

Diamond Cut Diamond OR, THE ROUT OF THE ENEMY.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—Continued.

"Why, Angel, I really think you are a lucky girl! To think that you hold all the trump cards in your hands, and have such a grand gambling game before you! Chance, indeed! Are you not young and pretty, and always with him—as good as gold and as sweet as hawthorn blossom? Do you think any man could resist you if you set to work to try and win him? Oh, I would not sit and cry if I were you! I would try with all my might and main to see if I could get the better of that 'other woman.' Win Geoffrey yourself, defy the spiteful words of a spiteful sister-in-law, and show her that it was a wicked lie that she told you! Begin this very day, my dear!"

"Do you think I could, Dulcie?"

"I am sure of it, Angel. Think what a grand advantage it is to be actually a man's wife. Oh, if you try hard enough, you will succeed, I promise you!"

Then Angel hid her face upon her sister's shoulder.

"Dulcie," she whispered, "I have a secret to tell you—do you know that I have made a wonderful discovery? I always thought, you know, that I loved Horace Lessiter—I did once, you see—and therefore I thought that I could never love anybody else. When I was married, I said to myself that I would be a good and dutiful wife, but that I could be nothing more—but since—since I think the very hour that dreadful man said he loved me, and tried to say disparaging things of Geoffrey—something has suddenly come to me. Perhaps it was the horror I felt, the disgust at his insolence, or perhaps it is Geoffrey's coldness that has hurt me, and this horrible jealousy which is eating away my heart—I don't know how or why it is, but I have discovered all at once that I am in love with him! Oh, but desperately, dreadfully in love!"

"Oh, Angel, Angel!" and Dulcie covered the blushing face with kisses of unfeigned delight. "So you see you have love as well to help you to win your battle!"

For some minutes neither sister spoke; they remained silent, fast locked in each other's arms.

Then very seriously Angel raised her face and looked anxiously into Dulcie's eyes.

"My dearest,"

"Don't think me a great fool, but—but don't you honestly think that Geoffrey is a very handsome man?"

"He is an Adonis, my dear, a very Adonis, with a touch of the Apollo and flavouring of a Cupid!"

And then she jumped up from her lowly position and laughed merrily and heartily.

But all this time she had said not a word about her own concerns.

Truth to say, Dulcie was a coward. She knew that she was about to fling an explosive machine down into the bosom of her family, and she was a little bit afraid of the storm and confusion she was certain to bring upon herself. That Dulcie, the practical, the sensible, should be the one to fling herself away in a reckless and imprudent fashion upon a man so poor, that without her father's assistance, he would certainly be unable to keep her in bread and cheese was to say the least of it somewhat galling to her vanity.

She felt, too, that really there was no special reason to show to the world's eye for her folly. If it had been Geoffrey now, there would have been some excuse. Geoffrey had all the needful charm of look and manner wherewith to storm successfully the citadel of feminine hearts; there was something interesting and poetical, and intensely fascinating about Geoffrey—but what on earth could there be in honest Miles Faulkner, that a girl like Dulcie Halliday should throw herself away upon and consider "the world well lost" for his sake?

"I do verily believe it is on account of his size!" Dulcie would say, with a rueful disgust to herself. "They say savages are impressed by brute force and gigantic stature—it is their only standard of excellence. At heart, there is not a doubt of it, I must be an Ojibway Indian!"

Nevertheless, Dulcie did not repent of her infatuation, and had not the smallest intention of drawing back from her bargain—only she shrank from the confession of it.

After her little talk with Angel, she went out and walked dreamily about the garden, pacing thoughtfully about the newly-laid out paths. Not a doubt of it that her intentions could no longer be kept a secret; her father must be written to and Angel and Geoffrey must be told.

"A hundred and twenty pounds a year," she said aloud, with a certain grim sense of amusement. "It's preposterous, of course; I almost wish it were nothing at all; the measure of romantic idiotry would at least be poetically out of her mouth, before she had a practical opportunity of testing her aspirations to their uttermost."

The second post had just arrived, and a servant came over and brought her a letter. It was from Miles, and the very first glimpse showed it to be of a most unprecedented brevity. With a vague wonder at its shortness, she began to read:

"My dearest Dulcie—All must be over between us for ever—our engagement must be broken off. Mr. Dane has dismissed me from the business, I do not know why, but think it is Albert Trichet's doing. Of course this puts marriage out of the question with me for years—I am a pauper. God bless you—I can't write more. I feel a bit bowled over. You needn't write, I'd rather you didn't—M.F."

For some moments Dulcie remained staring down silently at this letter,

with no other sign of emotion save a slightly heightened colour. Then, I much regret to be obliged to state the three words that fell slowly and deliberately from her lips.

They were neither lady-like nor refined words, and I only record them from a strict sense of duty, and because to render a tale absolutely and unvarnishedly truthful, it is necessary, occasionally, to offend the susceptibilities of punctilious persons. In hopes that the apology I tender may in some measure mitigate the shock that Dulcie is about to inflict upon my readers, what she actually said must now be revealed:

"The infernal blackguard!" was what Miss Halliday said aloud, in a calm and remarkably sweet-tempered manner. And it is quite certain that it was not to poor Miles that she made allusion.

Then walking back towards the house slowly putting her letter back into the envelope as she went, she came across a groom just coming round from the stables.

"Can you take a telegram down to the post-office for me at once?" she enquired of the man.

"Yes, miss."

"Then wait here, and I will bring it to you in a moment."

She went into the drawing-room, and sat down to the writing-table.

"Ah!" she said, savagely clenching her little fists together, "so that wretch thinks he can force me into giving Miles up, does he? He imagines that of course I shall drop him the very moment he has succeeded in ruining him! You don't know much about Dulcie Halliday, my young friend!"

And then she got out a telegraph form and wrote this characteristic message:

"All rubbish. Refuse to be given up. Prefer paupers. Come down here immediately."

"Strict obedience!" she murmured to herself, with an odd little smile of amusement. "He did not say I was not to telegraph!"

Then, after she had given her missive to the groom, she came back to the writing-table and took out a sheet of paper.

"This settles it!" she muttered, dipping her pen into the ink. And then she wrote:

"Dear Father,—I suppose you will think me quite mad, although I can't help it if you do. I am going to marry Miles Faulkner. I hope you will give me something to help upon, in addition to the four hundred a year which comes to me under my mother's marriage settlement, and which, as I am of age, I suppose I shall have a right to. Of course I am aware that this is very little, and so I hope you will kindly make some further provision for me. I have thought it all over for some time, and have quite made up my mind to marry nobody else on earth but Miles, so it is too late to make me change my determination, but not too late, my dear father, to give me your blessing and your help. I fear I may be disappointing some of your ambitions, but you are too good a father not to see that happiness and affection are, after all, the best things to make a marriage successful.—Your affectionate child, Dulcie."

"P.S.—By the way, I hear Miles is turned out of the business. This will make not the slightest difference to me, as it would be a mean thing, as you will agree, to throw a man over because he is in trouble. I suppose it is a trick of that detestable little cad, Trichet. I always hated the little beast! He is more like a monkey than a man, I think!"

Dulcie felt proud of this composition more particularly of the postscript.

"That will prevent the chance of any misunderstanding on that score!" she said to herself, as she folded and addressed the letter. "It will show papa that I consider Miles' dismissal as a matter of minor importance, and also put any little dreams he may have had on the subject of my becoming Mrs. Albert Trichet out of his calculations. No woman who describes a suitor for her hand as a monkey, could, by any possibility, be expected to retract the expression and marry him, under any pressure of circumstances whatever! It's just as well papa should see exactly how matters stand!"

After that, Miss Halliday felt as happy as a bird—a happiness which was in no way diminished by the sight of Geoffrey and Angel coming towards the house together from the stables.

Dulcie saw that Geoffrey looked pale and ill, but that he was apparently making an effort to talk to his wife; and presently, as she watched them, she saw Angel half shyly, and with a quick, nervous glance at her husband's face, slip her hand through his arm, of her own accord.

Geoffrey was evidently surprised, and a little colour mounted to his brow, but after a minute he laid his other hand upon his wife's, and looked pleased.

Perhaps coming straight from that sad interview upon the Downs, Geoffrey Dane might reasonably have cared for a little interval of solitude and thought ere he was called upon to begin to tread the path which his lost love had pointed out to him. But life sometimes hurries us on in an unaccountable fashion, and when as he turned into the stable-yard and flung himself off his foam-flecked horse, he was met by Angel, coming out hatless from the house to greet him on his return, something in her timid smile made him remember Rose de Brefour's words: "It is always possible for a man to make a young wife love him."

Was it he wondered. At any rate, he had made up his mind that he would try

A certain surprise came upon him,

too, at the manner in which Angel greeted him; there was a shade of embarrassment in her welcome, and a sense of being met half-way in her manner, that he had not noticed in her before.

He spoke to her at once about the horse, and told her that he would rather she waited a day or two before riding him toounds.

"Take him out for an hour along the roads if you like, he is very fresh, and wants exercise, and wait to hunt him till next week."

She agreed, with all her accustomed gentleness, yet pleaded that she might at least hunt on the following Monday. "The mare will not be right for a week, Gibson says, and Weldon Gorse is such a good meet, Geoff, and if you will be so good as to look after me a bit—"

"There is Captain Lessiter to do that, is there not?" he said, a little shortly, making not a question but an assertion of the remark.

"Captain Lessiter has gone away," said Angel quietly.

"Indeed!" He looked at her inquiringly, and a certain dim perception of things he had never yet thought about came into his mind, when he saw the hot colour rise like a flame in his wife's fair face.

"Captain Lessiter will not come back, Geoffrey," she went on with an effort; "he—he has off-ended me mortally. I shall never speak to him again."

It cost her a great deal to say this, Geoffrey was looking at her curiously—something became suddenly revealed to him; she was not then cold, as he had always believed her to be, only, as with himself, things had gone wrong. His infinite tact and sympathy saved him from the fatal error which nine men out of ten would have fallen into in the circumstances. He refrained from asking her a single question, or from demanding the slightest explanation from her. Only he said very quietly and simply, just as if he knew all about it—

"Thank you, my dear. I am quite sure you have done right."

And then it was that Angel, touched by his trust and his generosity, slipped her hand, in a shy, caressing fashion, under his arm.

Geoffrey had never felt so drawn to her before. "Perhaps, after all, she will grow to love me a bit," he said to himself, as he laid his hand softly upon the little timid fingers upon his arm; "and I may at least be able to make her happy."

And so Dulcie, sitting on the lawn as she came from the long French window of the drawing-room, with all sorts of great purposes in her determined little face.

"Look here, Angel and Geoff," she began, plunging after her habit right into the very middle of her theme. "I have got something very startling to tell you. I don't know what you will say about it, although I may as well tell you at once that it doesn't matter very much what you say," here she looked quite defiantly at them both, "because I have quite made up my mind—"

"Good gracious, Dulcie!" murmured Angel, turning a little pale at this alarming preamble, whilst Geoffrey only bent his brown eyes very attentively upon her.

"The fact of the matter is, that—I am going to marry—Miles Faulkner!" said Dulcie, a little breathlessly, but flinging the words in a staccato fashion at them as if in very truth they were little burning squibs, and then shut her lips up with a snap, and looked quickly from one to the other, as though to ask, "Now, what have you got to say to that?"

Geoffrey's answer was to reach out both his hands to her, and to shake hers very heartily.

"Then you are going to marry one of the very best fellows in the whole world, Dulcie, and I only hope that you are good enough to deserve him."

Dulcie's eyes literally shone with delight, and her face broke out into smiles. No answer in the world could have pleased her better.

"I don't deserve him in the very least, of course," she answered, with a little saucy toss of her chin; "but that's his affair, Geoff, and meanwhile, I am looking to you to help us. Do you know that those terrible old men—your uncle and papa, I mean—have given him his dismissal from the house?"

"Yes; I heard of it the other day. I couldn't make it out," murmured Geoffrey, and a sense of shame and contrition filled him that the trouble of his friend had made so little impression upon him—how selfish, after all, he had been in his own grief! It was not thus surely Rose de Brefour would have treated a friend who was suffering under ill-fortune. He had gone away and absolutely forgotten the bad news he had heard about a man who had been his greatest friend. He had not made an effort in his behalf, nor even proffered one inquiry concerning his probable fate. Poor old Miles!

"You see it is that hateful little sneak Trichet who has done it," Dulcie was saying; "they wanted me—those two silly old idiots—to marry him, and he was jealous of Miles, and thought he would get him out of the way. But you are such a favourite with your uncle, Geoff, that I am sure if you try you could get things put right for him."

"And so I will try!" cried Geoffrey. "I will go up to London to-morrow about it. Albert Trichet starts for South America this very night, and when he is safe out of the way my uncle is far more likely to listen to anything I say. Don't you worry yourself, Dulcie. Write and ask old Miles down here for a day or two—"

"I have telegraphed to him to come already," said Dulcie, demurely. "That's right, I'll be off by the 8.10 in the morning, Angel. I'll get that put right for you somehow, Dulcie; the House shall not leave the dear old boy out in the cold if I can help it."

He was full of a new enthusiasm and energy—already work for others, that grand panacea for private trouble, lay under his very hand. "There are other things in life to live for," Rose said

when she bade him turn his back upon love for ever. Was she not always right?

"Order breakfast for me at seven to-morrow," he said to his wife, as they went into the house, "and I'll have the dog-cart to take me to the station." Then, turning to Dulcie, he added with a smile, "Angel will have to wait till Monday to ride The Moor. You see, she has nobody now to pilot her but me!"

So Angel had her reward too.

To be Continued.

DO BABIES THINK?

Professor Ribot, of France, Advances a New Theory.

Do children think before they can talk?

Professor Ribot, the great French psychologist, says that they do, denying the old fashioned notion that we must think in words or not at all. He bases his conclusion on the systematic study of the children of scientific men who have recorded the growth of their intelligence step by step.

He cites the case of the child of Preyer, aged thirty-one weeks. Preyer was a famous student, writer and scientist. His child interested itself exclusively in bottles, water jugs and other transparent vessels with white contents; it had thus seized upon a characteristic mark of one thing that was important to it, to wit, milk. At a later period it designated these by the syllable "moom."

Another illustration is that of a boy, aged less than one year and incapable of pronouncing a single word, to whom a stuffed grouse was shown with the word "bird" uttered to identify it. The child immediately looked across to the other side of the room, where there was a stuffed owl.

A child, having listened first with its right ear, then with its left, to the ticking of a watch, stretched out its arms gleefully toward the clock on the mantelpiece.

Darwin related these observations of his grandson:—"The child, who was just beginning to speak, called a duck quack, and by special association it also called water 'quack.' By an appreciation of the resemblance of qualities it next extended the term 'quack' to denote all birds and insects on the one hand and all fluid substances on the other. By a still more delicate appreciation of resemblance the child eventually called all the coins 'quack,' because on the back of a French sou it had once seen the representation of an eagle."

Preyer says of one of his children that it was impossible to take away one of his nine-pins without its being discovered by the child, while at eighteen months he knew quite well whether one of his ten animals was missing or not. Yet this is no proof that he was able to count up to nine or ten.

At seventeen months Preyer's child, which could not speak a word, finding that it was unable to obtain a plaything placed above its reach in a cupboard, looked about to the right and left, found a small traveling trunk, took it climbed up and possessed itself of the desired object. Here there is certainly an element of invention.

A CREAMY COMPLEXION.

Judicious treatment, both internal and external, will surely result in a skin whose texture resembles the top of a pan of Devonshire cream. Cream is a synonym for luxury. A cat fed on it has a sleek appearance and superb fur. Living upon the cream of things develops the well bred, well groomed type of modern civilization.

No woman with prematurely crowded, tracked eyes and hatrack neck need despair, but accept gratefully the teachings of science and sense. Milk is fattening; cream more so. Buy one of the whole wheat preparations, already cooked, and make a gruel of it, with half a pint of very rich milk and a pinch of salt. Cook it slowly, stirring occasionally till it bubbles up like a charlotte russe. Sip it as hot as can be taken just before retiring. This will nourish the nerves and tissue, promote sound sleep and fill out all crevices of one's anatomy. It must be taken regularly for several months.

Most skin troubles come from a starved state of the pores. These, being fed from within and without, are restored to healthful action. Wash your face every night vigorously with hot water and soap; rinse with cold and dry carefully. Rub in, with an upward motion, this pure French cream—Take four ounces of the finest oil of sweet almonds, one ounce fresh rosewater, half a teaspoonful each of benzoin and violet extract, and half an ounce each of spermaceti and white wax. Cut up the latter fine, add the oil and stir over the fire till boiling. Set into a pan of snow or ice, stirring slowly and scraping toward the centre all accumulation hardening at the sides or bottom. When evenly thick, beat for half an hour, add the rosewater and benzoin mixed together, slowly, then beat for about fifteen minutes longer.

Add the violet perfume and stir it in well. Pour into a jelly tumbler with a tight fitting top and set in a cool place for several hours. This cream, if properly made, keeps perfectly, is a pure skin food and never causes a flowy growth upon the face. It is the safest and most satisfactory cosmetic.

An odd business is pursued by a man in Berlin. He breeds rats, and supplies them to hospitals for vivisection purposes.

Suffered Twenty-Five Years.

Samuel F. Perry, of Port Maitland, N. S., Has Recovered From a Long and Trying Illness.

Samuel F. Perry, Port Maitland, N. S., is one of the oldest residents of that town. He is a ship builder by trade, but like many others living along the sea coast has also followed the occupation of a sailor. Owing to an injury to his back some twenty-five years ago, he has, until lately, led a life of more or less suffering. Mr. Perry tells of his trouble as follows:—"About twenty-five years ago, I strained my back severely, and the result was that for six months following this I could not take a single step without the greatest agony. I doctored for about a year with a local doctor and while the pain was eased to some extent, the trouble spread from my back to my hips and legs and it was almost impossible for me to get around. I had to exercise the greatest care when walking, else I would fall to the ground. It was not exactly paralysis, and yet it was something very nearly akin to it. For about twenty-five years, I have suffered in this way, and although I doctored more or less, and tried many remedies I could not get relief. One day I read in a newspaper the particulars of a cure in a case very like my own, through the means of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I determined to try them. I began their use about two years ago, feeling that what they had done in the other case they would no doubt do for me. The trouble had fastened itself so firmly that I did not hope for a speedy cure, but as I found their use until I had taken some thirty or more boxes, with the gratifying result that they did for me what long years of other treatment failed to do, restored me to an excellent measure of health, and I can now go about almost as actively as in my young days. I gladly make known the benefit I have received, and hope my statement will give new hope to some other sufferer."

REMARKABLE OPERATIONS.

Two remarkable surgical operations for the purpose of stopping internal hemorrhage have been performed by Dr. Habart, of Vienna. In the case of a young man who had fired four slugs into himself, the surgeon cut into the thoracic cavity, removing one of the ribs, and stuffed a yard and a half of iodiform gauze between the heart and the lungs. The other case, that of a man stabbed through the armpit, was treated in the same way. Both patients recovered and are now perfectly well.

WORLD BECOMING CROWDED.

Official figures show that the population of every European country goes on increasing rapidly, and that during the past ten years this increase has been at the rate of nearly 10 per cent. The means of maintaining the people are not increasing in like ratio. At the beginning of the present century the population of Europe was put by Levasseur at 175,000,000. In 1830 it was 230,000,000. In 1860 it was 290,000,000, and in 1890 it was 350,000,000. It is now 389,000,000, and the continuance of the present rate of increase will make it 585,000,000 in 1900, 10 per cent. increase over what it was in 1890.

CAMERAS IN CHURCH.

A clergyman in England is advocating the use of a concealed camera in the pulpit, which could be snapped with a button, unknown to the congregation. This innovation, he thinks would prevent much of the snoozing in church, as the camera would take a picture of the congregation, and the sleeping ones would be caught. Then, he says, by showing these photographs to the blacksliding ones they would become so shamed that they would not be liable to repeat the performance. The suggestion is novel; but we should think that the surest way of keeping the congregation awake lies in preaching interesting sermons.

REMARKABLE ASSEMBLAGE.

In several respects the Peace Conference, now in session at The Hague, is the most remarkable assemblage of the nations which history records. Of the 1,500,000,000 people who constitute the population of the entire world about 1,400,000,000 are represented in that gathering.

TALLE SALT A LUXURY.

The greatest luxury in Central Africa is salt. The long continued use of vegetable food in that country creates so painful a longing for salt that natives deprived of it for a long period often show symptoms of insanity.

TREE 2,000 YEARS OLD.

The oldest tree on earth with an authentic history is the great Bhootee tree of Burma. For 20 centuries it has been held sacred to Buddha, and no person is allowed to touch the trunk. When the leaves fall they are carried away as relics by pilgrims.

AN AWFUL FLING.

Mrs. Styles—I'd have you understand that I know a good many worse men than my husband.

Mrs. Myles—My dear, you must be more particular about picking your acquaintances.