

TRIAL FOR LIFE

To her you have been false; but to her I will be so true that I will spurn the traitor heart you take from her to offer to me.

"She is the Baroness Eberidge of Swinburne, a peeress of the realm, a noble lady. Yet she has a meeker heart than I, the cottage girl, possess. I cannot so easily forgive. We waste time. Let me pass."

CHAPTER VIII. The father and son met at dinner. Mrs. Montgomery was at the head of the table. The good lady was full of anxious inquiries as to the condition of that dying friend to whom Lady Eberidge had been so inopportunist summoned.

Colonel Hastings took but little notice of Mrs. Montgomery's remarks. He was absorbed in much more weighty matters, and was anxious to be alone with his son. As soon as the cloth was removed, and the wine set upon the table, she retired, leaving the two gentlemen alone.

"Now, then," exclaimed Colonel Hastings, turning toward his son, "here is a dilemma. What do you think of this?" "Nay, I should not think of it myself, my dear sir. You, I understand, have been at the bedside of this woman, Elmer, and have taken her dying deposition. What do you think of it?"

Before answering, Colonel Hastings arose and went to each door to be sure that no one was hearing. Then he returned to his seat, stooped close to the ear of his son, and whispered: "I think that the little village maiden, Rose Elmer, is the true Baroness Eberidge of Swinburne. I think that the evidence leaves no doubt upon the question; and, if that evidence should come before the House of Lords, she would be immediately declared as such."

"Well?" "But that evidence shall never come before the tribunal. I was the magistrate who took that dying woman's deposition. The only other witness is in my pay, and at my mercy, and I know how to keep him subservient to one who can reward him with gold, or punish him with a jail; and he will be silent until I give him leave to speak. So make up your quarrel with Laura, and all evidence that might shake her in her positions shall be suppressed."

"And suppose she refuses to make it up?" "Then hold this evidence over her head as a rod of iron. Let her understand that, unless she consents to become your wife, you will bring forward this evidence of another's claim, and hurl her down from her high position. Let her find that her only safety is in becoming your wife."

"But now," suggested his son, "suppose myself, decline to make up the quarrel?" "You? Fool! Nonsense! I don't understand you!" hastily exclaimed the colonel.

"Well, then, I will explain. To begin, you have imagined that you really loved this woman?" asked Mr. Hastings, with a sneer. "Nay, excuse me! I always gave you credit for judgment to appreciate Lady Eberidge. Whether you really loved Laura or not, I cannot tell," laughed the father.

"You were quite right. I always appreciated Lady Eberidge of Swinburne. As my father, you ordered me to appreciate her as a good son I obeyed you. At your command, I proposed for her hand, and was accepted. But it was only Lady Eberidge that I valued. If you suppose that I cared for Laura, you are mistaken. If we had married, we should have led a wretched life. No; I detested Laura, but I valued the Baroness Eberidge of Swinburne."

"Well to what does all this tend?" asked the colonel, impatiently. "Why, to the solution of a problem that has plagued my heart for the last twelve months."

"In faith, I do not understand you at all!" exclaimed the old man, almost losing his forbearance.

"Then I will explain. I hated Laura, but valued the Baroness Eberidge of Swinburne. I still hate Laura, and still value the Baroness Eberidge of Swinburne, who, it seems, is not Laura, but Rose Elmer, the poor maiden, whom I have loved for more than twelve months."

thought me mad and raving. I was not delirious then, dear Rose, nor am I now, when I address you as Rosamond, Baroness Eberidge of Swinburne," said Mrs. Elmer, solemnly.

"Oh, mother, mother, pray do not ramble so dreadfully," exclaimed Rose, blushing scarlet; and then, turning to her visitor, and saying: "I am humbled to the earth, dear lady, to think that my poor mother will ramble so wildly! Please forgive her; she does not know what she is saying; her poor head is so bad."

"She knows what she is saying, Rose," gravely replied the lady.

"Oh, indeed, she does not! She is rambling, wandering in her mind. She never would offend your ladyship if she were in her right mind, or knew what she is saying. Pray do not be angry with her," pleaded Rose, with tears in her eyes.

"I am not angry with her; nor do you understand either me or her. She knows what she says, and I know that she speaks the truth," replied Laura, gravely.

"I—I am afraid that I am very stupid; either I do not hear rightly, or do not understand your ladyship," said Rose, in her perplexity.

"Then I will speak more plainly. When my mother, your nurse, Mrs. Elmer, here present, treats you as Rosamond, Baroness Eberidge of Swinburne, she speaks the sober truth, for such you are," replied Laura, slowly, and emphatically, fixing her eyes upon the perplexed face of her hearer.

"I wonder which of us three is crazy," said Rose, looking from one to another.

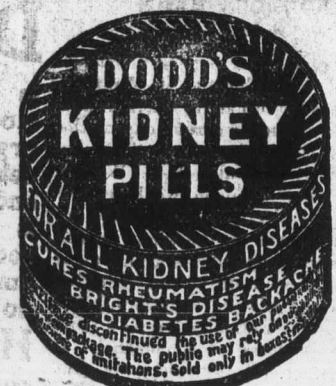
"None of us, dear Rose, though what I have just divulged to you is enough to stagger your faith in our sanity. You are Baroness Eberidge, and, as such, you will, in a few weeks, be recognized by the whole world. Can you not receive this fact?"

"Lady Eberidge, if I am not quite mad—if I am in any right senses—if I know my own identity—I am Rose-Elmer, the child of the village laundress; and you are the late Baroness Eberidge of Swinburne," said Rose, in amazement.

"No, Rose; I am only Laura Elmer, the daughter of Magdalene Elmer, the laundress."

Rose gazed in hopeless consternation upon the speaker.

"At last the sick woman spoke. 'I see the crime must be confessed anew. Rose, you were the only child of the late baron, who left you in my charge, from the time you were but a few days old, until you were six months old. I had an infant girl of the same age. While the baron was gone, the demon tempted me to change you in your cradles; and when, at the end of six months, the baron returned, I hid you in my own child, from his sight, and gave him my child, whom he brought up and educated in the belief that she was his own. Remorse for this act pursued me through life. Remorse for this act compelled me to make this deathbed disclosure.'"



"Mother, mother!" interrupted Rose—"let me still call you mother—I will never leave you while you live."

"She is right," said Laura Elmer. "We must not leave you."

"Then, when will do as you promise?" inquired Mrs. Elmer.

"We will," replied her daughter, gravely.

The suffering woman, quieted by these assurances, dropped into a deep sleep that lasted several hours.

The physician that Laura had employed to attend her mother arrived in the course of the morning and expressed his opinion that her awakening would probably be decisive for her life.

And so it proved. Magdalene Elmer awoke only once again to ask forgiveness of heaven and of earth, to bless her wronged child and foster-child, and then sank into her last sleep of death.

Laura mourned for the parent found only to be lost, and Rose wept bitterly for one who had always seemed a most tender mother to her.

Of Magdalene Elmer it might be said, her sins were buried with her—her repentance and her affection survived her in the memories of Rose and Laura.

Laura retained her self-command and assumed the direction of affairs.

After the funeral, Laura placed Rose in a close carriage and conducted her to Swinburne castle.

CHAPTER IX. Rumors of the change of ownership had reached the castle. And as the carriage drew up before the central hall door, the head servants arrayed themselves in the hall to welcome back their beloved lady. First on the right and left, stood the steward and the house-keeper. They bowed and curtsied low as Laura led Rose through the hall and up the broad staircase to a pleasant apartment that had been the late Lady Eberidge's morning room.

"Take off your bonnet and mantle here, dear Rose; we will have some luncheon and then rest. To-morrow you must be presented to the household as the baroness."

"Oh, no; dear lady! not yet. I am frightened at this great place, and all those military looking attendants. Do not tell them yet, and do not ever leave me!" exclaimed the terrified maiden.

She was far from rejoicing at her good fortune. The death of her foster-mother, the treachery of her trusted lover had nearly broken her heart, and now this vast wealth suddenly fallen to her had crushed her spirit like a great calamity.

"Do not leave me, Lady Eberidge. Oh, never leave me in this vast wilderness of a castle alone. I shall go mad!" she wildly exclaimed.

"Sweet Rose, you will not be alone. Mrs. Montgomery is a good woman; she is your near relative as she has always been supposed to be mine and you will find her very kind and very competent to become your chambermaid. I will have her quickly gathered around you after your position has been confirmed by the house of peers, as it must be in a few months," said Laura, with her usual calm, sweet seriousness.

"Oh, Lady Eberidge! I care nothing for all these things!" said Rose, very sadly.

"Do not call me by a title to which I have no right, my dear; call me Laura or Miss Elmer, which you please. And now let me tell you that you should care for these things, Rose. You should value the gifts of Providence, in gratitude to the Giver, and you should consider how much good you may do with this power."

"Ah! but if you knew—if you knew how much I have suffered!"

touched my heart, still less pierced it as this other blow has. No, Rose, it is this—my marriage is broken off, it is—"Your marriage broken off. Oh, lady, how was that?" said Rose, remembering that she had heard the same fact from Albert Hastings—yet wishing to know more.

"It was in consequence of my change of fortune."

"Oh, the traitor. Oh, the base traitor!" exclaimed Rose.

"Hush, my dear. I cannot hear the man whom I once loved spoken of in this manner," said Laura, with gentle dignity.

"Ah, but, then you do not know all his treachery yet, or how much right I have to call him a traitor. And now since I hear from your own lips that the marriage is broken off, and the reason for it I will tell you something which you ought to hear, that you may dismiss forever from your heart the memory of such a traitor."

Laura looked up in amazement. Rose paused a moment to recover her self-control, and then commenced and related the history of her acquaintance with Albert Hastings from the time he presented himself under the name of Level, to the time that she discovered him to be the betrothed husband of Lady Eberidge.

"And that was the cause of your fainting in the library that day?" said Rose.

"It was, lady; I am ashamed to acknowledge the weakness. I never again will faint, or even weep, for that traitor!" exclaimed Rose, with flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes.

After an early tea, Laura and Rose, both greatly needing rest, retired to their respective chambers.

Rose was shown up to hers by a pretty, neatly-attired housemaid, who informed her that she had been appointed the young lady's personal attendant.

"My name is Anne, miss; and please can I do anything for you?" inquired the girl, as she put the night lamp upon the dressing table.

"No, Anne, thank you; you may go," replied the cottage girl, to whom the attendance of a maid was more embarrassing than useful.

The next morning Laura Elmer summoned her chambermaid, Mrs. Montgomery, to the library, presented Rose to the ancient gentleman, and explained to her the strange discovery that had reversed the places of the baroness and the cottage girl. It was a long time before Mrs. Montgomery could be made to understand that Mrs. Elmer was really the Baroness Eberidge of Swinburne, and that she whom the old lady had hitherto been assured was such was only the daughter of the village laundress.

And when at last this truth was forced upon her mind, it nearly turned her brain, but she could not comprehend why such a great change of ownership involving such a vast estate, should be effected without the help of many lawyers, and a great lawsuit. And she could not approve of Laura anticipating the majestic slowness of the law by doing prompt and simple justice.

"Do not be alarmed, Mrs. Montgomery; you shall have a suit all in good time; the affair will come before the house of peers; they will have to confirm Rose in her rights; but, in the meantime, as they are likely to be most nobly tedious, I will refer to you in immediate possession, that she may enjoy her fortune," said the high-souled Laura.

"Hem! well, I am glad the peers will investigate this strange affair. She does look like the Eberidges; that is certain; but she is an Eberidge with the bar sinister across the arms—a sort of Fitz-Eberidge!" sneered the old lady.

"Do I not tell you that she is not? She is the only child of the late baron, by his lawful wife, the late Lucy Theobald," said Laura, a little impatiently, as she commenced and recapitulated all the evidence of Rose's birth and lineage.

"Well, well, those that live longest will see most," quoth the clergyman's widow; and, having uttered this unanswerable adage, she solaced herself with a pinch of snuff.

Lesson to the Vulgar Herd. Those vulgar persons who go to the theatres on street cars have been properly rebuked by a lady who complains of their unseemly haste in quitting their seats toward the end of the last act in order to rush to the cars. The nice people, who come in carriages, according to this superior lady, can be more leisurely in filing out. We are glad to see these hasty ones rebuked, but we tremble for the theatres lest in their humiliation they refrain from coming to the shows hereafter. As they comprise about 99 per cent. of the audiences it would be rather hard on the theatre, though, of course, the people remaining—the "select"—as small.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Makes a Vivid Comparison. (Athens, Kan., Globe.) Heavy snows are so rare in Kansas that athletes lead almost as secluded an existence as a married man's dress suit.

DISEASE MADE BONES SNAP LIKE GLASS

Frank L. Wellington has died at his home in Trinity avenue, New York, the victim of a disease which caused his bones to snap like glass. One day while holding a strap in a street car his arm snapped off. A short time later a leg bone snapped. According to his physician this terrible condition was brought about by taking medicine which contained a certain mineral poison.

Again and again has it been demonstrated that mineral medicines are harmful. It is because Bileans, while so effective for all liver and digestive ailments, yet contain no trace of any mineral but are on the contrary, purely herbal, that they have won the praise of medical men, trained nurses and scientists all the world over.

Bileans differ from nearly every other liver medicine in containing no mercury and from nearly every other stomach medicine in being free from bismuth. They are also free from alcohol. They are compounded from the finest known medicinal herbs and salts, and are thus the best family medicine that can be obtained. They operate gently on the bowels, cure constipation and piles. They correct acidity of the stomach, stimulate the digestion and tone up the liver, and correct the secretions of bile. Their general action is at the same time corrective and tonic—correcting faulty secretion, toning up weak and debilitated organs. They thus cure anemia, green sickness, female impurities, rheumatism, nausea, headache, gas, pain in the chest and between the shoulders, constipation, piles, and all female ailments. All druggists and stores sell Bileans at fifty cents a box, or post free from the Bilean Co., Toronto, on receipt of price. For \$2.50 a parcel of six boxes will be mailed.

COSTLY RAM TO SCRAP PILE. Katadin to be Broken Up Into Junk After Years' Trial.

After being carried on the naval list of warships for a number of years at a big expense to the government, the ram Katadin, one of the failures of the new navy, which has been lying since long before the Spanish-American war in the back channel at League Island, is to be broken up as junk.

The Katadin, which, it is claimed by the naval men, has cost nearly \$3,000,000 every two years to keep in such condition that it would not be eaten away by rust, has been condemned as utterly useless for any purpose whatever, naval or commercial, and orders from Washington to sell the ram as old iron are expected at League Island any day.

Few of the hundreds of visitors to League Island every week know what a tremendous cost the peculiar turtle-backed vessel has been to the government. The Katadin dates from the period in the history of the navy when the government was getting a new way of experimenting to get a new class of warships. Various types of ironclad steamships were built, and the Katadin was one of them.

As a fighting craft the Katadin was found to be worthless and was sent to League Island. There it remained for several years and at the outbreak of the Spanish-American war both it and the Venevius were used to protect the coast. The Venevius was turned into a serviceable torpedo training ship, but the peculiar build of the Katadin made it impossible to convert the vessel into anything that would be of use.

TRAINING A BLOODHOUND. Pastime Enjoyed by Some English Women Who Own Packs.

Bloodhound training is becoming quite a fashionable pastime with certain Englishwomen. At first sight this would appear scarcely likely to find favor with the gentler sex, but, like the bulldog, the bloodhound is far from being as vicious as he looks, and will merely bay where dogs of other breeds will bite. He is, however, deeply resentful of chastisement.

"Bloodhound tracking" is a most interesting sport and many women who ride consider nothing can be more delightful than to take out their own hounds for a couple of hours. The result is much certain to be a morning in which most interesting work has been witnessed, without the fatigue which a long day's fox hunting entails having been experienced and without "the kill" at the end, against which the feminine mind often revolts.

A peculiar thing about a bloodhound is that he follows a stranger's trail better than his owner's. To fit him for sudden and unexpected work, therefore, recourse is had to a scent laid down. But as this must be a scent which can not give any adventitious aid what is, technically known as the clean boot is employed in this way man hunting is entirely different from the old-fashioned drag.

Most owners of bloodhounds and the members of the Bloodhound Hunt Club follow the custom of taking out their young hounds at from three to four months out for their first trials. They take up the trail from a piece of paper which the owner has touched. A distance

of 300 to 500 yards is given them for the initial tracking, and at the end of the course stands the owner with, possibly, a little meat, which he flings as an encouragement and reward to the successful hound.

This experiment is repeated and made more difficult by degrees. Then the hounds are taken out on the high road and taught to pick up scent which has been crossed or confused by other trails.

It is customary for the runners, who are used as the first quarry of young hounds, to place cleft sticks containing pieces of paper, at the turnings and crossings taken by them. This is as a guide to the hunt in case the trail followed by the hounds should be momentarily lost by confused scent.

It is, however, a golden rule with bloodhound experts never to assist the hound who goes wrong, but to let him learn, as he soon does, to "cast" for himself and to "try back" whenever he has overrun the line.

Mrs. G. A. J. Oliphant, of Shrewton, Wilts, England, has the distinction of having been the first woman to own and hunt with a pack of bloodhounds. Mrs. Oliphant, who is president of the ladies' branch of the Kennel Club, is a member of the Bloodhound Hunt Club and has owned the well-known Stanley pack for a number of years. Her kennel just now contains eighteen couples, besides puppies.

Another woman who has taken up the sport with great zest is Mrs. Charles Chapman, of Findon, near Worthing, England. She also is a member of the Bloodhound Hunt Club. Her dogs have often been requisitioned by the local police to track a sheep killer on a missing miter in the Medomeley pit. Mrs. Ashton Cross, of Aldebourne manor, Bucks, and Mrs. Handley Spicer also take an interest in these hounds and the Viscountess Castlereagh is another owned and supporter of the breed.

MORAL INFLUENCE OF STAGE. Julia Marlowe Discusses a Most Interesting Topic.

During the last season or two I have been a good deal impressed by the number of letters which have been received by me from avowing religious people assuring how I think the theatre and the church may be brought closer together. These letters, which are a vein so wasteful and often so ingenious that it is impossible to doubt their good faith, in any case, the highest commendation of the growth of a more tolerant feeling on the part of the stricter church people toward the theatre and a desire to know something of the real intentions of an institution and man which history has in the past been a little apt to condemn without understanding.

Briefly put their first and most frequent question is: "Is it possible to have a Christian theatre in America?" Following a general line of thought suggested by such an inquiry, I have come to the conclusion that Christian theatre would not be an unimproving thing, but a most interesting and useful one. The theatre is an institution which seeks to express dramatic form, the highest artistic drama in many centuries older than the dramatic theology. Long before the Christian possessed any universal significance, the theatre had attained a strong and permanent development.

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Advertisement for Scott's Emulsion featuring an image of a man carrying a large fish on his back. Text: Rapid changes of temperature are hard on the toughest constitution. The conductor passing from the heated inside of a trolley car to the icy temperature of the platform—the canvasser spending an hour or so in a heated building and then walking against a biting wind—know the difficulty of avoiding cold. Scott's Emulsion strengthens the body so that it can better withstand the danger of cold from changes of temperature. It will help you to avoid taking cold. ALL DRUGGISTS; 50c. AND \$1.00.

T H I S O R I G I N A L D O C U M E N T I S I N V E R Y P O O R C O N D I T I O N