

BY MISADVENTURE FRANK BARRETT

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

It was for Lynn, not for himself, he wanted the farm. I saw now why he had pitched upon that particular one; he was also aware that it was side by side with the Dingle. If anything could promote the union of Lynn Yeames and Miss Dalrymple, it was this proximity; for here, he must have reflected, the young man would be urged to do his best, that she might see he had the good qualities—the energy, the resolution which he pretended to possess.

In the evening I went over to the doctor's house to see if I could pick up any news, and by a happy chance he was at home. He welcomed me heartily. "I have seen the captain's farm. It will do admirably. I will get you to arrange the terms with him as early as possible," he said.

I nodded gloomily. My want of enthusiasm now, contrasting with my warmth in the morning, was too noticeable to escape him. Like all good fellows, he was keenly alive to the humorous aspect of things, and I saw a twinkle in his eye as he turned to poke the fire.

"You don't seem so eager about it as you were, Keene," he said, with a smile. "No; I was fool enough to think you were going to take it for yourself."

"And you have found out that the future tenant is to be Lynn Yeames?" "Well, let me hear what you've got to say," said I, turning round, with a resolve to be as impartial in my dealings with Yeames as if he were unknown to me.

"I have no right to any of this money virtually," he said. "I won't admit that, to begin with," I replied. "Flexmore will lend the money to you, and signed his will when he was in health, and had the ability to reason the matter out; when he did not sign was decided upon when he was sick and unable to reason upon it."

"You will admit that in either case he intended this money to go to the man Miss Dalrymple should marry." I assented to this proposition, and he continued: "It is no longer a question whether I shall marry her—that is settled forever."

"Well, if he will only work heart and soul for his own sake, it's as much as I can expect of him. Let him begin with that; we shall see about the rest. You have spoken to him on this subject?" "Yes; we went together to look at the farm this afternoon. He is delighted with it, is confident of success, and eager to begin."

I was not surprised to hear this. Every one thinks he has the wit to make a farm pay by just riding about on a cob and giving orders; and to be a "gentleman farmer" is the desire of a good many lazy young gentlemen—especially when there's good shooting in the neighborhood, and a comfortable house, with an excellent billiard table in it.

"If you are still resolved on parting with your money, I think I see how it may be done without too much risk," said I. "We will start with the idea that when Flexmore's house is sold, the Dingle Cottage paid for, and everything squared up, you have two thousand a year to dispose of for nine years from this date. Half of that must be put away as a reserve fund. Out of the other half you must pay Miss Dalrymple's salary and the expenses of Laure and the Cottage—say, roughly, four hundred a year. That leaves six hundred to meet the losses on the farm and pay interest on the capital invested on going in. If Yeames makes farming pay, so much the better for him; he can pocket the profit, and the six hundred can be added to the reserve fund."

"And what is to be done with the reserve fund?" "I'm coming to that. At the end of nine years, when Miss Dalrymple ceases to be Laure's guardian, the reserve sum shall be drawn out and paid over in a lump to Miss Dalrymple if she is single, or to her husband if she is married. Here is an inducement for Yeames to develop his fine qualities, to work hard and win Miss Dalrymple, for then he will come in for the whole amount arising from the bequest. Now, there's an arrangement advantageous enough for Yeames in all conscience. It does not benefit you one penny piece, and so ought to be acceptable; and it carries out Flexmore's last wishes to a tittle."

"That seems a capital arrangement," said Awdrey cheerfully. "I should think Yeames would be pleased with it." "He ought to be," said I. "But I was very doubtful whether he would be; for a greedy man would not be satisfied with ten thousand a year, if he thinks he may by hook or by crook get twenty."

However, he had the grace to express entire satisfaction with the arrangement when Awdrey explained it to him, and the doctor bade me conclude negotiations with Captain Ranger as quickly as possible.

CHAPTER XVI.

The following week Miss Dalrymple moved into her new home with all her household; and one morning when I had been to settle affairs with Captain Ranger, I walked across the meadow, climbed over the fence that separated it from the Dingle paddock, and made my way to the Cottage. I found everything in its place, and the whole house as neat and comfortable as if the tenants had been there a year.

It seemed to me that I had never seen Nurse Gertrude to such advantage. Black was certainly becoming to her, and her dress was, to my eyes, the perfection of grace and elegance, giving fullness to her figure which, as I have said before, was, in my opinion, a trifle too slight. Her carriage was never wanting in dignity, though it was scarcely time to expect them, and I was glad to hear this, not only because it would be good for Laure to find companions of her own age, but for Miss Dalrymple's sake also. Mixing among people who must appreciate her excellent qualities, it was ten to one that some decent young fellow would fall in love with her, and good might come of it. One thing I had made up my mind upon; if Dr. Awdrey wouldn't have her, Mr. Lynn Yeames shouldn't. Although the running at present looked favorable for Lynn, the race was not won yet by many a length, and I had a strong belief that he would be found nowhere when the marriage bell rang.

"And who else has called upon you, Miss Dalrymple?" I asked, when Laure left the room. "Has Mr. Yeames paid you another visit since we last met?" I wondered whether the little frown with which she replied in the negative implied that she was hurt by his neglect, or vexed at the thought of his calling upon her again.

"I was told that he intends to redeem his character before he again presents himself," said I. "I am very glad to hear it," she replied, taking up her work.

"However, you will be able to see him, for he is to be a near neighbor." I fancied that she did not look particularly pleased at this intimation. "He is going to live in the house over there, and from this window you will be able to see him, if you get up early, mowing his fields, following his team, throwing heart and soul and money into the noble endeavor to become a worthy member of society and a model farmer."

"But I understood that Mr. Yeames was in difficulties." "What does that matter? He has found a friend who's a bigger fool than he is in some respects, willing to pay his debts, and spend a thousand a year besides to make a worthy gentleman of him. Do you think he will succeed?"

"She did not reply to my question, but sat absorbed in thought. Watching her face keenly, I thought there was an expression of tender sadness in it. Was she mourning in her heart for the fall of one whom no effort could raise up? or was she grieving to think of that other friend's disappointment when he should find that all he had done was of no avail?"

"The friend is Dr. Awdrey," said Miss Dalrymple, after we had sat in silence for some moments. "Yes," I replied; "that is not difficult to discover; for I believe there's not another man in the whole world who would beggar himself for others as he will."

She sat with idle hands and musing eyes, still and silent as one sits at times awed by the beauty of a starry night. "And I have not told you all that he will do to make Yeames a gentleman—he will give him two thousand a year when he wins you. If that does not encourage him to make himself a fit subject for matrimony, I don't know what will."

"He must have a great respect for Mr. Yeames," she said. "A very strong belief in his latent goodness, undoubtedly," I said. "Dr. Awdrey is as simple and confiding as a girl. In that category he is not the only one who has had a great respect for Mr. Yeames."

"How am I to reply to that thrust?" she asked, with a smile. "By telling me that if Dr. Awdrey had as intimate an acquaintance with Mr. Yeames as you have, his respect would have evaporated."

"But still his faith in latent good qualities might exist," said she. "I know his love would remain unaltered; and while he thinks Yeames capable of goodness, and you capable of loving him, he will endeavor to bring about your marriage."

"His love?" she repeated questioningly, with a little emphasis. "His love," I said again; "and greater love hath no man than this—that he lay down his life for his friend."

"Do you think he loves Mr. Yeames to such an extent as that?" "I was not thinking of Mr. Yeames," said I; "he is not the only friend concerned; it is a friend better known, more highly prized in his heart, for whom that brave man would lay down his life."

The malicious smile provoked by our little passage of arms faded from her lips, the color left her cheek, her dark eyes deepened as she looked at me with intense earnestness, to read in my face what I had yet left untold.

I believe she realized at that moment for the first time that Dr. Awdrey loved her with a love that is deeper than friendship.

"If I have not put a considerable lounge

spoke in Mr. Lynn's wheel, I'm a Dutchman," said I to myself, as I went away from Dingle Cottage.

CHAPTER XVII.

Lynn Yeames had the sagacity to leave Conyerford, and keep out of sight, knowing that he could do nothing to re-establish his character until he had got into the farm where he was to work such wonders, or finding the bad weather that succeeded the frost intolerable, or society dull, or for some other reason that may be clearer later on.

He had made himself very popular at Conyerford with his charities, his reckless riding, his agreeable manners, and his assumption of bluff, outspoken honesty. People were inclined to think even better of him in his absence than when he was amongst them, remembering the pleasant side of his character and forgetting the little slips which occasionally awakened suspicion. He was spoken of as a fine specimen of muscular Christianity. Miss Dalrymple was constantly with these people, and as it was generally understood that a tacit engagement existed between her and Yeames, they thought to please her by talking about him, and sounding his praises. Then that dear, stupid old doctor, whenever he got a letter from Lynn, must needs show it to her and dilate on the fine prospect extending before a young fellow with such manly feeling and high aim.

It was the end of the second week in March, and people were speculating on the day when Lynn Yeames would make his appearance, when something occurred which upset everything; it was nothing less than a moral cataclysm altering the entire aspect of affairs.

Coming home that particular afternoon, I found a visitor in my office who had been waiting there three parts of an hour to see me. He was a little pudgy man, with a short throat, a puffy face, and eyes as like a pig's as ever I saw. He breathed with difficulty, and gasped before each sentence, and in the middle also if it was a long one. He had not much hair; what there was of it had a dirty, sandy tint; his whiskers were hardly distinguishable, they were so thinly planted, and like his complexion. He was dressed in a tightly-buttoned frock coat that formed deep ridges in his waist, and seemed to increase the difficulty of breathing. In one hand he held his hat, in the other a pair of gloves, and both rested on his knees, which, by reason of their shortness and pudginess, were widely separated.

"Afternoon, Mr. Keene; afternoon, sir," he gasped, turning his little blue eyes in the corner before he could screw himself up on his legs to face me. "Come to talk with you on a matter of business. My name's Bax—Smithson Bax," with this he sank down on his chair and gasped again.

"Not the pleasure of knowing you, Mr. Bax," said I, sitting down in front of him. "Thought you might have heard of me from Lynn Yeames or Mrs. Yeames. I am—friend of the family."

"A professional friend?" I asked, for I detected the look of a pottfagger in him. "You may call me—professional friend if you like—not a lawyer exactly—know something about it." He gave me a glance that was not to be mistaken, and continued: "To begin with, you must understand that I—writing on behalf of the family—Lynn Yeames nothing at all to do with it—better keep out of it."

"He does not wish to take the responsibility of anything you do?" "That's it. Too generous—too careless of his own interests—altogether too—" he gasped and filled up the break with a wave of his gloves.

"I understand his character perfectly," Mr. Bax; let us come to the point. "We'll go straight at it—begin in the middle—save breath. Dr. Awdrey is a scoundrel—biggest hypocrite andascal that ever imposed—credulous humanity!"

"Be good enough to show how you arrive at this conclusion," said I. "I will. Flexmore's will. He knew of the conditions in the first one. He knew also the conditions in the second. He knew that if that were not signed he would come into two thousand a year."

"He did." "Good. Tell me, please, Mr. Keene, why that second will was not signed." "It was thrown out of a trap; that and the fog—"

"Thrown out of a trap. How? Answer me that, if you please." "By a rope stretched from one side of the road to the other."

"Good. I can produce a witness to prove that he was engaged by Dr. Awdrey to stretch that rope and throw you over!" (To be continued.)

No Further Need.

"I hooked a fish yesterday," said the amateur angler, "that weighed all of ten pounds but it got off the hook."

"Will you swear to that?" asked the one-man audience. "No," answered the a. a. "I swore enough when I lost the fish."

To Judge from Appearances.

Elderly Spinster—You know, doctor, I'm always thinking that a man is following me. Do you think I suffer from hallucinations?" Doctor (sizing her up)—Absolutely certain you do, ma'am.—Sketch.

An Old Story.

"Did you ever experience a change of heart?" asked the kind old lady. "Well, I should say," laughed the girl. "I've been engaged four times!" —Detroit Free Press.

There are eighty State, private and savings banks and trust companies, and thirty national banks in Idaho.

Mexican troops are moving to the Guatemala frontier.

More than 2,000 preachers in California will speak against race track gambling next Sunday.

A surgeon general of the navy is having great success in treating consumption with mercury.

Two bags of valuable mail from London, worth \$500,000, were stolen in New York or in transit.

Ambassador Tower has given up his Berlin home and will start south with his family immediately.

San Francisco shipowners are cutting freight rates to the Orient in an attempt to drive out tramp steamers.

A city councilman of Georgetown, Wash., was arrested for keeping his place of business, a saloon, open on Sunday.

Local option which goes into effect May 1 in Massachusetts will throw about 2,000 saloons men out of work.

Latest reports of the sinking of the British cruiser Gladiator place the total casualties at five dead and 23 missing.

Extra passenger trains aggregating about 250 coaches will be run into San Francisco during the battleship visit.

Spring rains and melting snow caused a landslide in the province of Quebec, Canada, which destroyed a village and killed about 30 persons.

Santa Barbara, Cal., gave a flower festival in honor of the battleship fleet and bombarded them with bouquets.

Admiral Evans took an auto ride and is feeling much improved.

The boycott of Japanese goods by Chinese has extended to Australia.

The supreme court of Illinois declares the new local option law valid.

Pensacola street car strikers stoned the car barn and several arrests were made.

Lieutenant General Linevitch, who managed the Russian retreat from Mukden, is dead.

Representative Rayner, of Maryland, says it is time to curb the power of the president.

The independence league of New York is practically bankrupt and its creditors threaten suit.

King Edward says of the dead premier: "He was a faithful servant of his country. I am truly sorry he has gone."

The Illinois democracy has instructed its delegates to vote for Bryan and use all honorable means to secure his nomination.

General Manager Gruber of the Great Northern, estimates that the damage to that road by the bursting of the Hauser lake dam was about \$15,000.

Los Angeles will take about 3300 men of the battleship fleet on a tour of the city. Then they will have a barbecue luncheon and see the wild west show.

Widespread rains are causing great joy to California farmers.

It is reported that threats have been made on the life of Abe Ruef.

Sudden warm weather is causing great damage in Alaska from floods.

Four million oysters were destroyed by striking fishermen at Cancale, France.

A bunco man who has been robbing women has been arrested in Oakland.

Four masked robbers held up a fashionable club at Hot Springs, Ark., and got away with \$10,000.

All the regular army troops in the vicinity of Seattle will participate in the welcome of battleships at that port.

Mrs. Beulah Hawkins of Los Angeles, has now been asleep 78 days, and there is apparently no change in her condition.

Eight years ago a prominent citizen of one of the biggest cities, and suburbs died leaving no money from everywhere, no relatives so country.

Senator Piles, Sullivan, went to Graves were examined, and find of Sullivan were to give Senator Piles' law firm as well as the kind in this state.

Seattle, April 28.—Roar Admin improve. Today nine miles from Springs. He was Evans, Dr. McD, burgh, Jr., gene, the Southern Pac C. R. Train, Lieut Marsh, daughter Paso Robles today at Santa Bar

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