

BY MISADVENTURE

FRANK BARRETT

CHAPTER XIV.

The young man bent his head and looked on the ground. He couldn't stand chaff; but he had to make the best of it now—perhaps consoling himself with the reflection that he would not stand it after their marriage. I can imagine him promising himself to break her in and bring her to meek submission in the future. Pity those poor souls who marry a bully they have teased beforehand!

"I think this is scarcely a time for badinage," said he, after a pause, still looking upon the ground and tracing the pattern of the carpet with the lash of his whip. "I know I am not perfect; but you must admit that allowances should be made for a fellow under the influence of—of emotion."

"I am willing to admit that a man under that condition is not responsible for his actions—is that enough?"

"If you admit that, what am I to understand by your present attitude? You seem to forget what took place before I went away."

"But I do not. You made me an offer of marriage; but am I wrong in thinking that you made that under the influence of emotion? I absolve you from responsibility for action under that condition. May I not suppose that you were beside yourself when you made that proposal, and overlook the mistake as readily as that you have committed since?"

"It was not a mistake, Gertrude—I loved you then as I love you now; I have come here this afternoon to ask you again if you will have me, faulty as I am—yet an honest fellow—and be my wife."

Nurse Gertrude was not greatly moved with this speech, which had very little appearance of depth and sincerity in it, despite the quavering of that manly voice.

"May I ask why you have thought it necessary to ask me a second time?" she asked, trying to fix his attention, and learn the truth from them.

"Well, your manner seems to imply that you consider the engagement broken off."

"I did think it broken off. Had I not reason to think so?"

"Oh, yes; the way I spoke to you and little Laura was unpardonable."

He paused and looked down again to escape from her fathomless eyes. He had probably thought that there would be little difficulty in his way, and that he could just reconcile Gertrude, if she should resent his silence, with a few words or a kiss or two, and without going into any more verbose explanation than a mere avowal of many weaknesses under trying circumstances. Dr. Awdrey had told him to confess the truth, and conceal nothing, adding that a woman would forgive the man she loves anything except duplicity.

But Lynn, in his own concealed, pig-headed way, had fully relied on his own cleverness; his contempt for women in general disposed him to tell them no more than was necessary. He would rather have avoided an explanation which, though it presented a certain attraction in being untruthful, would require a good deal of bolstering up to support his assumption of honesty and generosity. However, he had bungled so disastrously in his own attempt, that he saw no escape from his dilemma but by acting now on Awdrey's suggestion.

"The fact is," said he, changing his tone with a slash at his leg. "I was purposely brutal to little Laura and you. I wished you to take offense and relieve me from the engagement."

"That is what I thought—it was the only construction I could put upon your behavior," said she.

"I dare say you wonder what my reason was. I will tell you. I can't conceal the truth, and I know well enough that there's nothing a loving woman will not forgive, except duplicity."

A new warmth glowed in Gertrude's heart. She liked those words; they were good and true—it never struck her that they might be Dr. Awdrey's.

"I knew that through Keene's delay I was ruined—that I had nothing whatever to expect from my uncle's will. I knew that I must no longer cherish the thought of making you my wife, in debt and penitence as I was, and—but there, you can imagine the rest."

"You wanted to give me the opportunity of breaking the engagement, before it might appear that our separation was due to mercenary considerations on my part. Oh, that was generous!" exclaimed Nurse Gertrude, carried away by her own impulses and generous recognition of an unselfish—nay, a chivalrous motive on his part. All my warning was forgotten in an instant.

"I did not want to tell you this," he said, in a tone that seemed to disclaim any merit to gratitude.

"But you wronged me, Lynn," she said gently—"you wronged me, to think I might wish to break the engagement because you were less rich than you expected to be when you made me an offer."

She held out her hand to him frankly, and he took it. If he had been wise enough to tell her all that had passed between him and Awdrey, she would have been his without doubt. In return for an open avowal, she would have swept aside my warning and all prudential considerations, put the best construction on his motives, and scorned to entertain any suspicion of mercenary motives which might be suggested by his conduct. Now was the time for him to spring up and put his arms around her; but he hung

back, the dot. With that perverse idea of a girl's mental inferiority, he thought he had told her enough. Possibly he was annoyed in being forced to abandon his own way of winning her, and act upon Awdrey's more generous and manly advice. Perhaps, believing that she was anxious to get him, he thought he might treat her with a little indifference as a kind of punishment for her previous coolness. There is no knowing the extent of pitiful meanness a heartless man is not capable of. Anyhow, he sat there in silence, waiting for her to make a further advance. And that, giving her time for reflection, saved her.

"Are you greatly in debt, Lynn?" she asked after a little consideration.

"Oh, not a great deal," he replied carelessly; "a few hundreds."

"And how do you propose to pay your debts?" she asked.

"That will be all right. The fellows won't press for payment. They know their only chance is to wait till I get a bit straight."

"How do you mean to get straight, as you call it?" she asked, smiling.

"Hang it all, Gertrude!" he exclaimed petulantly, "let's drop this subject. I came to make love to you, not to talk about money."

"Yes; but the two subjects seem to have become so involved that we can hardly mention one without talking about the other. The best way is to detach the pleasure from the unpleasant subject, and that would be most readily done by settling the money question at once, don't you think so?"

"Oh, well, if we must talk about that sort of thing, I should ask you to let me have a little money to square my accounts, while I look about for something that would enable me, in time, to pay you back—though I don't think there ought to be any debt and credit account between man and wife."

"Nor I," replied she gravely. "If I marry you, all that I have will be yours, and I should be very unhappy if I thought it necessary to question how you disposed of it."

"That's all right. Of course, whatever I do with the money will be for our common good. So that settles the thing," he said, rising from his chair. "Eight, ten months will be soon enough to settle my creditors' little bills. I'll manage them!"

"But in ten months I may be as far as ever from being able to let you have the sum you need; in the meantime, you must be incurring fresh debts unless you have some definite means of earning money."

"But Awdrey told me that he intended settling the whole of the interest on the money left by Flexmore on you for taking the care of the child of his hands, and quite right that he should."

"I know nothing at all about that, see you. I'll send a note up to him this morning. Leave all the negotiations to me. I shall manage that better than you could."

We shook hands and parted, but as soon as he was gone a misgiving seized me. That misgiving was verified when I caught sight of him in the afternoon jogging along in the gig towards Captain Ranger's, with Lynn Yeames on the seat beside him.

"Mr. Keene is in the next room," suggested Miss Dalrymple.

Lynn replied with an expression in regard to me which it is unnecessary to repeat, for I think I have shown enough to prove that he was a blackguard, and quitted the room to "go and have it out with Awdrey," in a manner so devoid of feeling, or even common courtesy, that it must at once have destroyed any faith in his sincerity that poor Gertrude cherished.

Poor Gertrude! It was some time after the door closed upon Mr. Lynn Yeames before she came from the room where he left her, and then, despite the cheerful air she assumed, I perceived that she had been crying.

Here, again, I have wondered what she cried for. Had she not every reason to be pleased that she had found out the man's real character before marriage rather than after it? Was not scorn of such a base fellow enough to dry in its source the regretful tears that would have sprung in losing a lover? I should have thought so. But nothing puts on so many unlooked for aspects as human nature. One cannot reason upon the movement of human hearts as if they were made of wheels, mathematically arranged, to produce from a given impulse a certain and undeviating result. So I say again, poor Gertrude! for she was weak as well as strong.

Had she really loved Lynn? or was she only interested in him from a belief that her influence had ennobled him? I cannot say; all I know is that she went in realizing that he was neither noble nor lovable.

CHAPTER XV.

The morning after my last visit to Flexmore House I heard the crunching of wheels in the ice of the gutter, and, glancing through the blind, I caught sight of Dr. Awdrey. The old gig had been mended, and he had bought a new nag of the same sober sort as the last. "His, ha!" thought I; "he's come to settle about the two thousand a year that Nurse Gertrude is to receive."

It must be remembered that the particulars of the interview between Lynn Yeames and Miss Dalrymple which I have set down in the last chapter, had not then come to my knowledge.

Dr. Awdrey came in clapping his hands, for, I remember, it was bitterly cold; and, pulling off one of his knitted gloves, he gave me his hand. His nose was red, but his fine, kindly eyes sparkled brightly; and he had in his face that expression of virile energy, and vigor, and triumph, which one may see on a man when he has broken the ice to take his morning plunge. But there are difficulties to overcome in carrying out a healthy moral principle, that call for just as much nerve and courage as diving through half an inch of ice; and it has often struck me that if one braved as much personal inconvenience and discomfort in the service of humanity as he will endure for the mere sake of self-glorification, it would be infinitely better for oneself and one's fellow creatures. It was a moral plunge of this kind that animated and beautified the doctor's face that morning, I felt sure. He sat down before the fire warming his hands and talking about the weather for some minutes; then, after a pause, he said:

"Are there any farms to let about here, Keene, do you know?"

"Yes," said I; "you may take your pick of them for ten miles round. Land was never so cheap before. Rents have gone down fifty per cent."

"Then why don't you farm?"

"I'll tell you," said I; "it's because your farmer is too genteel to work, and has to pay another for doing what he ought to do himself—that's one reason."

"If a man were not too genteel to work, if he put his heart and soul into it, if he went into it as a man goes into battle, setting his heart and soul on winning, how then?"

"He would make it pay—I'd stake my reputation on it," I exclaimed. "You know nothing about farming, doctor; but with your dogged perseverance and a certain amount of intelligence that you would bring to bear on it, even you might make it pay; and I'll guarantee that you would make more by it than by your medical practice."

"I am very glad to hear you think so," said he, cheerfully.

"Why? Do you think of taking a farm?" I asked hopefully.

He nodded. "I was never better pleased in my life, and I told him so."

"Now, there's Thibault's farm," said I. "You could get that at fifteen shillings an acre, I know."

"Too far off. How about Captain Ranger's farm—do you think he wants to give up?"

"I know he does. He must. Can't go on losing eight hundred a year."

"Eight hundred a year? That's a good deal to lose," he said, drawing a long face.

"Why does he lose it? Because he never goes out of the house except to hunt or shoot; because he's lounging about his billiard room instead of looking after his accounts when he's at home; because his wife keeps four servants; because he pays Evans three hundred a year for robbing him; and because he's no more a farmer than you are a lawyer. It's famous land—the best in the county. I'll get the place, house and all, for a pound an acre. You're bound to make it pay; it's the very thing for you."

"Well," said he, rising. "I shall go over and look at the farm this afternoon, perhaps. Do you know if Captain Ranger is at home?"

"He is, and he will be only too glad to see you. I'll send a note up to him this morning. Leave all the negotiations to me. I shall manage that better than you could."

We shook hands and parted, but as soon as he was gone a misgiving seized me. That misgiving was verified when I caught sight of him in the afternoon jogging along in the gig towards Captain Ranger's, with Lynn Yeames on the seat beside him.

(To be continued.)

The Huntsman Kaiser.

Among the many trials that President Roosevelt has had to bear is the accusation that he resembles the Emperor of Germany. The fondness of both for hunting has been pointed out as an example of the likeness of the President and the Kaiser. Statistics have recently been published which cast light upon the hunting achievements of William II. They make Theodore Roosevelt's occasional excursions in search of well-deserved rest and a few grizzly bears seem Sunday school picnics in comparison. They put the strenuous occupant of the White House forever in the class of milkops and mollycoddles.

The official statistician to the huntsman Kaiser reports that his majesty has bagged a total of 47,514 pieces of game in a period of thirty years. Over eighteen thousand pheasants were assassinated, and seventeen thousand hares were cut off in their prime. One can go on down the list of boars, rabbits, stags, etc., until there seems to be scarcely a variety of bird or beast that has escaped the imperial bullet. The emperor even invaded the realms of Neptune, for we are told that one lone, solitary whale perished in supreme honor and agony. On one short winter's day the Kaiser, unaided, shot 1,458 pheasants.

This is not the annual report of a Chicago meat-packing establishment, but a record of imperial achievement. In support of it, the London Magazine reproduces photographs of the royal Nimrod picturesquely surrounded by decimated animals. We are shown boars about to depart this life, and stags which are prostrate in the imperial presence. "A cat may look at a king," but the wise German feline will stay under the Hohenzollern bar.—Success Magazine.



Electric Farming.

Although agricultural machinery originated in the United States and the American farmer used patent mowers, reapers and threshing machines long before their European contemporaries in the same field of labor had put aside scythe, rake and flail, the possibility of introducing electric power in farm work was first recognized in the Old World.

This has probably been due to the fact that the farmers of America, thrifty and far-seeing, recognizing the economy and reliability of the small oil engine, failed to perceive how any saving could be effected by generating electric current and distributing to its motors in outlying positions.

When, however, the mains from some large electric power company pass within reach of a farm or estate the conditions are much more favorable, and this state of things must already exist in a measure which will be largely extended in the future. Current German newspapers contain an interesting account of the application of electricity to a group of farms in Saxony. The electric current is brought from an adjacent town by overhead wires carried on wooden poles. Two receiving stations are arranged, from which the electricity is distributed to the farm buildings and to convenient positions in the fields for the purpose of driving threshing and other machinery.

Sixteen fixed electric motors are installed for chaff and root cutting, on crushing, pumping and for operating machinery used in the manufacture of potato spirit. In addition to this power equipment, six portable motors are provided, which may be used for driving pumps, circular saws, threshing machinery, and so forth, at any point where their services are required. The houses and buildings on the farms are all lit by electricity, 9 ar: lamps and about 1,000 glow lamps being used for the purpose.

It must be pointed out, however, that this example could only be followed in the United States on a very large estate or a group of adjacent farms, and it is doubtful whether such a scheme could be made a commercial success for the operation of farming machinery pure and simple. It would appear that wood sawing, pumping and other operations requiring power must be included if the results are to compare favorably with those at present obtained by the use of oil or steam engines. But the Saxon experiment is full of interest, and displays a curiously progressive spirit in a country where farm fences are almost unknown, and shepherds and cowherds are still living amid picturesque realities.

Learned by Hard Knocks.

A peculiarity of clover is that we may take off a crop and leave the land richer than it was before.

A proper rotation and wise tillage will do much to keep the soil supplied with available fertility.

Without stock there can be no complete utilization of the farm products. With stock there can be no waste products.

Clover and grasses retain moisture in the soil, render it porous and favor nitrification while doing with vegetable matter.

More hay and less grain makes the farm easier to handle and in the end gives it quite as much profit.

So long as the home market is not fully supplied there is no gain in shipping away.

Better methods, better stock and better tools have doubled the productions of more than one farm.

As a rule the offspring of immature and pampered animals are predisposed to disease.

There is often more profit in growing little things and in fine products, in proportion, than in the great staples.

Oats contain largely the mineral properties requisite to form and grow bone and the protein that makes muscle and other tissues.

Quality of Grass Seed.

The Maine law regulating the sale of agricultural seeds requires that grass seed shall be sold under a guarantee as to purity. Bulletin 138 of the Maine agricultural experiment station, which, doubtless, many of your readers have received, gives analysis of the seeds which were collected by the inspector and those sent to the experiment station by correspondence in 1906. The dealers are very generally conforming to the law and the purity of most seeds is now guaranteed. The question naturally arises in the mind of a farmer, should a seed be strictly pure, and, if not, how nearly pure should it be?

The purity of seeds varies greatly with their kind. It is possible to grow timothy seed so clean that it shall car-

ry practically no foreign weed seeds. It is not as easy to grow any of the other grasses or clovers so clean. There is no need for the sower to ever buy timothy seed that is much less than 99.5 per cent pure. Samples have been examined by the station the present year which contained not a single foreign harmful seed.

The best red clover seed will frequently carry as much as 1 per cent of foreign matter, although these impurities are usually comparatively harmless. It is, however, poor policy for the sower to buy a red-clover seed that is less than 98 per cent pure. The best grades of alsike clover will run about 98.5 per cent pure on the average. It is doubtful if the purchaser should buy an alsike whose purity is less than 97.5 per cent.

Redtop is the most difficult seed of all. It will, of course, contain more or less chaff. It is difficult to grow redtop free from timothy, and the seed cleaners find it difficult to separate timothy seed from redtop after it has once been introduced. Samples of redtop carrying as high as 12 or even 15 per cent of timothy are not unusual. If one could be sure that the impurities were harmless like chaff and timothy it might be safe to buy a redtop even as low as 85 per cent pure. Unless one is assured of the character of the impurities, it is unwise to buy a redtop less than 95 per cent pure.

Double-Edged Saw.

To make one saw take the place of two, and at the same time preserve its durability, is the recent invention of an Indiana man.

Every carpenter includes two saws in his kit—one for cross-cut and one for cutting with the grain. He can now dispense with one saw, as it is possible to put the two blades having different teeth on the one saw, as shown in the illustration.

The smooth top edge always seen on saws is changed to a cutting edge, similar to the regular cutting edge, the saw thus having teeth on the two longitudinal opposite edges. The handle is hinged to the blade instead of being rigid and can be reversed as it becomes necessary to use either blade. This saw is also an economical saw, as it saves the expense of purchasing two saws.

News and Farm Notes.

The profitable line of production is to maintain good health with early maturity.

More than half a million emigrants from Russia have passed into Siberia the past year to engage in wheat raising.

A farmer near McEwan, Tenn., is displaying an ear of corn twelve inches long, weighing three pounds and containing 1,396 grains.

A grain farm at Murray, Iowa, shipped twenty-seven carloads of timothy seed last fall, for which the farmers received from \$1.50 to \$1.75 a bushel.

A Kansas man claims to have invented a fence-weaving machine, run by a two-horse power gasoline engine, which will weave and set a mile of fence a day.

The United States produced 14,000,000 bushels of rice last year on a half million acres. The culture of rice is gradually creeping north and some very good grain is reported in Arkansas.

Holland has set engineers to work to pump the water out of the famous Zuider Zee and turn it into dry land. When this work is accomplished there will rise where 4,000 fishermen now sink their nets farms and homes for 50,000 Hollanders.

Charles W. Trock of Ridgeway, Ohio, a 7-year-old lad, while wandering in the fields sat down on a little hummock which contained a bumblebee's nest. Within a moment he was so badly stung that his body swelled to twice its size and death soon followed.

Enterprising men will make an experiment of raising thornless cactus on a commercial scale in Riverside county, California. This cactus is the kind that has had its thorns bred off by Luther Burbank and is said to be extremely valuable as stock food.

A Washington dispatch says a genius has invented a dope which when used as paint for farm machinery will prevent rust and decay. This might be good news for those farmers who use the fence corners as storehouses for their farm machinery, but the probability is they are too lazy to apply the dope.

R. W. Crouse, a graduate of Iowa agricultural college, has been appointed State lecturer on animal husbandry for Virginia. Another Iowa boy has gone to the Massachusetts agricultural college as assistant in animal husbandry. The demand for college graduates in the high class agricultural lines at salaries ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000 a year is larger than the supply.

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A Book Number.
Watson—Scribbler is horribly behind the times.
Baker—How so?
Watson—Why, he has a preface to his new volume of essays instead of a foreword.—Somerville Journal.

Germany had 11,013 suicides last year, a rate of 21 in 100,000 inhabitants. The rate for Prussia alone is 20; that for the Province of Saxony 32, and for Schleswig-Holstein 33, while in Catholic and Polish Posen it is only 8. For Berlin the rate was 34.

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