

Then he said, Dr. Seaman, whose patient had taken A large dose of laudanum, saved the man's bacon, (I use Harry's words) by a horsewhip applied With a vigorous hand to the poor fellow's hide; And declared the same regimen good to remove The few 'rish distractions occasioned by love. And he wrote a prescription had done good to many, "Verberibus ut flagellatur est bene." Then he praised of Mars and of Venus and Cupid, I wonder why boys are so dreadfully stupid— For I don't think relationship any apology For tormenting me with his Heathen Mythology.

I must see Doctor Bolus; nonsensical twaddle Is not very likely to run in his noddle; He's a grave sober man of sound practical sense, And does not to quizzical wit make pretence— With pill, draught or lotion I don't think he'll tease me.

But write a prescription more likely to please me— I'm sure I shall die if I get no relief. And that physic will help me is not my belief, So, if dear Doctor Bolus desires to cure, He'll advise, what I'll gladly consent to endure. That Captain Tremore some fine morning shall bring (It will work like a charm, it will be the right thing,) A Parson, a Clerk, and a plain golden RING. He is stationed at London, I'll gladly come home, And no more, dear Mamma, will your fond Fannie roam.

TWO CHAPTERS OF L-FE.

CHAPTER I. "WOODED AND WON."

WHAT has come over you, Llew?" and the speaker, a fair man, with a bright honest face, pitched down his fishing tackle, and seized the tiller of the boat. "You don't want to try whether it is true that waters cannot quench love?"

"I wish you'd not make such a confounded donkey of yourself," replied the other sulkily, getting red in the face, and showing temper in the tremble of the upper lip. The fair man gave him a quick glance, and then pulling his cap over his eyes, lay down on his back, saying presently, "Example is better than precept;" at least, the copy-book I used in my childhood had it so. You are in love; I have never been; you are evil tempered, bad company, and inclined to be quarrelsome. Ergo, love is to be avoided by those who desire to live at peace with their fellow-men." Then suddenly changing his voice and lifting himself up, he said: "Let's have a pull, Llew; the tide is on the turn, and will bring us in again; an hour's stretch will put your digestion in better order."

His companion, although he made no verbal answer, set about doing what was required of him; he rolled up his lace, lighted a fresh cigar, and took to his oar keenly if not kindly. They pulled straight out for the matter of a couple of miles, neither breaking silence, then they paused, and Llew, looking a little ruffled, said:—

"I say, Charley, I've an abominable temper, and you shouldn't try to rile me, especially about you know what. I have got myself into a mess, and—and, the fact is, I mean to marry Alice in spite of them all."

"The deuce you do! then it's worse than I expected. What do you mean to keep a wife upon?"

"I'll emigrate."

"No you won't. It costs money, you see."

"I'll take a private tutorship."

"But they won't take your wife too. I'll tell you what you'll do: you'll drop the affair altogether. Seriously, you cannot afford to marry. Alice's father is a sensible old fellow; he won't have anything to say to you; he's as proud in his way as you are."

Llew made use of an expression by no means complimentary to his intended father-in-law, and his adviser went on:

"Or put it in another way. Suppose you could have her, and made her Mrs. Derwin to-morrow—how about your new relations? her people would be your people, you see."

"Stop that, Charley; I'm in earnest; I mean to marry Alice, and I mean to cut all her relations. Who was the parson you introduced me to at Tenby?"

"Cornish, an old Wadham man; he's got a curacy down in these parts somewhere, and is a capital fellow across country, and not so bad at brewing punch."

"Would he come over here for a day or two?"

"I don't see why he should not; but, why! you don't want him to do the splicing, eh?"

"Yes, I do—"

"Whew!" and Charley Shifner drew a long breath. "I hope you won't get angry, Derwin," he went on speaking very gravely, "but I'd rather not have anything to do with this, you are certain to repent it sooner or later. Not that Alice is not a good and pretty girl; I believe she's all that, old fellow; but it's her friends. And then your uncle, he'd put a spoke in your wheel at once. I wish you'd be reasonable. Let's cut away to-morrow; come, there's a good fellow; she's a dear little body, and it will be a wrench, you know, but better a scar than an open wound."

Charley spoke from his heart, and with a sincere feeling of anxiety for his friend; but then he had never been in love, and forgot that reason has sometimes very little to do with the tender passion. He paused, thinking his argument too clear not to take effect, and then, as Llew did not answer, he held his peace, mentally comforting himself with the reflection that his words had told,—and—that his friend was thinking of them. They rowed leisurely on, dipping their oars slowly and quietly, the tide doing most of the work for them; just as the keel grated against the beach, Derwin said:

"We'll start to-morrow, Charley."

"That's a good fellow," and all the clouds passed away from Charley's face; "you'll never regret it."

"I don't intend to," was the reply, uttered in rather ambiguous tones; and then landing, the two men shouldered their tackle, "sh, and rugs, and mounted the hill to the little inn, where they had taken up their quarters a month before, with the intention of reading hard, an intention Shifner kept up as far as the Field and Bell's Life were concerned, while Derwin might very soon have made personal application of Byroa's lines,—

My only books were woman's looks;

the blue eyes, fair face, and light form of a neighbouring farmer's daughter having effectually banished all other power of study.

A few hours later, Derwin, pretending to go to bed, bade good night to his friend, and took his way out of the house, along the path leading to the castle, which, rising grimly against the moonbeams, was throwing mysterious shadows upon the hill-side. Not a breath of air moved the leaves or grass, or disturbed the surface of the river, down which, it being full tide, the stream was just keeping up a moving rain of silvery sparkles in the centre of the broad bosom of the water. There were very few people stirring at that hour; the villagers worked hard and early, and went soon to bed in those days, and the country folks, who, after the manner of the Welch, came down to bathe, saw no beauty in evening lights. So it was that Mr. Derwin used the castle road to himself, and having passed through the fir-wood and reached the open path upon the south side of the hill, he walked more slowly, pausing, and turning to look back now and then, as if in expectation of seeing some one. At last, reaching the steeper part of the hill, he sat down upon the grass, and, whistling softly, gazed over Carmarthen bay, lying quiet and lake-like between him and the dark mountain-outline of the Gower's land. The moon was full that night, and hung low in the blue heaven, casting a broad glistening path of light across the water, along which one solitary fishing-boat was gliding, the oars throwing showers of fiery sparks as they dipped in the water. It was very lovely, very peaceful and holy, but Derwin was only looking at, not thinking of it; he scarcely knew whether it was land or water, moonlight or daylight. Presently a quick light step came along the turf, and Alice Morgan stood by his side.

"You are shaking, darling," her lover whispered, as he held her hand, and gazed into the sweet eyes, growing unnaturally large and bright in contrast to her pale frightened face.

"Yes, surely; Mr. Shifner was talking to father, and they were saying you are to go to-

morrow," she looked around at him fixedly for a second or two, then lifting away his arm from her waist, she rose, saying in a loud hard voice,—"And it's true indeed then, and I might have known it all along. God forgive you for deceiving my heart, but it's me that's been foolish and blind. Yes, indeed, I knew you were a gentleman like the rest of them, but I thought I could read love and truth in your eyes."

Derwin had let her talk on, partly because he was tempted just for the moment to take Shifner's advice, partly because in her vehemence and despair there was a raw spell and power in her beauty, and partly because it was pleasant to hear how the very passion she gave way to told of her love; but when she paused, with a long sobbing gasp for breath, he held out his arms, whispering:

"Alice, my beloved, you are coming with me."

She clasped her hands together, and bent forward as if to read his face, whispering in a low husky voice:

"God forgive you. Why are you tempting me?"

"It's no temptation, Alice, I swear," and as he spoke, he sprang to his feet, and took her hands in his. "You shall be my wife, I never meant anything else. I have no one to stop me marrying whom I please; and you, darling,—they'll never keep you from me."

Alice began to sob hysterically now; and shaking and crying, she clung to him, as he told her his plans, hopes, and promises, which, as he was excited, Derwin poured forth vehemently, and, as far as the feeling of the moment went, truthfully.

He told her his future could present no difficulty, which, with her by his side, would prove unconquerable, life must be all love and happiness, its very happiness tinged with the rosy hue, would look like blessings.

The moon rose higher and higher in the quiet sky, the silvery path was gone; inch by inch, the tide left the glistening sands, and Derwin still drew pictures of the time to come, of the world he was to show his wife, and Alice listened, nestling to his arms, and now and then asking some question, which from the very insight it gave him into her simplicity and innocence, stirred still more deeply the better feelings of his heart, and gave just enough light of pure love to blind him to the passion that was hurrying him on.

When they parted that night Alice had promised to meet him at the nearest railway station upon the morning following his departure from Llandstephen, and they were to be married in London.

Derwin did not take his friend into his confidence. Probably a railway carriage is not conducive to secrets. Perhaps he was beginning to doubt the prudence of his scheme. Shifner's noisy college chaff and talk was bringing back other feelings, and he grew more and more absent and nervous.

They reached Tenby in time for dinner, and Shifner, misinterpreting his friend's cloudy spirits, concluded that after all, if love could take such a hold upon a man like Derwin, it must be a still more desperate thing than he, Charles Shifner, had even imagined. There was only one cure he knew of, and that was to drown dull care; therefore he ordered a capital dinner, and persuaded Llew to try a peculiar combination of liquids, brewed in a special manner, concocted by a famous grand-uncle of Shifner's. But his experiment failed; Derwin pronounced it atrocious, and drank mildly of whisky-punch; so that Shifner out of veneration for his uncle's memory, did more than his duty to his own manufacture, and found it expedient to retire about midnight, assuring the waiter that he was going to be married next day to the maid of Llangothlen.

As soon as Shifner was safely out of the way, a dog-cart was ordered, and Mr. Derwin, leaving an explanatory note in the coffee-room, was driven off to the station, where he proceeded to the appointed rendezvous, where, veiled and frightened, Alice stood almost alone upon the platform, waiting for the train.