

Hilda's voice alone was silent in his praise. It was not that she did not appreciate the nobleness of soul which had led him to risk his own life for others, but the peculiar circumstances of the affair concerned her so deeply, the recognition she had made preyed so heavily upon her mind, that she found it impossible to take any part in the conversation, or express, as others did, her admiration of the Baronet's noble conduct.

Hilda did not feel glad that he had saved the life of Dudley. She could not conceal from herself the disagreeable truth that she would have been infinitely better pleased if the whelming waves had closed over him, and the tie that united them had been snapped then and forever!

She knew it was very wicked and selfish to feel thus; she struggled against such feelings, but still the bitter regret would linger, although it was mingled with self-reproach. Silent and abstracted she remained during dinner, and when the ladies left the dining-room she withdrew to her own apartment, excusing herself to Lady Milicent on the plea of indisposition.

The wish to see the man she supposed was Dudley had taken possession of her mind. The hope that she might have been mistaken urged her to take this step. She would know the worst at once. Anything was preferable to suspense. The apartment Eveleen occupied was in a remote wing of the house. She preferred it from early associations, for it was there the nursery was situated, where she had nursed Colonel Godfrey's children, and where her own happiest days were spent.

CHAPTER XVIII. THE CASTONELLS.

Is a plain furnished sitting-room situated in an unfashionable street in Montreal, a gentle-looking lady sat sewing by the clear light of a coal-oil lamp placed on a work-table beside her. She was comparatively young, yet there were silver threads in the brown hair and lines of care about the mouth which, with the dark shadow under the sad, sweet eyes, showed but too plainly that the burden of life had pressed too heavily upon her. The reader will hardly recognize in that faded, care-worn woman the rich Edith Harrington. The hopes of happiness she had indulged at the time of her marriage with the man she loved were never realized. Mr Castonell's disappointment in not receiving the fortune he longed to possess had been the means of embittering her life. She too soon learned the humiliating truth that it was her money not herself he had coveted. How the idol became shattered, as the veil was torn aside, and she saw the worldliness, the hypocrisy of the man she had so greatly admired! This bitter revelation did not come gradually—it flashed upon her at once, some time after her marriage, when Mr. Castonell's hopes of a reconciliation with Mr. Harrington were destroyed, and in the bitterness of passionate regret he bewailed his union with a portionless wife. The cruel words escaped the disappointed man in his passion, and he regretted them the next minute, but too late! Such words stamp themselves on the memory and are never forgotten. Like a crushing blow they fell upon the miserable wife, striking her down into the depths of humiliation, and from that hour the sunshine of her wedded life was clouded—the light of happiness was never seen in her young face again. For some years after their marriage Mr. and Mrs. Castonell had resided in Toronto, but they had lately taken up their residence in Montreal, Mr. Castonell having been appointed incumbent of St. Mark's Church in that city.

Mrs. Castonell was not the only occupant of the room where we have again brought her before the reader. A lovely girl of fourteen—her only child—was reclining in an easy-chair on the opposite side of the work-table, apparently busy with a book, but often laying it down as if to indulge in thought.

"You do not seem inclined to study to-night, Maud; what is it that diverts your attention?" asked her mother, with some reproof in her gentle tones.

"I cannot help thinking of that Mrs. Grant Berkeley who was at our church last Sunday. She is so handsome and so rich, and was so fashionably dressed, that every one else looked mean beside her. I wonder why she comes to St. Mark's. I think the Cathedral would suit such a fashionable lady better. Don't you think so, mamma?"

"You forget, Maud, that your papa is a very eloquent preacher, perhaps the best in the city," and Mrs. Castonell sighed, as she remembered how she had herself been once deceived by his beautiful sermons.

"Then you think it is to hear him preach she comes to St. Mark's? I really think it is," Maud continued, "for she seemed to admire him exceedingly. She never took her eyes

off him during the sermon, and she did look so beautiful, mamma, leaning her cheek on her white jewelled hand, I could do nothing but look at her."

Mrs. Castonell's curiosity was awakened. "Is she then so very beautiful, Maud?"

"Just like a picture! with dark, bright eyes and rich colour! Papa thinks so too; he says he never saw any lady so handsome but one, whom he knew years ago, and Mrs. Grant Berkeley reminds him of her."

"Did he say so, Maud? He did not mention this lovely lady to me," Mrs. Castonell added, thoughtfully. "I feel some curiosity to see her. She will probably come to St. Mark's again."

"I should think she would! Why, mamma, she has taken a pew there already. The sexton told me so to-day. The girls at school were talking about it. Eva Smith said papa had converted her."

"And she has heard him preach only once!" said Mrs. Castonell, smiling.

"Oh, she heard him two or three times at the Cathedral lately. Eva Smith said her mamma did not admire Mrs. Grant Berkeley—that she was a great coquette."

"Maud!" said Mrs. Castonell, reprovingly; "this is evil-speaking."

"Only repeating what I heard, mamma. Eva said a great many things about her, but I know you would not listen if I were to repeat them, you are so very good, never listening to a word of gossip. Now, papa does, when he is in good humour; he listens to all the news I tell him."

"Is Mrs. Grant Berkeley's husband living? Does she come to St. Mark's alone?" asked Mrs. Castonell, whose curiosity was now fully aroused by this beautiful stranger, who had been attracted to St. Mark's Church by her husband's popular preaching.

"Mr. Grant Berkeley is living, but he does not attend our church. I believe he seldom goes to any. Eva Smith says he prefers the billiard-room to the Cathedral. There was a young fellow with her, though, last Sunday, who Dora Harris says is her son. His name is Frank Mordaunt."

"Did you say his name is Mordaunt? I thought you called the lady Berkeley."

"And so I did; her husband is the eldest son of the rich merchant, Mr. Berkeley. The family are among the most fashionable people in Montreal. But Mrs. Grant was married before to a Mr. Mordaunt."

To be continued.



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