

A DEAD PAST

By MRS. LOVETT CAMERON

CHAPTER XXI.—(Continued.)

To save Kitten, or indeed to benefit her even in the smallest degree, there was nothing upon the face of the earth which Roy was not prepared to do, or dare, or endure. But the question was not what he would do, but whether Felicia would feel disposed to sacrifice herself to save the reputation of a woman, whom she knew but slightly, and to whom she owed nothing whatever.

By degrees, as he thought it over, as he pondered upon Margaret's suggestion, turning it over and over in his mind, an entirely new and original idea flashed into his brain.

Why should he not pretend to be engaged? And what good reason could Felicia bring forward to refuse her consent to a merely nominal engagement which should last a couple of months at the longest? There really seemed nothing impracticable to him in the idea. Felicia had had always understood each other perfectly and were quite capable of keeping a secret between them.

The more Roy thought about it the more simple and easy did the whole thing seem, and the less it entered his mind to imagine that his cousin could refuse to co-operate with him.

Felicia Grantley went about all one summer's day with a cloud upon her brow, a burden of horrible uncertainty in her heart, and a most singular letter from Roy in her pocket.

Mr. Raikes had sat for half an hour in her drawing room, balancing his stick between his knees, and staring gloomily at the carpet.

"What do you think," he asked her for the twentieth time, "shall I go abroad with Brian, or no?"

"You must be the best judge of that, Mr. Raikes," Felicia had answered coldly—very coldly.

The measured tones struck ice into his soul. How could he possibly guess that her heart was in a tumult, and that she had a difficulty in keeping back her tears?

Edgar Raikes looked at her gloomily and miserably. She did not care then, he supposed, whether he stayed or went. It made no difference to her, or now dare, indeed, could he expect it, or now dare to frame in words the miserable thoughts that were surging in his heart; he was with a paper, to this girl, whose money and whose fears of being sought for her fortune, seemed to stand like a forbidding angel between him and his chiefest desire.

"I suppose then I had better go," he said miserably, with an inflection that was almost a question in his voice, and something wistful in his eyes which it was a pity that Felicia was so engrossed with her red and yellow silks as not to see.

"That is for you to decide," she said coldly.

Her very coldness should, perhaps have shown him that she did care, but he did not understand that. Few men know women well enough not always to take what they say for what they really mean. Edgar Raikes merely supposed that his case was hopeless. He shook hands with her in silence, and left her, and when the front door had been slammed upon his departing footsteps, Felicia flung her silks and her plash on to the ground, laid her head upon the table in front of her and burst into tears.

All this took place in the morning, and then came Roy's letter, and Felicia went about her daily business, her shopping and her visitings, with a load of anxiety on her mind. In the evening she was to give Roy his answer.

They were to meet at some private theatricals, and it was there that he would ask her for her decision, to surely the strangest proposal which a man ever made to a woman.

When dinner time came Felicia was still undecided. For a wonder she was dining at home with her father. They took their places in silence opposite each other. And Mr. Grantley began his usual comments.

"Why didn't you ask Raikes to dinner?"

"He is staying with poor Mr. Desmond; I didn't like to ask him to leave him."

That very morning Mrs. Talbot sauntered down Bond street, when she almost stumbled into Brian Desmond's arms as he came quickly round the corner of Grosvenor street.

Here was a chance of mischief making which our friend Gertrude was not in the least likely to neglect. She laughed and stood still, so immediately in front of him that Brian had no chance but to stand still, too.

"You nearly knocked me down!" she cried playfully. Then asked quickly: "Any news of that naughty little truant, Mrs. Desmond?"

"I have not heard from my wife to-day," answered Brian frowningly.

"Oh! of course you know where she is?" she cried lightly. "I tell everybody so. I've been fighting her battles for her everywhere. Of course, there is not an atom of truth in all the unkind things people say, as I tell everybody. No truth about her, that is to say. Of course, you are a very naughty, bad man indeed!"

Brian's brow grew black as thunder. No one had dared to breathe a word to him of scandal concerning his wife. It had been Edgar Raikes' constant care to see that no such reports reached his ears. Gertrude was pretty well certain that he had been told of nothing.

be the pot calling the kettle black. Good by, Brian. I may call you so just for once, mayn't I? You and I were always good friends, though you haven't paid me one compliment or admired my new dress; but then I know 'Fair Rosamond' is all in all to you now!" And with this parting shot she kissed her fingers lightly to him, and vanished round the corner of the street.

As to Brian, he turned slowly and duly away. He could not go down to the club, nor walk along Bond street and St. James street now, to run the gauntlet of his friends' pitying or inquiring glances. He turned back and went slowly homeward. His miserable secret was known, and his wife's name was coupled with that of another man. He met his cousin coming out of his own house.

"We will start at once—this very night," he said to him. "I cannot bear the shame of this," and then he repeated to him what Mrs. Talbot had said concerning his wife.

"Do not believe her," said Edgar Raikes, stoutly. "To have repeated such a thing to you, she must be what I have always taken her to be, a bad-hearted woman. Stay at home like a man, Brian, and your wife and vindicate her name by bringing her back in the face of the world."

"No, no, let us go, if not to-day, let it be to-morrow," he answered gloomily, for there was that other trouble, concerning Rosamond Earle, of which he could speak to no one, weighing upon his heart. That, too, was, it seems, known and spoken about, and to save Rosamond's name it seemed to him that he had no alternative, save to get himself away out of England. There was no refuge for him save in flight. As to Kitten, she had been foolish, but her very simplicity and foolishness would save her. With Rosamond it was different. If Kitten's flight were once to be attributed to its true cause, then the voice of slander would not spare the woman of whom his wife was jealous.

He had made up his mind to go. By noon the next day a wonderful thing had taken place. In every club, in every house where Mr. and Mrs. Desmond's name and story had been known, there went about a strange and astonishing piece of news. Everybody was talking about it. Sir Roy Grantley was engaged to his cousin, the heiress.

"And, of course," said the fickle voice of the multitude, "it is evidently impossible that there could have been any truth in that other story of his unfortunate attachment to Mrs. Desmond." Kitten's name was saved.

And Edgar Raikes, going in for a moment to his club to get his letters, heard the story, too. Then he went back to Lowndes Square, and he said:

"Let us go at once."

They started from Charing Cross that very night.

CHAPTER XXII.

It is six months later. From July to January. A great many things in the world's history may take place in six months.

Some such thought was in the mind of a woman who sat very still in the twilight of a winter's afternoon, staring dreamily into the red coals of the fire in front of her.

The world outside was white with snow. Snow upon the cottage eaves, upon garden paths, and upon the stone pillars of the garden gate, snow in thick masses upon the laurel hedge, and a white pall upon the winding lane that vanished speedily away into misty darkness, and snow again upon the distant shoulders of round-backed hills which loomed weirdly against the gloomy sky. And the woman herself sat still and motionless by the fireside, with the red light flowing full upon her. Her dress is of black velvet, plain as any nun's, yet with a certain richness in its harmonious folds. There are white lace frills at her throat and wrists, and the gleam of diamonds upon the hand upon which she rests her oval cheek.

Rosamond Earle is doing what she has seldom allowed herself to do of late; she is dissecting her own heart.

Insensibly she had grown to have but one interest in her existence, one solitary pleasure to which she looked forward—the periodical visits of her landlord, John Trefusis. She led a life of absolute seclusion at Dunsterston. The red brick cottage upon the outskirts of the village green, with its tiny lawn and its miniature flower garden, and with the glimpse of the Keppington hills away through the gate, had suited her purpose admirably. Here she had battled through the worst of her sorrow, and had come forth scarred and wounded indeed from the fight, but a conqueror in the end.

"How right I was to go away at once and to leave no trace of my destination," she said to herself often.

But she had no idea that Brian was abroad, or that Brian's wife was not living with him. In this far-away village of the world had reached her ears, and she certainly flattered herself that her own retreat was absolutely unknown to all save to her one friend, Colonel Trefusis.

And gradually and insensibly this one friend became more and more to her. His unflinching devotion, his unwearied kindness, could not fall in the end to have some effect upon her. He never spoke to her of love, but the atmosphere of his love surrounded her. She did not love him, but she learned to depend upon him. It is often said that a heart can be caught at a rebound.

his spare moments in making love to her, had entered Mrs. Raikes' service upon her first arrival at Dunsterston, under the more dignified name of Mary.

Some six weeks ago Mrs. Earle had been very kind to Mary's brother, whose chest was delicate. She had undertaken to support him for the winter in the south of France, and by the help and assistance of Colonel Trefusis, young Whaffle had been sent out to an invalid establishment managed by an English sisterhood at Mentone. It was of this brother that Mary came to speak.

"I have had a letter to-day from my brother, ma'am."

"Indeed, and how is he, Mary?"

"Oh, so much better already, ma'am, and so grateful to you and the colonel for all your goodness to him." And then Mary proceeded to enter into a detailed account of her brother's condition and of his surroundings at Mentone, which were all of great interest to his benefactress. After which Mary said, rather blushing, "And only think, ma'am, he met a friend there one day, such a kind gentleman whom we all used to know at home, Mr. Raikes, who lived up at the Hall."

"At Keppington, do you mean?"

"Yes, ma'am, he was Mr. Desmond's cousin, and he used to live there, he was there two years, I daresay, and he was a great friend of mine," she added, with a little conscious smile.

Mrs. Earle fell to musing. Raikes, Raikes, who was he? Ah, yes! she fancied she remembered a family of that name; many sons and many daughters, whose mother was a needy widow, and of whom mention used often to be made at Keppington in years gone by. No doubt this young man was one of this family.

"He has been very kind indeed to young George," continued Polly, "and inquired so much after me; and then he gave him three sovereigns for himself, so that George is quite rich now."

"That was very kind of him," answered her mistress absently. And then Mary left her, and she thought no more of it; nor did it occur to her to imagine that through the instrumentality of George Whaffle it would be possible for Brian Desmond to learn where it was she was living. Edgar Raikes might be his cousin, and he might also be at Mentone, but that Brian should have been a bystander at the interview between the two certainly never entered for a moment into her calculations.

Eleven o'clock struck. The last note of the clock had scarcely rung before she caught a sound outside at the garden gate; the click of the iron latch, then the slow swing of the hinge followed by the clang of the gate as it fell back again. Her dog put up his nose, and uttered a low growl. Rosamond shut up her book suddenly, and stood up. The door bell rang.

She stood for a moment half uncertain. Should she summon the servants from their beds, or should she go to the door herself?

At last, however, she opened the door. There stood outside, upon the doorstep, a man, wrapped in a long, loose traveling cloak, with a heavy cape to it.

When he saw her he made a half step back, as though he would have turned away.

"Who are you and what do you want at this hour of the night?" said Rosamond, summoning up her courage, although she was secretly somewhat uneasy. And then he spoke, and she recognized his voice.

"Forgive me for coming at such an hour. The train broke down; I have walked five miles through the snow. May I come in?"

She backed slowly from him into the hall; a great chill struck her soul, a sick sense of miserable helplessness.

He came in, divested himself of his heavy cloak and of his hat, shaking the snow from them into the porch. Her eyes rested upon him almost with terror and repulsion.

"Why have you come to trouble me?" she said to him, in a strange, hollow voice, and yet she led the way back into the warmth and light of her sitting room. For how turn a dog from her door on such a night!

"Ah, how warm and bright!" he murmured, stretching down his cold hands towards the blazing wood logs. He looked very cold as he stooped over the blaze, and so pale and wan; it struck her with a keen pang of anguish to see him.

"You must forgive me for coming so late, Rosamond," he said to her once more.

"Why—why have you come, Brian?" she, too, repeated once again. "Could you not at least keep out of my way?"

(To be continued.)

Automatic Banks.

Every post office in Italy is a savings bank, but not every laborer in Italy can get a chance to go to the postoffice during business hours. Therefore, says Pearson's Weekly of London, the Italian government is encouraging thrift by setting up automatic banks all over the kingdom.

They are simply hollow cast-iron pillars, with three slits opening into them. In the top one a man who begins saving money inserts a ten-centime piece, which is equivalent to about two cents. If the coin is counterfeited it is promptly rejected, and falls out of a lower slit. If good, a receipt drops from the third opening, at the bottom of the pillar.

As soon as one has collected five or more receipts he can exchange them for a pass-book at a regular savings bank, and the government begins to pay him interest on his savings at the rate of four per cent.

The device is a new thing, but already many a laborer turns to the automatic bank when he gets his day's wages, pleased with the thought that when he has saved ten cents he will have his bank-book, like any capitalist.

Scorching.

"You may all poke fun at the Chinese about being backward," said the man who was looking for an argument, "but the Chinaman will make his mark yet."

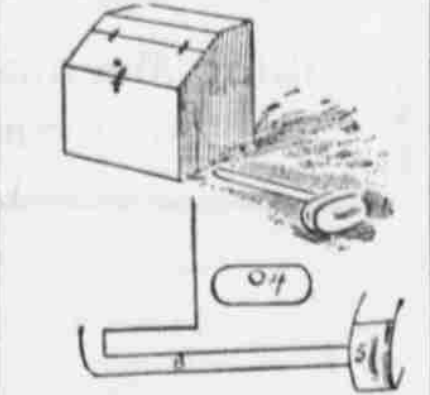
"I don't doubt it," spoke up the man with the glazed collar. "One of them made a mark on my shirt with a hot iron only yesterday."

Always place a large book on a table before opening it.



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.

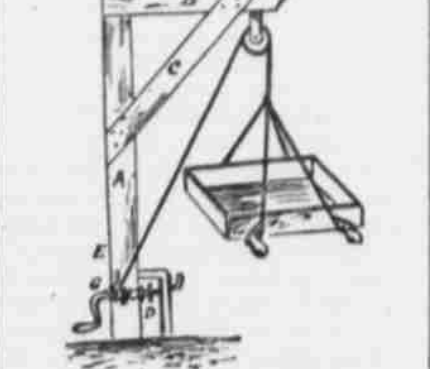
Make the smoke fire in the boiler, the smoke will pass into the box, and, on a small scale, one will have a first-class smokehouse. At little heat is required to keep up the fire sufficient to give the desired amount of smoke, there is no danger of the wash boiler being too frail for the purpose. The 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.

Loop ends of rope to slip over poles under bed. When raised sufficiently, secure by placing a bar across hooks F and E. Pulley can be attached to rafters if preferred.

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



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—Christians assumed government of Sweden.

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

1653—Oliver Cromwell declared lord protector of England.

1683—Issue 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.

1790—General Anthony Wayne died.

1790—General George Washington died.

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

1809—Divorce of Augustus 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.

1822—Treaty of navigation and commerce concluded between United States and Russia.

1826—Patent office and postoffice at Washington, D. C., burned.

1828—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—Mayo 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—Phillipine tariff bill passed House of Representatives. Marconi signalled across the Atlantic by means of wireless telegraphy.

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 fool 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?