

STORY OF THE WEDDING RING.

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CHAPTER XIV.

If the enjoyment of wealth, luxury, very earthly delight and comfort, could give happiness, Ismay Waldron might have been perfectly happy. After the sending of her letter she waited for some time for a reply. Paul would be sure to write; there would be, perhaps, a passionate appeal to her to return—a passionate cry for love and pity. She must answer that as well as she could; the die was cast now—no prayer, no appeal would be of any use. She could not alter her decision. But for the expected letter she watched and waited in vain. She would have liked to hear from her husband. She had left him deliberately—she had preferred money and grandeur to his love and the pretty humble home he had given her; still she longed to know what he thought of her conduct—what he suffered—if he was very unhappy. Unknown to herself, she was longing still for his love—for some of the kind words that had been as needful to her as the air she breathed. Here all was magnificence and stately splendor. If her head ached every remedy and every luxury were offered her; but there was no Paul to lay her head on his breast, to soothe her with gentle words, and comfort until the pain had ceased. She missed him more than words can tell, and for the first few days she looked so pale and changed that Lord Carlswood began to fear he had made a mistake. He did all he could to rouse her; he gave a grand dinner party to which the elite of the country were invited; he ordered a magnificent costume for Paris for her, and she was delighted. In the novelty and excitement she forgot her sorrow, and from that hour the world took possession of her.

Lord Carlswood kept most faithfully every promise he had made her. He busied himself first in getting together every proof of her identity, and he succeeded. Then he formally declared Lionel to be his heir; he made his will, bequeathing to Ismay, his beloved grandchild, a fortune which was to have been divided between three of his children, and which would have made each of them rich. Then he looked round for some lady who would reside at Bralyn for a time and teach Ismay the lessons he most wished her to learn. He found the very lady he desired—Lady Merton, a distant relative of his own. She gladly consented to educate the beautiful girl so as to fit her for her position. "She will never be accomplished," said Lord Carlswood; "it would be useless to attempt to teach her French, German, and music; but with her great beauty, we may dispense with accomplishments. Teach her to take her place gracefully as the mistress of my house—teach her all the little details of etiquette that every lady ought to know, and I shall be quite satisfied." The result was perfect success. The little deficiencies of manner were soon toned down, the musical voice took a more delicate and silvery tone; the actions and movements, always graceful before, became more graceful still in their highbred elegance.

She was so quick in learning to adapt herself to her sphere that Lord Carlswood wondered at her marvelous progress. When she had been with Lady Merton for three months, one might have thought her whole life had been spent at Bralyn. Then when the London season opened Lord Carlswood took her to London to Bralyn House. She made her debut in the great world, and was received there with open arms. Lord Carlswood's prophecy was realized; her marvelous beauty and grace created a perfect furor. More than ever he regretted her unfortunate marriage; but for that there was no rank, no might not have attained. The only thing that reconciled him in the least to it was the fact of the child's existence.

There opened then to Ismay Waldron a most brilliant life; nothing that she had ever dreamed of equalled this magnificent reality. There was one drawback. She had one dispute with Lord Carlswood; he was very desirous that she should relinquish the name of Waldron, and that she should not consent to do. She looked at him with flashing eyes, her beautiful face crimsoned with anger.

"I have broken my husband's heart," she said; "I have deserted him; I have spoiled all his life; but I will not give up his name. I was proud enough the day I bore it first; I will not give it up." He saw that it was useless to urge the point, so he ceased discussing it. Ismay had more spirit and determination than he had given her credit for. She was known as "Mrs. Waldron," Lord Carlswood's beautiful granddaughter. People at first used to ask—where was her husband—who was he?—and the answer was: "She married very much beneath her and is separated from him." After a time they ceased to ask, and the beautiful Mrs. Waldron became queen of the fashionable world. How admired she was! Men spoke of her with wonder—of her marvelous loveliness and grace, her bright smile, her quick ready wit, her radiant face. Ismay Waldron enjoyed her life. She gave herself up heart and soul to the spirit of gaiety; no party, no ball, no soiree was complete without her; she was indefatigable in the pursuit of pleasure. Lord Carlswood smiled as he watched her.

"I was not mistaken in my estimate of her character," he thought, "She has forgotten her husband." He became warmly attached to her, chiefly because her great beauty and popularity flattered his pride. He loved her, too, because she so closely resembled her mother, the Katrine

he remembered as a child, and had loved so dearly. He took great pride and interest in the little Leo—his heir who was to be, the Lord Carlswood of the future.

There were times when Ismay Waldron looking around her, said to herself:

"I did well; if the time and choice were to come again, I should do the same. It would have been cruel to waste such a life as mine in a wood-keeper's cottage; it would have been cruel to deprive my beautiful Leo of this grand heritage."

So year after year passed, and with time her beauty developed into magnificent womanhood; she grew more fashionable, more popular. The beautiful Mrs. Waldron was perhaps more universally admired than any other lady in London. The world loved her, and she loved it.

There were times when she hardly realized that she, the admired and flattered beauty, the queen of the season, the most popular woman in London was the wife of Paul Waldron. In the midst of her grandeur she looked back with a sick, faint shudder on the past—that poor wherein she had been the discontented wife of a poor man.

She had reached the climax. Life had nothing more to give her. Wealth, luxury, magnificence, pleasure, unbought, admiration—all were hers. The world she had once looked upon with such longing eyes now lay at her feet. She delighted in her own beauty, she took the greatest pride in adorning it, she was never weary of contemplating it.

The admiration of men pleased and amused her, it did not move her. She was vain and worldly, she loved riches and grandeur better perhaps than she loved her own soul; but she was never even in thought, false to Paul Waldron. She never forgot, that, though parted from him—though she had deserted him—she was still his wife. No one dared to speak to her of love that she could not receive. Yet some of the best and noblest in the land would fain have wooed her, had she been free to be wooed.

Lord Carlswood noticed that trait in her character, as he noticed everything. "She is a true Carlswood," he said, more than once. "She is beautiful and pure as were all the women of our race."

So the years passed away to Ismay Waldron, one of the most admired and celebrated women of her day.

CHAPTER XV.

There was one season in London when people were all talking of a "new man," who had made his entry into public life. He was a Mr. Dale of Ravensdale, who had been recently returned as M. P. for Taverton. At first Tories, and then Liberals, had tried to ignore him, but he was becoming a power among the people. He could be ignored no longer. He had made some of the most brilliant speeches ever delivered in the House of Commons.

"If he would but become one of us," said the great Tory leader, with a sigh.

"If we could but get him over on our side," said the Liberal chief.

But Mr. Dale had taken a line of his own and he adhered to it. He was the poor man's friend—some of his speeches were one long burning tirade against the rich and their treatment of the poor. He was prejudiced and bigoted, but his wonderful eloquence, his passionate words, carried with them a certain force of conviction. He was rich himself—master of a fine estate—but he was no aristocrat. He thanked Heaven that he had sought to buy no man's soul with gold. Shrewd men said a secret attached to his life; he could not hate the aristocracy so much unless he had suffered through one of them.

But no one even faintly guessed that he hated the aristocracy because an old aristocrat had tempted his fair young wife to leave him.

He had become one of the leading men of the day—a power and a voice in the land. Lord Carlswood, who was a great admirer of talent, admired him, although he deplored his principles.

"He has not only talent, that man," he said, referring to him—"he has positive genius. I admire him even for his honest hatred; but I wish that his talents were all enlisted on our side—I wish he were one of us."

People talked a great deal of him; it was said that, although he was so fierce a democrat, even royalty admired him, and that princes had praised his eloquence. Still, he would not enter what was called fashionable society.

He was walking one day through the park with Major Henchley, a great friend of his, and they saw the carriages of the ladies who were going to the drawing-room.

The major, a fervent admirer of fair women, stopped to look at them, and, in spite of his unwillingness, Mr. Dale was forced to the same. Suddenly his face grew pale, and his breath came in thick, hot gasps from his lips. His hand clasped the arm of his companion.

"Who is that?" he asked in a fierce, hoarse whisper.

Major Henchley looked.

"That is the beautiful Mrs. Waldron, the grand-daughter of Lord Carlswood. She is a magnificent equal in London—nay, in all England."

"Mrs. Waldron?" repeated Mr. Dale in a low voice.

"Do not put the question that no one fails to ask. 'Who is her husband?'"

"I cannot tell you; she made some low marriage, I believe."

"Does a low marriage mean that she married a poor man?" asked Mr. Dale.

"I suppose so. I do not know. I have heard, in common with the rest of the world, that she married beneath her, and is separated from her husband."

"Because he is low—I can understand that I am what is called a self-made man, major. If a highbred lady looked kindly on me and an alliance were formed, should you think she had contracted a low marriage?"

"Because of you?" cried the major.

"Certainly not. Why, you are one of the most rising men of the day!"

"It is difficult to discover what a low marriage is," said Mr. Dale; and the strange pailor did not die from his face.

He was unlike himself for the whole of the day after he had seen Lord Carlswood's grandchild.

There were many who remarked at the drawing-room that the beautiful Mrs. Waldron looked unlike herself; she was not so brilliant, not so radiant; there was more of thought on her brow, of care in her eyes; her smile was not so bright, her repartees not so ready.

It was the truth. The pleasures of the world were beginning to pall upon Ismay. Perhaps she had exhausted them too quickly. She had drained the cup of pleasure to its very dregs; there was nothing left for her to wish for—nothing to desire.

Her life for ten long years had been one series of brilliant triumphs; the world had worshipped her; and during that time she had lived without love, without tenderness, engrossed in vanity, pleasure and love of luxury. She was in the very pride of her magnificent womanhood now, and she was beginning to feel tired of frivolity—to wish for something better.

She was at a ball one evening, and some one presented her with a beautiful rose. She took it carelessly and held it in her hands while she sat down to rest. The perfume stole slowly upon her senses; it brought back to her the time when she had sat with Mr. Ford in the pretty shady garden; she remembered her own passion of wonder and emotion as she listened to his story. Then her husband's face rose before her as she had seen it last—handsome, haggard, with misery, yet full of love and tenderness. She remembered how he had clasped her in his arms and kissed her lips—how he had said to her:

"You will find nothing in the world like me."

She started, for a warm tear had fallen upon her hand.

"What am I doing?" she thought. "I have hardly thought of him for years. Can it be possible that I am weeping for Paul?"

She flung the rose away, but she could not dismiss those haunting memories from her heart—Paul's love, Paul's tenderness, Paul's devotion, his incessant watchful care. How proud he had been of her! How madly he had worshipped her!

For the first time—so engrossed had she been in her new life—she began to wonder what had happened to him during those ten years. He took my decision very quietly," she said; he never even tried to persuade me to alter it."

How useless all such persuasions would have been; no one knew better than herself; but she should have made an effort to see her—to induce her to return to him. Of the tempest of pride and passion, of love and despair through which he had passed, she knew nothing.

Paul! Why should she be haunted now she asked herself, impatiently. Surely in ten years she had time to forget; surely there could be nothing so absurd as that she should wish for him—long to see him now.

Yet by day and by night there was the lingering pain, the longing desire. At times when she woke her pillow was wet with tears; there were times when she found herself moaning, "Paul, Paul!" almost unconsciously to herself. And this was the vain, faithless woman who had left her husband because she valued luxury more than love.

She began to long to see him. Once she had compared him with the polished gentlemen she had met at Bralyn, and the comparison, in some respects, had always been to his disadvantage; they were so refined, he was so homely. But now, as her eyes wandered wearily over the great crowd, she looked in vain for a face like his.

So slowly but surely, repentance began its work. She had been so eager for riches, so eager to show her great beauty, so eager for admiration—she had longed with such an intensity of longing for the pleasures of life, for its brilliant gayeties—she had been eager as a child; and now all that she had longed for had been hers. For ten long years she had been engrossed, heart and soul, in the world's delights. She had been like a man intoxicated with wine. Now the intoxication was subsiding—her sober senses were beginning to return; and with them came a yearning, longing desire for her husband—for the love and kindness of other days. She had been like one in a delirium—now the delirium was wearing off, and the reality frightened her. She had been so dazed, so bewildered, with the prospect held out to her that she had never thought of the wrong.

Perhaps years had steadied her, had given to her better sense, clearer judgment, better thoughts, nobler ideas. One thing was quite certain—she had been so engrossed in her life that she had overlooked when she had chosen to leave her husband, the enormity of the sin she had committed.

"I was so sorely tempted," she cried to herself—"I forgot all the wrong."

She tried hard to drown all these thoughts. She went out more than ever—tried to forget, to drown her sorrow in gayeties. It was not possible.

By night and by day memory was here to torture her.

"She grew thin and pale. People remarked to each other and to Lord Carlswood how changed she was, and how anxious about her."

"We will leave London earlier than usual this year," he said. "You must go to the seaside, Ismay. You are not looking so well, my dear child. What ails you?"

She could have told him that it was an awakened conscience, a troubled heart, an uneasy mind, a longing desire to see her husband again, a longing wish if possible to undo her sin.

"Was it a sin?"

The question came suddenly to her mind one day, and startled her terribly. A sin? She had always been frightened at sin—it was not a pleasant word. Was this a sin—to have left the husband to whom she had pledged her troth, for no better reason than the desire of being rich?

Not all the sea breezes that ever swept the waves would bring health to the unhappy wife who had been so frail, so weak of purpose so easily tempted. No medicine, no tonic yet discovered, had power to quiet the pain of her awakened conscience.

To be Continued.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.—Rousseau.

All-powerful money gives both birth and beauty.—Horace.

Light griefs may speak, deep sorrow's tongue is bound.—Seneca.

When you speak in your praise you add nothing to your reputation.—Terence.

It is to live twice when you can enjoy the recollection of your former life.—Martial.

Those who are in love believe every idle tale which flatters their expectations.—Ovid.

It is the peculiar faculty of fools to discern the faults of others at the same time they forget their own.—Cicero.

This world is full of fools, and he who would not wish to see one must not only shut himself up alone, but also break his looking-glass.—Boileau.

That which is called liberality is frequently nothing more than the vanity of giving, of which we are more fond than the thing given.—Rochefoucault.

PROVERBS BY THE CZAR.

The Czar is a very lucky man. He inspires proverbs, and every one knows that when a sovereign begins to inspire proverbs, he is pretty nearly ready to become a great man.

Here are a few of the wise sayings which owe their inspiration to the ruler of all the Russias:—

"The Czar is very powerful, but he is not the All Powerful."

"The Czar is naturally a cousin to God, but he is not His brother."

"A tear in the eye of the Czar costs the country many handkerchiefs."

"Only one can be the Czar, but many may love him."

"The ukases of the Czar are worth nothing if God does not say 'Amen' to them."

A WINNER.

I think, said the ingenious man, that I have an invention at last which will make my fortune.

What is it?

It is a camera for use in fishing camps. It exaggerates the size of the fish, while taking the fisherman at his normal size.

A NONSUIT.

My entire future depends upon the favor you show my suit, he pleaded. Yes, Mr. Sharp, replied the beautiful young heiress, coldly. I have heard that you refer to me as your long suit.

LONG AND DREARY.

Father McSweeney—Dennis, if you keep on in this way you will shorten your days.

Dennis—O! was 'tinkin' that same myself, father. O! was sober two days last week and they war the longest days of me loife.

NOT A COT BY THE SEA.

He sentimentally—If I were to propose to you what would be to you the most vivid mind picture of the future? She expectantly—A little plush box, satin lined, containing a diamond ring.

PROGRESS OF OPIUM.

Asia Minor was the chief opium market of the world until the twelfth century, and from then it was gradually distributed all over the world. The Chinese obtained the drug in the thirteenth century.

MUSIC AND MILKING.

In Switzerland a milkmaid gets better wages if gifted with a good voice, because it has been discovered that a cow will yield one fifth more milk if soothed during milking by melody.

SEXES POLITICALLY EQUAL.

In Iceland men and women are in every respect political equals. The nation, which numbers about 70,000 people, is governed by representatives elected by men and women together.

SERUM IN PERSIA.

Thanks chiefly to the use of the serum treatment, the mortality in Prussia from diphtheria has been reduced from a rate of 15.5 per 10,000 in the years 1885-1894, to 7.6 and 6.2 in the years 1896 and 1897.

The Salvation Army.

THE LIFE OF THESE SELF-SACRIFICING WORKERS OFTEN ONE OF HARDSHIP.

While on Duty Capt. Ben. Bryan Was Stricken With a Supposed Incurable Disease and Forced to Relinquish the Work—He Has Now Recovered His Health.

From the News, Alexandria, Ont.

The life of a Salvation Army worker is very far from being a sinecure. Their duties are not only arduous, but they are called upon by the regulations of the Army to conduct out-of-door meetings at all seasons and in all kinds of weather. This being the case, it is little wonder that the health of these self-sacrificing



workers frequently gives way. Capt. Ben. Bryan, whose home is at Maxville, Ont., is well known through his former connection with the Army, having been stationed at such important points as Montreal, Toronto, Kingston, Guelph and Brockville, in Canada, and at Schenectady, Troy, and other points in the United States. While on duty he was attacked by a so-called incurable disease, but having been restored to health through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, a representative of the Alexandria News thought it worth while to procure from his own lips a statement of his illness and recovery. He found Mr. Bryan at work, a healthy, robust man, his appearance giving no indication of his recent sufferings.

The story of his illness and subsequent cure by the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills reads like a miracle, and is given in his own words as follows:—"While stationed at Deseronto, in July, 1897, I was attacked with what the doctors called 'Chronic Spinal Meningitis.' The symptoms were somewhat similar to those preceding a pleuritic attack, but were accompanied by spasms, which, when the pain became too severe, rendered me unconscious. The length of these unconscious spells increased as the disease advanced. After spending four months in the Kingston General Hospital, and on the Salvation farm, Toronto, I regained some of my former strength and returned to my work. The second attack occurred when I was stationed at Schenectady, N.Y., in October, 1898, and was more severe than the first. The symptoms of the second attack were very similar to those which preceded the first, the only apparent difference being that they were more severe and the after effects were of longer duration. Owing to the precarious state of my health, I was compelled to resign my position after the second attack and return to my home at Maxville. While there a friend advised me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I began using them in March, 1899. I have used only a dozen boxes and am once more enjoying perfect health. I feel that I am perfectly well, and can cheerfully say that I attribute my present state of health to the effects produced by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Mrs. Bryan has also used the pills and has benefited very much thereby."

MOTHER WORSHIP IN TURKEY.

The strongest sentiment of the Turk is his reverence for his mother. He always stands in her presence until invited to sit down, a compliment he pays to no one else.

MILLIONS OF STARS.

The most wonderful astronomical photograph in the world is that which has recently been prepared by London, Berlin and Parisian astronomers. It is claimed to show at least 68,000,000 stars.

BANK NOTES DESTROYED.

The Bank of England destroys about 250,000 of its notes every week, to replace them with freshly printed ones. One evening in each week is set apart for the making of this expensive bonfire.

DRINK IN FRANCE.

Since the sale of alcoholic liquors in France has been unrestricted the number of drinking places has increased, until now there is one saloon for 85 inhabitants.

FOOLHARDINESS.

O! like courage, said Mr. Rafferty, but O! don't like recklessness wid it. I told Casey, the contractor, the same ting, replied Mr. Dolan, wan day when he wor thryin' to show how brave he could be in an argymint wid 'is wife.

WORK OF AN EYELID.

A scientist has calculated that the eyelids of the average man open and shut no fewer than 4,000,000 times in the course of a single year of his existence.

NO RUNAWAYS IN RUSSIA.

Runaway horses are unknown in Russia. No one drives there without having a thin cord with a running noose around the neck of the animal. When an animal bolts the cord is pulled, and the horse stops as soon as he feels the pressure on the windpipe.