairs with the first sensation of pleasure she had experienced for some time, which grew stronger as she learned that the countess and her children were expected up the following day from Dalowater House.

(To be continued.)

Heavy Gloves.

The wealthy old gentleman came up the steps dripping with perspiration and puffing like an automobile.

"Oh, father," faltered the beautiful heiress, nervously, "where have you been?"

"I have been attending to that French count who is after your hand and my bullion."

"Gracious, father, I hope you haven't been rude. The count is such a delicate gentleman. Didn't I tell you to handle him with gloves?"

The old gentleman smiled grimly.

"You did? Oh, I am so glad."

"Yes, the biggest boxing gloves I could find, and then I put a horseshoe in each."

Afraid He'd Change.

"Could you guess how old I am?" said the girl with the crows' feet, giving a little giggle.

"Why, you're about 24," said the man who thought he ought to be kind to her.

"Remember," she said, with more giggles, "I only gave you one guess."—Yonkers Statesman.

Nothing But the Truth.

Buncum—My physician tells me I am working too hard.

Marks—The M. D. evidently knows his business.

Buncum—Why do you think so? Marks—I have been comparing notes with a few of our mutual friends and I find you have worked us pretty hard.

Distinction Without Difference.

Sensitive Goffer (who has fooled)—Did you laugh at me, boy?

Caddie—No, sir; I was laughin' at another man.

Sensitive Goffer.

Sensitive Goffer—And what's funny about him?

Caddie—He plays gowf awfu' like you, sir.—Punch.

His Temperament.

"What kind of a disposition has our dyspeptic friend?"

"None at all—only an indisposition."—Washington Star.



American's Dark Hour.

Late in 1778 Sir Henry Clinton sent a British expedition of 2,000 men to invade Georgia, and on Dec. 23 it arrived at the mouth of the Savannah River, where the soldiers disembarked. General Robert Howe, with about 600 Continentals and a few hundred militia, endeavored to hold Savannah against the enemy, but the Americans were overpowered and put to rout, the town, fort, munitions and supplies falling into the hands of the British.

In August, 1779, Count d'Estaing appeared off the southern coast with twenty-two French ships of the line. General Lincoln, then in command of the American army in the South, was at Charleston when a frigate came there to announce the arrival of the fleet, and at his request the French commander agreed to assist in the reduction of Savannah. Lincoln and his small army reached the Savannah River on Sept. 12 and on the same day the French troops landed and marched up to within three miles of the town, which had been strongly fortified by the British.

Surrender of the post was demanded, but General Prevost, the British commander, requested a truce, which was unwisely granted, for during the interval he was reinforced and then gave a defiant refusal to the demand for surrender.

A siege was begun on Sept. 23, lasting until Oct. 8, with varying success. Just before dawn on Oct. 9 an assault was made by the allies, and after five hours of fierce conflict there was a truce for the purpose of burying the dead. While the British had lost but 120 men, the Americans and French had lost 1,000 in killed and wounded. Among the latter was Count d'Estaing, who was carried to his camp. Count Pulaski, while fighting at the head of his legion, was mortally wounded by a grape-shot. During the truce D'Estaing and Lincoln held a conference. The former, having lost many men, wished to abandon the siege, while Lincoln, confident of ultimate success, desired to continue it. The French commander refused to further participate, and on the evening of Oct. 18 the French withdrew to their ships and the Americans to the Savannah River. Thence Lincoln retreated to Charleston, and at the beginning of November the fleet sailed for France, thus closing the Revolutionary campaign of 1779.

His Mother.

We sit in one big chair, for mother's little, And rock and talk, all in the firelight's glow; She pats my hand, perhaps you think it's funny, It's somehow easier to visit so.

She loves to read the very books that I do, She tells of Launcelot, and all the rest; That tells of Charlemagne was such a hero, But maybe Bayard, bravest knight, was best.

She knows about the school, and what I study; She likes the boys, remembers nicknames, too. I tell her everything that I am doing— Why, bedtime comes before we're nearly through!

She's glad that I'm a boy, and growing taller. She isn't sorry that my hair does curl. My mother is not like a grown-up lady; I'm sure she always seems just like a girl.

—Youth's Companion.

Lincoln's Much-Quoted Words.

Perhaps the most famous address ever made by President Lincoln is the one that he delivered at the dedication of the soldiers' monument on the battlefield of Gettysburg, and the words most quoted from it are "the government of the people, by the people and for the people." This phrase was, no doubt, an unconscious quotation, for the same words were used by Theodore Parker in an address to the Anti-Slavery Society, May 13, 1854. Now was the phrase original with Parker. Daniel Webster, in 1830, used the words, "the people's government, made for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people." And even before Webster, Chief Justice Marshall had expressed the same idea in similar phraseology.

Shining Eyes.

Why do the eyes of some animals, notably of the dog, the cat and the horse, shine in the dark? Naturalists say that it is because their eyes secrete a pigment of a brilliant metallic luster at the bottom of the eyeball, which acts as a concave reflector, causing the rays of light to traverse the retina a second time. This probably increases the power of vision, particularly where only a feeble light is admitted to the eye. The choroid of the human eye, on the contrary, is lined with a dark brown or black pigment, which does not reflect light. This peculiar construction of animals' eyes is part of the protective scheme of nature.

Alexander Hamilton.

Every now and then, a boy or a girl who is studying United States history, wants to know why Alexander Hamilton, who was born on the island of Nevis, West Indies, was spoken of for the Presidency of the United States after the adoption of the Constitution. That constitution, with the framing of which

he had more to do than any other man, perhaps, says, "No person except a natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President." Hamilton was eligible because he was a citizen at the time the constitution was adopted. No foreign-born citizen is now eligible, of course.

Topsy-Turvy.

When it's later the spectator sees her

Rising early, Mrs. Burley is her garden meets the eye;—The Century Co.

He Decided Not to Wait.

"Lucinda," said Mr. Melstrum, who had just returned from a visit to a farmer friend in the country, "while I was at Longley's I ate some whole wheat boiled. I like it better than anything I ever tasted. He gave me a small paper sack of the wheat, so we could cook some ourselves. How long will it be before supper is ready?"

"About half an hour," answered Mrs. Melstrum.

"Well, we'll have some boiled wheat, if you please. Here's the paper sack."

"But, Joshua, it will have to be cooked in a double boiler, and—"

"I don't care how you cook it. I'm hungry for some more boiled wheat."

"But, see here, Joshua! It will take—"

"It will take a lot of cream and sugar; I know that. But we've got plenty of both. Put it on right away, will you?"

Without another word his wife took the wheat, washed it, emptied it into the "double-boiler," and set it on the fire.

At the end of half an hour, Mr. Melstrum became impatient.

"Lucinda," he called out from the sitting room, "isn't that wheat ready yet?"

"Not yet," responded Mrs. Melstrum. "How much longer is going to take to cook it?"

"About seven hours and a half. That's what I was trying to tell you, but you wouldn't give me a chance. Do you want to wait for it?"

Marriage No Joke in Kansas.

Brides must not laugh while a marriage is being performed in Kansas. Because a young woman laughed while the ceremony was being performed Judge McCabe of Topeka stopped in the middle of it and refused to continue until she ceased, says the Philadelphia North American.



Once in a while you see a girl who doesn't care if people know how old she is. She is usually 17.—Somerville Journal.

Senator, a political job is pretty hard work, isn't it? "Not very," replied Senator Badger, "but getting it is."—Milwaukee Sentinel.

Chapleigh—I was all broke up over a girl once, doncher know. Miss Knox—Ah, I see! And some of the pieces were lost.—Chicago Daily News.

"How do you get those clinging ways?" asked the country cousin. "Hanging from street-car straps," answered the city girl.—Washington Herald.

The Simple One—Going away for your health! Why, that is very sudden. Does your doctor recommend it? The Wise One—No, my lawyer.—Puck.

"Do you know that I am soon to be engaged to Mr. Huber?" "Is that so? Has he spoken to your mother?" "No, but my mother has spoken to him."—Meggendorfer Blatter.

Passenger (about to leave the cars, sees his heavy satchel fall from the rack on a lady's head)—That's very fortunate. I had just forgotten it was there.—Filigende Blatter.

Gracey—My dressmaker says I ought not to wear white with my skin. Mayne—Don't believe her, dear. White and yellow make quite a pretty combination.—Baltimore American.

"I never was so happy before," said the new benedict. "Marriage has made a different man of me." "I'm glad to hear it," said his rival, "for your wife's sake."—Philadelphia Press.

Patience—How do you know Peggy is alone? Patrice—Because I hear her singing. "But that's no sign." "Yes, it is. If there was any one with her she'd be talking."—Yonkers Statesman.

Future Father-in-Law—I am sorry to inform you that my daughter will not receive her fortune until after my death. Future Son-in-Law—Well, and how old are you now?—Simplicissimus.

If you have any room left in your tool box, be sure and fill it with money. You can, on an auto tour, get along without anything but money. If there is any doubt about this, throw the tools away.—Life.

A young man went up for an examination and was "plucked." He sent the following telegram to his anxious family: "Examination splendid. Professors enthusiastic. They demand an encore."—El Paso.

Thank Heaven, the multiplication table doesn't change! It is the only thing a mother knows that is the same as when she went to school, and which she can speak of without being corrected.—Arlinson Globe.

"Some men insist that woman has no business brains, but there is a young woman who conducts a large business and it calls for head work all the time." "Who is she?" "My wife's milliner."—Cleveland Press.

Deacon—By the way, that man Brown you married a year ago, has he paid you your fee yet? Clergyman—No; the last time I reminded him of it he said I'd be fortunate if he didn't sue me for damages.—Boston Transcript.

Mr. Seesig—Yes, it was my first ocean trip. Miss Romana—Ah! When you realized that you were on the great bosom of old ocean did you not feel like shouting in your exhilaration? Mr. Seesig—Well, I don't know about the exhilaration, but I—er—could scarcely contain myself.—Philadelphia Ledger.

The modern wife is beginning to astonish the modern husband. A man came home at 3 a. m. He took off his shoes on the front doorstep. Then he unlocked the door and went cautiously upstairs on tiptoe, holding his breath. But light was streaming through the keyhole of the bedroom door. With a sigh he paused. Then he opened the door and entered. His wife stood by the bureau, fully dressed. "I didn't expect you'd be sitting up for me, my dear," he said. "I haven't been," she said. "I just came in myself."—The New Voice.

A Hardship.

Favored Walter—I'm goin' to leave here when my week is up.

Regular Guest—Eh! You get good pay, don't you?

"Yes, 'bout the same's everywhere."

"And tips besides?"

"A good many."

"Then what's the matter?"

"They don't allow no time for goin' out to meals. I have to eat here."—London Mail.

The Chronic Kicker.

"What's the matter?"

"Oh, the kentry's goin' to rack an' ruin."

"But times are good."

"That's it. We're too prosperous."—Washington Herald.

The Travelling Need.

The Social Philosopher was reviewing the situation.

"We don't want overbold railroad employes," he said, "but we do need reckless schedules."—Baltimore American.

Unpleasant truths always please a lot of people whom they do not concern.