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THE HEIR OF LANCEWOOD

CHAPTER XVII.

Vivien Neslie reached the haven she had been seeking—the buried arch of a western window, where the ivy had climbed the stone and clothed it in richest green, where it hung in grand festoons down to the soft grass—a window that overlooked the Rhine from a height which made one giddy. She had been there before, having taken her book there—for the ceaseless chatter of the Misses Smeaton often annoyed her. It was so quiet, so remote from the world, so strangely still, there seemed to be nothing save the broad blue sky above and the rapid, clear stream below. It was like a shrine to Vivien, a place where she could dream and think and read at leisure.

She sat down on the broad stone of the ruined window; the gleam of the swift current below seemed to dazzle her, the golden beams of the sun disturbed her. She turned her face to the cold stone walls, and read her father's letter again—read every word carefully—and then turned with a start to wake to the full reality of what it all meant. She had loved Lancewood; the home she had loved so dearly, so proudly, and fondly, would never be hers. She flung herself down on the thick soft grass and sobbed aloud. What a relief that were those tears! She could cry aloud in her anguish and sorrow, she could weep with deep-drawn passionate sobs, and there was none to hear. All the long-pent-up grief found vent now; the anguish of the past three sad years, the pain of wounded love and wounded pride, the desolation that had fallen to her lot since her father's marriage, all found vent in that passionate storm of tears.

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She had lost Lancewood, her beloved home, the inheritance that had been hers; the grand domain, every tree and every shrub that grew on which was dear to her. The son of a stranger would have it, the home where her proud, gentle, high-born mother had lived and died; it would pass to the son of the vain, insolent woman who had robbed her of her father's love.

No one could understand her sorrow. It was not the mere money loss. Had she been offered twice the value of Lancewood to relinquish it, she would never have done so. It was the place itself she loved so well, it embodied her love of race, her pride of family. Every wish, every dream, every desire of her heart was centered in it. She had concentrated all her love and hopes on it; and now that she had lost it, her life lay in ruins around her. She could care for no other destiny; no other seemed worth having. It was all over. Death would not have been harder than the pain, the desolation and anguish she was suffering. The Abbey would never more be home to her—never more. It would be given up to the rule of a vain woman and her son. What would they do with Lancewood when it would be theirs?

"It was cruel of my father," she sobbed; "oh, terribly cruel!"

So passionately was she weeping that she did not hear the sound of footsteps. Some one came across the long grass, parted the festoons of ivy, and stood looking in wonder at the crouching figure of the prostrate girl—looked long and earnestly, and then dropped the sheltering ivy as though she was fearful of obtruding. But, when the sound of a bitter, passionate sob fell on his ear, he paused, and stood irresolute.

He was a tall, handsome man, with a noble face and earnest, eloquent eyes. The clear-cut face, with its regular features, was that of a high-bred gentleman. The wind stirred lightly the brown clustering hair that waved back from a broad white brow; the clear eyes that had in

them no shade of sin or guilt rested pitifully on the young girl. The most beautiful feature of the man's face was his mouth; the firm grave lips had a sweet expression—one could discern it although they were shaded by a heavy mustache. They trembled slightly as he listened to the girl's passionate weeping. He looked and felt irresolute. He was too true a gentleman not to feel the greatest hesitation about intruding, yet he had too kind a heart to go away and leave the weeper there. He stepped forward, a frank, handsome, high-bred English gentleman, of dignified carriage and proud bearing, but with kindly manner, and, going up to Vivien, said in a low, gentle voice—

"I beg your pardon, but I am afraid that you are in great trouble. Can I do anything for you?"

The next moment Vivien stood up right, with flushing, tear-stained face and indignant eyes.

"I—I thought I was alone," she said.

Her wonderful beauty startled the new-comer despite her passionate tears. She looked lovely as a poet's ideal. Her masses of dark hair fell in picturesque luxuriance around her. Her beautiful face had lost all its proud calmness, and was quivering with a hundred varied emotions. He did not betray his surprise.

"I beg you to forgive me," he said "I was sketching on the other side of the wall, and I thought that you were ill."

His kindly manner, the gentleman's words, the earnest voice, reassured her. He was a gentleman, not an impertinent spy.

"I am not ill," she said. "I am in great trouble."

"So I perceive. Can I do anything for you?"

"No," she replied. "I thank you—nothing."

She turned away, as though to intimate that their interview was ended. He followed her.

"Pardon me again," he said. "Pray do not think me intrusive—do not think me rude. I cannot go away and leave you so. If I saw a little bird lying on the grass wounded, I should raise it and care for it—if I saw a flower bent and bruised, I should try to restore it—I could not pass the smallest creature in pain; much less can I leave you."

"You can do nothing," she declared; but the kind voice had evidently a charm for her. She turned her head, and he saw again the beautiful tear-stained face.

"Will you let me say one thing to you?" he continued, gravely. "What we think a trouble often turns out to be a blessing in disguise. This may be the case with you."

"No," she returned. "There is no way in which such trouble as mine could be a blessing—nothing could possibly make it so."

"If it be death, do not forget that, great as your sorrow may be, it is not hopeless. There is a fairer, brighter, better world, where death and sorrow are unknown."

"My trial is more bitter than death," she rejoined—"a thousand times more bitter."

"If it be sickness, you have hope to cheer you; if it be the falsity of a friend, there are true ones left; if it be the loss of fortune, you who have rare gifts, I am sure need not fear that."

"It is worse," she said; "mere loss of fortune would not affect me. I have lost that which is dearer than life and all that it holds."

"You have lost some one whom you love," he decided, with grave, kindly pity.

"Love!" she repeated. "Oh, no! I have—" Then she stopped abruptly, remembering that it was to a stranger she was speaking.

"Then, if all other consolations fail, let me add this," he said. "Time will heal your sorrow, no matter how great it may be. When I was a boy, I had a sister, whom I loved better than all the world besides. She was my twin sister; she seemed like a part of my very existence. She died and I did not think it possible ever

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If there are any complications you do not understand write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential) Lynn, Mass. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman and held in strict confidence.

to smile again. I told my mother so, and her answer was that time would be my comforter. So now I say to you. Let what may be your trouble, time cannot fail to comfort you as it has comforted me."

But Vivien shook her head gravely. "I fear not. My sorrow is an uncommon one; time will add to it, not heal it."

"If that be the case," he said, still more gravely, "will you let me remind you where to seek comfort?"

"Heaven holds no comfort for me, save that of enduring in patience," she replied, slowly.

He had gained such influence over her by his grave, earnest voice, his noble face, his deferential grace of manner, that she forgot he was a stranger—forgot that she felt frightened or shy. She had turned her beautiful, tear-stained face to him, and raised her dark eyes.

"I like to hear you speak," she said, simply; "you have been very patient and kind."

"My poor child, I have simply—what is it?" he interrupted himself to say, for she was glancing up at him with a pleased, wondering smile. "What is it?" he asked again.

"I was thinking," she replied, "that I do not remember to have ever heard any one call me 'poor child' before. All this is new to me," she added, passionately—"this suffering, this sense of loss; the feeling of humiliation and isolation is all new to me, and hard to bear."

"Poor child!" he said again; and this time she made no comment on his words.

"Should you think me very curious if I asked you to tell me what your loss is?" he asked.

"I cannot tell you; it is my all, my world, more than my life—I cannot speak of it."

He wondered to himself what it could be. It was not a love affair—of that he felt sure. He read her face correctly—there was no revelation in it of a love story. Who was she—so beautiful, so dignified, so queenly—this English girl alone in this ruined castle?

"Are you staying at the hotel?" he asked.

"I am with some friends at the Hotel de l'Europe," she replied.

"And I am staying at the Reine d'Espagne. Will you permit me to introduce myself to you? For I hope most earnestly to meet you again, and that under happier circumstances. I am the late Lord St. Just's eldest son, and I am travelling down the Rhine for the sake of sketching. If I had my folio here, I would show you some views that I think would please you."

He was in great hope that she would imitate his frankness; but Vivien had recovered herself by this time; she bowed, and said—

"I am grateful to you, Lord St. Just. You have been very kind to me. May I ask a favor?"

His face brightened. Was she about to trust him, to accept some kindness from him?

"You will honor me as I have never been honored before," he replied.

"I beg of you earnestly to forget this little scene. I am ashamed to have been so much a child; but it seemed to me my heart was broken, and I came out here that I might, like a child, cry away my grief. May I ask you to forget the incident—not to mention that you have seen me—and if I should at any time meet you, that it may be as a stranger?"

"If you wish it to be so," he answered, sadly. "I should have been so happy to be of service to you—so happy to meet you again."

"We may meet again," she said, "but, if we do, forget that we have met before."

"And is there no service I can render you?" he asked.

"None," she replied, "but to forget what has passed. I shall always be vexed to think that I have been so childish. I thank you, Lord St. Just. Good-bye."

Before he had time to reply she had gone half way down the hill, and he stood alone under the blue cloudless sky.

The next day, on making inquiries about the English party at the Hotel de l'Europe, he heard that Lady Smeaton was accompanied by her daughters and Miss Neslie, the heiress of Lancewood.

(To be Continued.)

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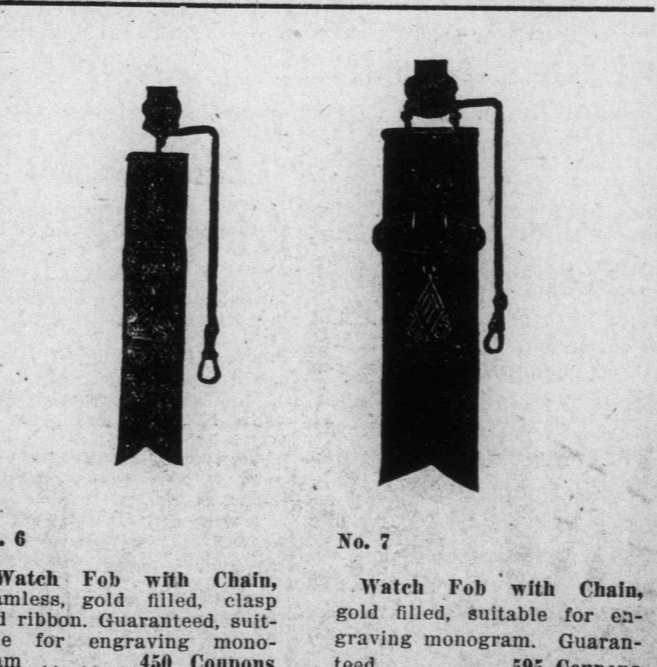
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A Win for Collegians.

In last evening's football game, the Collegians defeated the C.E.L. Fellidians by a score of 3 goals to nil. The game was keenly contested and both sides gave a good exhibition. The Collegians, through Ellis secured one of their goals in the first half. In the second half Kendrick and Coultas each found the net, but the C.E.L. Fellidians failed to score though they had several chances through penalty kicks, which were shot badly. Mr. W. Duggan acted as referee, and the line-up was:

Collegians—Goal, Wornell; backs, Heath, Halfyard; halves, Pike, Barnes, Pike; forwards, Coultas, Ellis, Kendrick, Jolliffe, Gear.

C.E.L. Fellidians — Goal, Long; backs, Miller, Ryall; halves, Oliver, Drover, Fox; forwards, Bugden, Hunt, Winter, Adams, Pinnent.

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THE THOUGHTS

PROHIBITION.

Dr. Jones cannot understand that with almost everyone in Newfoundland a baptized Christian, there should be any question of the legalisation of alcohol. That there should be any question of the campaign that seems necessary to ensure the success of the prohibitive this fall in favour of Prohibition.

To those who say why penalize the temperate drinker for the sake of those who suffer so much through liquor, he gave a homely example from his garden—if it happen that in there was a fruit which was poisonous to one of his children, he would uproot and destroy it, even if the other members could eat and enjoy it without injury. And the fact that some people imagine that Prohibition will bring a great many evils in its train should not influence anyone. If there is a social sore it should be removed. The Prohibition movement is one of social service; it is of value in adding to the welfare of a community.

THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL SERVICE.

The activities of the Church in practical social service seem to be hindered by many opinions. One man thinks such and such, and another man begs to differ—the church accounts the work of another, and a third church sees no virtue in the work of another denomination—and it goes on—all preventing work of practical nature being done, and leaving it to be done either by charitable Societies or the State.

The Church seems satisfied to minister principally to the inner spiritual man and it is in the exclusive following of this, that, in my humble opinion, has brought about conditions in church life about which clergymen and others unfortunately have to speak in these days.

Franklin says that if you find a defective man—you must first feed him, clothe him, and then lodge him.



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