

"How Did She Burn Her Face"

That Was What People Asked About Our Daughter

Dreadful Itching, Burning Eruptions Cured

Smooth, Soft, White Skin Now.

"C. I. Hood & Co., Lowell, Mass."

"Gentlemen: Our little daughter is now four years old. When she was about three months old, she had eruptions on her face which were very disagreeable, and itched so much, especially at night, that it made her trouble a great deal worse. I was obliged to keep her hands tied at night and it was necessary to watch her during the day. She would scratch herself whenever she had the chance, until her clothes would be covered with blood. We had a great many doctors to see her, but they did not help her in the least. It was a terrible task to care for her. When we took her away from home, people would ask, "How did that child burn her face?" She was completely covered with scabs for a long time. She suffered everything. At last we concluded to try Hood's Sarsaparilla, because I had read that it was in it, and after awhile we could see that she was getting better. People said she would certainly be left with scars on her face, but she was not. It is now a year since she was cured by Hood's Sarsaparilla, and her face is as

Smooth and Covered with Blood.

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as that of any child. I believe Hood's Sarsaparilla to be the best family medicine that can be obtained. I take it myself for headache and that tired feeling, and I have found nothing to equal it. One peculiarity about Hood's Sarsaparilla is that it is pleasant to take and it is no trouble to induce children to take it. The doctors pronounced my little girl's disease to be eczema, or salt rheum." Mrs. WILBUR WELLS, Warren, Connecticut.

N. B. Do not be induced to buy any substitute. Be sure to get

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A WOMAN OF FORTUNE

By CHRISTIAN REID. Author of "Armine," "Philip's Restitution," "The Child of Mary," "Heart of Steel," "The Land of the Sun," etc., etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXIII

"LET ME HELP YOU."

From the hill "which saw St. Peter die" to the grand Basilica where his body lies is not a great distance, and the road lies through one of the most interesting quarters of Rome. Every foot of the way is filled with memories of the warlike clash and splendid tumult of ages when men did and dared great deeds. Every tower and ruined wall is written over and over again with records of history stretching back through centuries. Great figures seem to step forth on every side; pagan philosopher and Christian saint, soldiers of ancient Rome and martyrs of Christ, heathen emperors and mediæval kings, jostle one another, as it were; there is not a page of human history which does not touch, in one form or another, this great centre of human existence. And it is like a burst of exultant music when from the narrow, winding, deep-colored streets one enters the noble piazza of St. Peter's, with its encircling colonnades, its obelisk and springing fountains. All the varied pageant of ages seems to lead to this space to kneel at the feet of Christ's Vicar.

Cecil's heart bounded with the thought that she had no longer the sense of alienation with which she first entered here. She had felt then that in all this greatness she had no part—she was a stranger and an outsider, cut off from the inheritance of all the past, which stretched back in unbroken continuity to the hour when the Fisherman of Galilee entered the city of the Casars. Everything surrounding her, every sentiment, every tradition, every embodied idea, appealed so irresistibly to her love of greatness, that she felt this alienation as only a few souls feel it—a few who cannot be fed on the narrow and colorless traditions of Protestantism, and who, standing amid the mighty monuments of Rome, realize how great an inheritance has been wrested from them.

"I cannot tell you," she said to her companions, as they crossed the portico, "how painfully I felt myself an alien when I entered here first. It was a consciousness which overwhelmed me so that I could hardly even admit. Everything seemed saying to me, 'In all this you have no share.' I could not console myself with any fiction of 'a common Christianity,' for I see here what I had felt before—that Christianity is Roman or it is nothing. And I was among the number of those who stood apart from it, and had no right in this ancient sanctuary save as a stranger and sightseer, admitted by courtesy within its walls."

"But now you come as a child to her rightful inheritance," said Kathleen, holding out her hand; and while Tyronnel lifted the heavy leather curtain, she drew Cecil within the marvelous interior, where majesty of space and harmony of proportion, such as man never planned before, a splendor of decoration, passing all description. As they slowly walked up the vast nave toward the circle of starlike lamps which mark the tomb of the Apostles Tyronnel said softly, as if thinking aloud:

"This shall come to pass— From your dim sea of marble and of brass The knees once more shall pale, sceptre and crown On that dim sea of marble and of brass Showering, as angels on the sea of glass, Their amarantine wreaths."

"Do you know our Irish poet, Aubrey de Vere?" he asked, in answer to Cecil's inquiring glance. "He has written a beautiful set of sonnets which he calls 'Urbs Roma,' and from which those lines are taken. There is hardly a spot in Rome where some thought of his is not recalled."

"I know many of his poems," Cecil answered, "and I must find the sonnets of which you speak. Kathleen has repeated several for me. I do not wonder that this 'dim sea of marble' should suggest to him that which we dream of as stretching before the throne of God. I can never think of anything else when I see it spreading away before me."

It is indeed a vista of unsurpassed beauty which this great nave of St. Peter's offers—the vast expanse of polished marble underfoot, the richly

gilded roof above, the splendid sculptured arches opening on each side glimpses into the chapels which line the aisles, the noble space that marks the soaring dome, under which stands the canopied high altar, and the glory of golden light which at the end of the tribune pours above the chair of St. Peter—all unite to form a picture of unapproachable majesty and magnificence.

But it was when Cecil knelt at the marble balustrade which guards the opening before the great confessional that she was conscious of an emotion far beyond the power of words to express. Ardent faith and passionate gratitude almost overwhelmed her as she made her earnest supplication that God would enable her to show by living deeds her sense of what He had done for her.

When they left the church Tyronnel was struck by the expression of her face. There was a radiance on it and a light in her eyes as of one who had seen a vision. As they stood on the steps of the portico while their carriage drove up, she looked toward the Vatican and said to Kathleen: "The hands are the hands of Leo, but the voice is the voice of Peter, and it bade me go and work for man in token of gratitude for God. So I think I may safely believe that the way will be opened for me."

"I am sure of that," was the earnest answer. It was the first time that Cecil had spoken, save in general terms, of anything that had been said in the last audience which the Holy Father had granted her—a private audience, given at the special request of the Abbé Ravoux, who knew Rome well, and knew just what channels to employ to gain whatever end he had in view.

It was in a mood of positive exaltation that Miss Lorimer went home that day. Such moods come probably now and then to all of us, but they come most of all to the impressionable and enthusiastic—especially to those who have dreamed high dreams and before whom seems to open a vista of possibility for their fulfilment. At such times we neither see nor heed all the difficulties that must encompass such fulfilment, as they encompass everything earthly. Our gaze is on the sunlit heights, and we do not mark the toilsome, cloud-wrapped way that lies between us and the point we vainly would reach. To Cecil, who had known little of disappointment, it seemed as if a providential way had opened by which she might accomplish all the good she longed to do; she had only to pour the surplus wealth that burdened her into Tyronnel's hands to see the fulfilment of plans so beneficent and wonderful as they realized her own ideals. She was so absorbed in this thought that it did not occur to her to consider how it would be possible for Tyronnel to accept and use her wealth, even though it were for ends wholly impersonal.

There could be no doubt that Cecil was open to the charge so often brought against enthusiasts—her head was sometimes in the clouds.

Several days passed before she had an opportunity to speak to Tyronnel on the subject burning at her heart. But at last they were alone after noon in the grounds of the Villa Albani; the rest of their party were still lingering within the Villa, but they had passed into the garden. It is impossible to imagine anything more beautiful than this spot, and beguiled by the spell of its classic grace and loveliness, Cecil had almost forgotten her purpose until Tyronnel suggested, after they had been walking for some time, that they should rest a while in this charming nook, where a fountain filled the silence with its musical murmur, and the white shapes of statues gleamed against the dark green of cypress and ilex. Cecil placed herself on a seat, and then it suddenly occurred to her that here was her opportunity. She looked up at Tyronnel, who stood beside her, and with characteristic frankness plunged at once into the subject so near her heart.

"Mr. Tyronnel," she said, a slight tension of voice alone betraying her nervousness, "do you remember what you said to me about your difficulties in Ireland the other day at San Pietro in Montorio?"

"I remember," answered Tyronnel, smiling, "that I talked at length and very egotistically. You were good enough to encourage me in egotism by your interest. I hope you have not repented of it."

"No," she replied, gravely. "I was very much interested in all that you told me, and especially in your plans for improving the lives of the people. They seemed to me very wise plans—such as are certain to succeed and do good, because they would enable people to help themselves."

"I am glad you think so well of them," he said. "Nothing is certain until it has been tested; but I believe that they would succeed—if they could be tried. But," he added, "that is an insurmountable 'if.'"

"It need not be insurmountable," she said quickly, "if you will let others help you. If some one who is very rich—richer than anybody need be—should offer you the means for this good work, would you refuse it?"

"Well, yes," answered Tyronnel, after a moment's surprised pause; "I should have no alternative but to refuse, because I could have no certainty that the money would not be thrown away. I would risk my own if I had it, but I could not risk that of some one else."

"Not even if some one else were more than willing for it to be risked—as willing as you could be?"

"Not even then, for the responsibility would be mine. And the whole world will tell you that philanthropic schemes are of all schemes the least likely to make a profitable return. But why do you ask? Do you know of any one anxious to play at philanthropy?"

"No," she answered, and something in her tone showed that she was a little wounded, "I do not know of any one anxious to play at philanthropy; but I know some one who is very anxious, more anxious than I can tell you, to do some good—some real, lasting good—in the world with a superfluity of money which happens to be hers."

"Miss Lorimer!" The next moment he had seated himself beside her. "Forgive me if I have misunderstood you," he said earnestly. "I see now that you are speaking of yourself. How can I thank you for such a generous thought! It is like you—to wish to put out your hand and help wherever you know that suffering exists. I am grateful for yourself and for my poor people, but you must see that it is impossible for me to take what you so generously offer."

"Why is it impossible?" she asked, turning on him a glance of eloquent appeal. "You do not know how long I have been desiring and seeking a way to spend my wealth in doing some real, practical good. And now that I have found the way, why should you deny me the happiness of doing it? I can never find a better way—that I am sure, and you must be sure too. Let me help you, then. Let me put my useless money into those things of which you spoke—cultivated lands and good houses, and industries to give the people employment. That is just the opportunity I have dreamed of. You will not surely say I can not—deny me the opportunity to realize this dream!"

"How did Tyronnel restrain himself from taking the hands she unconsciously clasped in her appeal and lifting them up to his lips? He hardly knew. His heart leaped, his head seemed for an instant whirling as she leaned toward him saying, 'Let me help you!' All the love he had never before acknowledged suddenly asserted itself with a force that almost deprived him of self control. He did not know afterward how he resisted the temptation which assailed him so strongly—the temptation to speak, to cry out passionately, 'I love you—I love you!' Ah, if only he might pray her to share his labors, to help him indeed! But the money of which she spoke stood like a barrier between them, and the thought of his own poverty nerved him to silence. The conviction flashed upon him like a scorching flame that if he had ever meant to ask her to share his life he had waited too long—it was too late to speak after she had told him of her superfluity of wealth, and he had told her how sorely he needed money. Thoughts like these—thoughts on which a whole life hinge—can pass quickly. There was not a very long pause before he answered Cecil's last words with a gravity which chilled her.

"My dear Miss Lorimer, you forget that what you are asking me to do is to allow you to spend your money on my estate for the benefit of my tenants. You must see, if you will pause a moment and think, that such a thing is impossible in the world as it is at present constituted. Your generous ardor leads you to forget this, but I am forced to remember it. For your sake, as well as for the sake of my people, I wish that it were possible, but it is not. In the sharpness of her disappointment tears welled into her eyes, and startled herself as well as Tyronnel by suddenly dropping in a crystal shower. He uttered a hasty exclamation which she did not catch, for she was making an effort to speak composedly.

"I did not mean to be so childish," she said, lifting her handkerchief to her eyes. "But when one hopes a great deal it is hard to bear disappointment. I had so long been looking for such an opportunity, and when I found it I did not think of being denied. It seems so simple a thing and so natural a thing to spend what one has in doing good, that I have never considered what the world would think or say in such a case. Therefore I have made, it seems, a great mistake. You must pardon me. I have troubled you and I don't do good."

"I am sorry," she said, "that I have made anything hard to you. It was not what I meant; but I have been told that I am visionary, and perhaps it is true. Probably this is something I should not have thought of. Let us try to forget it. And now Mrs. Savern will be wondering where I am. Shall we find the others?"

It was with a sense of a horrible necessity that he turned with her down the path which led to the Villa. He knew that she felt herself misunderstood, that she seemed cold and unsympathetic; he longed miserably to express a part at least of all that was in his heart, but how could he express

himself? He felt like a man under a spell of malign enchantment as he walked by her side down the long, box-bordered avenue, and found no words which his lips dared utter.

Like all impulsive people, Cecil Lorimer had many a time been compelled to regret having spoken or acted too hastily; but never before had she suffered from this cause so acutely as she did now, when realizing what a mistake she had committed in making an offer of pecuniary assistance to Tyronnel. That power of self-control and instinctive repression of all outward signs of emotion, which the conventional life of the world teaches so effectually, enabled her to resume her usual manner on rejoining the party in the Villa. She simply ignored the aching, stinging sense of disappointment and humiliation by which she had been at first overwhelmed, and which had betrayed her into that uncharacteristic burst of tears, as a brave spirit often ignores physical pain and infirmity when occasion requires.

Not only to the brilliant company gathered that evening in Mrs. Savern's salon, but to Tyronnel as well, did she seem quite her ordinary self. But nature—particularly so high-strung a nature as hers—though it may, under the constraint of a resolute will, manifest wonderful pluck and endurance in an emergency, must inevitably give way after a time; and when she had at last gained the solitude of her chamber that night, and had dismissed her maid, all the restraint she had imposed on herself vanished—dropping away from her like a mask that she had thrown aside. Pale and agitated, she walked up and down the floor with hasty steps and clasped hands, self-reproachful, mortified, and miserable.

"How could I have been so stupid, so senseless, as to do such a thing!" she exclaimed to herself in a paroxysm of unavailing regret. "How could I have imagined for a moment that he would accept from a stranger—one on whom he had no claim, and who had no claim on him—such an obligation! I see now that, as he said, it is impossible. Oh, what must he think of me—that I wished—"

She flung herself into a deep chair that stood in a recess beside a window, and bowed her burning face into her hands, a few tears trickling through the slender fingers.

"And yet it seemed to me—it does seem to me—reasonable, natural, that if my useless abundance I should endeavor to help those who need help so sorely," she murmured. "He ought to have known—he ought to have understood! It is ungenerous of him—it is unjust! He is depriving these people who are in such dire straits of poverty of the comfort and relief which a word of his would bring them. I will speak to him again; I will ask him if he thinks he has a right to do this. I will at least make him understand!"—she lifted her head haughtily—"that I was thinking only of the poor people, not of—him."

But she did not speak again on the subject; for the more she thought of her terrible blunder, the more distressed and embarrassed was she; and, despite her utmost efforts to avoid any change of manner, this embarrassment showed itself, when she met Tyronnel on the following day, in a certain reserve and coldness which cut him to the heart. He could not see that he had given her any cause for resentment, or that he could have acted differently; yet he was miserable and self-reproachful—ready to blame himself rather than her for a misapprehension that had been caused by no fault on his part; longing to ask in how he had offended her and to deprecate her displeasure, but having neither courage nor opportunity for such explanation. In truth if opportunity had been afforded him—and it was not—what could he have said? He knew that if he spoke at all the expression of his love would force itself from his lips; and he said to himself that to speak of love now would simply be tantamount to an acknowledgment that he had held back so long as he did not know of her wealth, and came forward as soon as he was assured of it.

For several days he debated with himself what he should, or rather what he could, do, and finally decided to go back to Ireland. It was useless to remain in Rome waiting for the impossible—a return of the frank, friendly association between Cecil and himself which had been such a happiness to him. There was more pain than pleasure in meeting her now, as he felt in every word, every tone, a change so subtle as to be indescribable in words, yet so decided as to admit of no doubt as to its existence. That she strove to conceal this change, especially in the presence of others, was evident; but equally apparent was the fact that she did not succeed in doing so; that each one of their little circle perceived and wondered at it—each probably finding or fancying a different solution of the mystery. That the effect on himself was also noticed he could not doubt.

It would have been impossible not to notice it; for though his manner did not alter, his appearance did. He grew thin and pale; his face when at rest wearing the same expression by which Cecil had been both struck and touched when she saw that face first so many months before. And to read the suffering thus legibly marked on it was hard to her—very hard. Never yet had her woman's pride permitted her to acknowledge in words, even in the deepest recesses of her own

thoughts, that she loved this man who had never expressed love for her; but she did admit to herself that she pitied him with that passion of pain and admiration blended together which is seldom excited save by a contemplation of undeserved suffering.

It is not to be supposed that Kathleen Tyronnel, with her quick sympathy and keen observation, was long in divining the cloud that had risen between the two people whom she fully believed to be formed for each other. She had carefully refrained from so much as hinting to her brother the conjecture of the Abbé and herself concerning Cecil's fortune, knowing well that the very suspicion of such a thing would be a lion in the way of his seeking to win Cecil's heart. She had a hundred times felicitated herself on the opportune illness which brought them again together, and rejoiced with exceeding great joy as day by day she beheld the interest with which they had been mutually inspired from their first meeting deepening into a life-long attachment. And to see all her expectations suddenly fade away was the sharpest disappointment and pain she had ever known.

She did not speak to either of them on the subject, a natural delicacy restraining her from manifesting consciousness so far as Cecil was concerned; while an instinctive comprehension that it would be like touching a bare nerve of his heart to question her brother prevented her saying a word to him. Into the ear of her good friend the Abbé, however, she poured out freely her apprehensions and lamentations.

"There is certainly something the matter between them," she said, interlacing her fingers, and looking wistfully into the kind eyes bent upon her. "What can it be? Do you think she can have refused him?"

"I doubt if it is that," the Abbé answered. "Something is the matter—yes. But do not be in too great haste to despond. It may be merely some little misunderstanding—"

He paused and smiled.

"A lover's quarrel, you mean?"

"Well, yes. Such an occurrence would not be unprecedented."

She shook her head decidedly.

"Neither of them is the sort of person for that," she said. "You know Gerald—that he is not; nor, I assure you, is Miss Lorimer. It is so strange!"

She went on sadly. "I cannot imagine the meaning of it, for even if, as I suspected at first, he has offered himself and been rejected, that surely would not affect her so much. From little things I have heard Miss Marriott say, she must be too much accustomed to admiration to take the disappointment of her rejected lovers much to heart. And she does take this to heart."

"For that reason I think we may hope that the estrangement is only temporary," said the Abbé. "Is her manner to yourself changed at all?"

"No; she is as cordial to me as ever, only I see less of her. She always has some excuse now for making her visits very short, and she never comes alone. She and Miss Marriott were here half an hour ago, but they stayed only a few minutes, said they were engaged to dine with some friends of theirs who have lately arrived in Rome, and could not see us again this evening."

"That was a reasonable excuse," the Abbé resumed after a momentary pause. "It breaks my heart to look at Gerald—to see how he is suffering! And I was so certain that a brighter life was opening for him. It was not that I thought so much of Miss Lorimer's money—I am sure she is very wealthy though she never told me so. I thought of it a little, I must confess; for money would make such a difference in his life. But it was herself. She has such a fine nature—so like Gerald's own! And he loves her passionately! I can see that. It breaks my heart!"

The Abbé's own heart was very sad for her as he tried to say some words of encouragement and consolation, at which she shook her head hopelessly.

"I am so afraid," she said, "that he will go away and lose the opportunity of ever making up the difficulty, whatever it may be. Every day I expect him to say that he is going."

Her fears were prophetic