

A Broken Vow;

—OR—

BETTER THAN REVENGE.

CHAPTER V.

Something definite was shaping in the mind of Olive Varney; she began at last to see the way. If only by the aid of this old woman she could get into that house; if only she could be smuggled in, or taken in under false pretences, the rest would be easy. If no other fashion occurred to her for declaring herself, she might do it in a dramatic way, and bring Olive Varney back from the grave. Best of all, however, if she could get into the place as a stranger, free to spy out the land. Aunt Phipps, as she had called herself, was certainly the most feeble, timid old creature imaginable. That she had been shaken by some disaster was evident; she seemed quite glad to cling to the arm of this stranger, and to submit to being led away by her. She said nothing aloud as they walked; she only whimpered, and dabbed at her eyes with a black-bordered handkerchief, and muttered softly to herself.

"It never occurred to me," replied Olive Varney.

"It's true," he went on. "They're just like men; some of 'em big and flashy and loud, and never to be depended upon; and others demure-looking and plodding and humble, and never losing a minute, and always conscientious. Some that go in a dull, ordinary fashion, as if they weren't a bit pleased at having to work at all; others with a dash and a sparkle, as if they were quite proud of themselves. Just like men—and women."

Aunt Phipps led the way up a staircase to the second floor. There she took from a little bracket outside a door a candlestick—lighted it—and opened the door. Olive saw that there were more clocks even here, to say nothing of a tall grandfather clock on the landing itself. The little old woman spoke of them after she had closed the door—and she spoke in a hushed voice.

"I don't like them," she whispered, looking all round about her. "I've stopped these; but I hear the others when I wake at night. They say things—they call to me with their chimes like old voices. And they never never cease ticking. Do you know what I think? I believe they'll tick my life away—oh, yes, they will—far quicker than if there was only one of 'em. I can't get my breath sometimes, trying to keep pace with them. It doesn't matter," she added, with her curious little laugh that was half a sigh—"but I shouldn't have liked it when I had money; I was more particular then; more to live for, you know."

"But surely you have something to live for now," suggested Olive. "What of this young man who lives at the house where I saw you to-night—what of him?" She was anxious, if possible, to bring the old woman back to that most vital subject.

"I'm afraid of him," said Aunt Phipps, untying her bonnet and shaking her head fretfully to rid herself of it. "You wouldn't like to go to anyone if you were carrying bad news, would you?"

"But I suppose it must be told at some time or other," said Olive Varney. "Won't you let me help you? What is it—a matter of death, or something less?"

"Death—and something worse," said Aunt Phipps, the ready tears springing to her eyes. "I'd give anything if I could even get the courage to write it. But I can't do that; my pen stops when I've got as far as—'You will be dreadfully sorry to hear'—and then the tears fall so fast that they simply spoil the paper. And if I hold my handkerchief against my eyes I can't see to write."

"Why not let me be your messenger?" asked Olive gently. "I told you that I wanted to get into the house, too, and that I also was afraid. And yet I do not bear any evil tidings. Only it happens that my errand is a delicate one, and I should like to do it under cover, as it were. At all events, if you have bad news why not let me pave the way for you—break it gently? Does this boy of whom you speak know that you're in London?"

"No," replied the old woman, with a shake of the head. "And yet in a way he is expecting me—he has been expecting me for years past."

"To bring him bad news?" asked Olive.

"No—to take him good news," said Aunt Phipps, beginning to weep again. "And I simply dare not tell him that there is no good news for him at all, but only bad. Oh, dear! oh, dear!—what ever shall I do?"

"It may not be so bad as you think," said Olive Varney. "Come—since you have told me so much, why not go further and tell me all. We have this in common at least—that we each want to get into this mysterious house, and that each is a little afraid of the business. But I am stronger, and although I am afraid, I mean to carry out what I have started to do. It doesn't concern any boy or young man; it concerns a girl."

"I think you might help me," said Aunt Phipps hesitatingly. "After all, it is only to take a message—to tell

quietly something that I should blunder over, and cry about, and upset everybody in telling. I like your face," she added, looking at Olive with a fleeting smile—"there has been sorrow there—and not much brightness; but it's a good face. Yes—I'll let you help me."

"And so help myself at the same time," said Olive gaily, pleased at having gained her point. "Now—tell me what I am to do."

Aunt Phipps waited for a moment or two, as though putting her story together in her own mind; sighed once or twice; dabbed at her eyes with the black-bordered handkerchief; and began.

"The boy in that house is a Mr. Christopher Dayne—and I believe he is the nicest boy in the world. I've never seen him—and I've never been in the house in my life; but I am his aunt."

"And yet have never seen him," said Olive steadily. "Please go on."

"His uncle—Mr. Julius Phipps—married me rather late in life," went on the old lady—"and treated me rather well, all things considered. I was very, very rich—and we travelled about a great deal. He was one of the finest-looking men I've ever seen—and he invented the most beautiful pet-names for me you can imagine; I never knew in the morning what new name he was going to call me for the day—and I didn't deserve any one of them. Gradually, however, as the money went, the pet-names grew less; they had to last for a week sometimes before he could find a new one. And when there was nothing left at all, and we were in desperate straits, he called me 'Anne' only. He was like some of Tagg's clocks—all moods. But I was very, very fond of him."

She fell to weeping again in her hopeless, helpless way. After a little time Olive ventured to remind her about the boy, and the message that boy was to receive. Aunt Phipps dried her eyes, and sat up, and said she was sorry to have given way; and laughed her queer little laugh, and went on with her story.

"I always thought Phipps was a rich man—but he wasn't. From the first moment I knew him he was always cutting a figure—and buying horses—and making bets—and doing everything that was dashing and fine and gentlemanly. I was quite proud to be seen with him. It was only after he married me that I discovered he was deep in debt, and that I must pay a great deal to set him right. But I paid it—and he was quite happy and affectionate about it, and said he was glad he had married me and that no other woman would probably have suited him so well. He was always saying nice things like that."

"He had reason to be grateful to you, I should think," said Olive, with some bitterness.

"After a little time I found that letters were coming for him from London—letters which annoyed him. I managed to find out at last that they were from this young man—Christopher Dayne; and I discovered they referred to a large sum of money which belonged to the boy. Phipps was his uncle, and had been entrusted with the fortune for investment by the boy's mother—Phipps's sister. And the fortune was gone."

"Gone? You mean squandered, I suppose?" asked Olive in a whisper.

"Yes, my dear—squandered. The boy was to have had it when he was one-and-twenty; he's been waiting for it for three years—and, God help me!"—Aunt Phipps covered her face with her hands and shuddered—"there's nothing to wait for. Christopher Dayne is a beggar, and yet he expects me to walk into that house, and tell him that his fortune is ready for him, and that he never need want for money again!"

"So that's what you're afraid of, is it?" asked Olive Varney slowly. "You dare not face the boy and tell him that he is a beggar, eh?"

"No, I dare not. I believe he's a nice boy, and a hard-working boy, who hopes to make a name for himself in the world. He wrote again—and again to Phipps, and Phipps always put him off with excuses. Only the last letter that he sent to Phipps demanding some account of the money suggested that the boy was in love and wanted the money more than ever. Beautiful things he wrote, too, about Lucy."

"Lucy? That is the girl who lives there, is it not?"

"Yes; and he says that when he has his fortune he's going to ask her to marry him. And there's no fortune—and I don't know what I'm to do." Thus Aunt Phipps, with deep dejection, and with the black-bordered handkerchief at her eyes.

"Where is your husband, Mrs. Phipps?" asked Olive, leaning forward across the table.

"Dead," wailed Aunt Phipps. "When he found that all the fortune was gone, and that we were penniless, he said it was too much for him. He went out and never came back; and he left a letter saying—" Aunt Phipps sobbed, and looked carefully for a dry place on the handkerchief—"saying he was going to make away with himself. And he was always a man of his word, poor dear. I waited for two days in Paris, and he never came back; then I rushed across to London, intending to tell the boy; and I haven't had the courage."

Olive Varney got to her feet, and threw up her head with a new look of resolution. She had found the way at last, and this feeble, weeping old woman was to help her.

"Listen to me," she said. "You shall stay here, without a soul knowing where you are or what has happened to you. I will go to see this Mr. Chris-

topher Dayne; I will break the news gently to him; I will make him see it in the right light; he shall forgive you. Don't worry; I will put everything right for you."

"You are very wonderful—and very strong," said Aunt Phipps, drying her eyes. "I will stop here until you tell me that the boy doesn't think it's my fault, and won't speak hardly of me. It is kind of you to smooth the way for me."

"Remember that promise," said Olive firmly. "You are to wait here until I come for you; you are to rely absolutely on me. I shall come soon, and shall let you know all he says. Good-night."

The way was found at last. Olive Varney had set her feet firmly upon the road she meant to travel. With grim, set mouth, and with eyes staring straight before her in one direction, she swept on through the silent streets, straight towards Chelsea.

(To be Continued.)



DIFFICULTIES TO BE OVERCOME.

First and foremost in the production of a first-class cheese, is the raw material; we must have a better quality of milk, as all depends upon the flavor of the cheese for its true value. The milk producer must make improvements in the quality of our dairy products is to be of the finest. A poor flavor is always to be traced back to the patrons of factories. Although people often send very inferior quality of milk to the factories, they expect the maker to turn out a first-class cheese. If the maker is foolish enough to accept such milk he is blamed for everything.

Second to flavor comes the texture, for which we can hold the producer responsible to a greater extent, especially if his milk is over ripe. This over-ripening is due to the faulty method of caring and handling of the milk. We cannot hold the patron responsible alone, however. The maker comes into the game. We cannot hope for any great improvement until we have makers who have the backbone to return bad flavored, over ripe, or any milk that is not suitable to make the most and the best article out of. Many makers have not the courage to return bad milk. Some will not for fear of vexing their patrons so that they may leave them and go to a neighboring factory that is willing with open arms to receive them.

Fortunately, defects in milk are not general, they are nearly always confined to a few patrons. The evil effects the whole, however. One or two defective cans of milk in a vat of about 5,000 pounds will contaminate the whole lot. The quantity will be reduced to the extent of from 5 to 15 pounds in 1,000 or about 25 to 65 pounds on the whole vat. The resultant inferior quality may amount to from 1/2 to 2 cents a pound. Allowing 11 cents to be the price of cheese, the total reduction (taking 10 pounds cheese a 100 pounds of milk) would be \$9.63, striking an average on both price and number of pounds lost. In taking in such milk, therefore, a loss of about 3 times a maker's salary is incurred. Despite this fact, the majority of offenders refuse to do any better.

If the maker wishes to run the risk of manufacturing this sort of raw material; and the buyer will accept the inferior product, it would be a step forward if we could place a penalty upon the maker for accepting such milk. We should hold the patron responsible for bad flavor and the maker for bad texture. Many makers depend nearly altogether upon the inspectors to keep their patrons in line. This is all very well, but it is just so much energy expended for nothing. If the makers will not back the inspector and carry out his instructions, no good will be accomplished.—N. J. Kuneman, cheese factory instructor, in an address to Manitoba dairymen.

FARM NOTES.

The fast changing into winter and all-year dairying must avoid all unnecessary shrinkage of the milk yield. Abundant food, a good stable, and protection from chilly winds and beating storms will prevent shrinkage of milk, and often show absolute gain in yield. It is not luck that counts, but deliberate, calculating judgment.

It is to be remembered that if nitrogen be applied in the form of ammonia, cottonseed meal or other organic form, it must first be converted into nitrate before the plant can use it and this is not done until the soil becomes warm, and then this action goes on all through the season till autumn, and has the same effect as if nitrate of soda were sowed every day, the plants being kept in vigorous growth without giving the fruit any chance to ripen or wood to mature.

The course which I have adopted for many years is to provide neat and comfortable laborers' cottages, place in them married men who work for me, and give them all the winter work I can provide, writes a correspondent. Some of this work would be from unclean rather unprofitable for me, but I am reimbursed for any deficiency of this kind by the superior help I obtain through the summer. I pay them in

cash whenever they want it; and do not impose on them unsaleable farm produce at high rates. They appreciate the difference. If I pay 25 per cent. more than the average wages, I get men who are worth double the average amount of work, by securing the pick of laborers. It saves me a great deal of care and trouble to secure men who will go right ahead with whatever work may be allotted to them.

DAIRYING VS. GRAIN RAISING.

When you sell butter fat you are selling sunshine. When you sell grain you are selling the fertility of your soil. You harvest wheat and corn once a year. You harvest milk twice a day. The dairy farmer raises more grain and better grain and gets a higher price than anybody.

The dairyman leaves his family a better farm than he got. The grain raiser don't.

A ton of wheat takes \$7 worth of fertility from the soil. A ton of butter takes 50 cents. The wheat is worth \$20 and the butter \$400. Which do you raise?

A carload of grain is worth \$250. A carload of butter is worth \$5,000. Convert your grain into butter and save the freight on nineteen cars.

MOST FAMOUS SWINDLER

DEATH ENDS A REMARKABLE CAREER OF CRIME.

Robberies on Extensive Scale—Marriages and Duels Figured in His Life.

The death is announced at Milan of one of the most famous swindlers in Europe, George Masolescu, Duke of Otranto, and Prince Lahovray, both titles being self-conferred on him. He was a man of extraordinary good looks, a perfect figure, a bright, amiable disposition and all the necessary equipment for the Chevalier's Industrie. He was born in Roumania forty years ago, the son of an army officer. He ran away from a military academy at Galatz and went to Constantinople. He soon absconded with the pocketbook and the prize beauty of the Pasha's harem. He was arrested across the Greek frontier and attempted suicide. He was taken to a hospital, where the handsome youth attracted the attention of Queen Olga, who was visiting the sick. She procured his release, and gave him money enough to take him home. He left Roumania the second time as a slowaway on a grain steamer, and reached Paris. He soon stole enough to set up a large villa in the fashionable quarter. He drove his own carriage on the Bois de Boulogne and raced his horses at Longchamps. Presently justice overlooked him and he was sent to jail.

When he was released from prison, four or five years later, he visited London and Monte Carlo, and went to Canada as the Duke of Otranto. In San Francisco he was the nephew of the Spanish Minister at Washington. Thence he went to Japan, and afterwards to Honolulu, where he fleeced a rich widow.

FLEECED A MILLIONAIRE.

From Honolulu he went to Chicago, where he became engaged to the daughter of a millionaire. He returned to London and got eight months at hard labor for stealing jewelry from hotels. After this he went to Brussels, where he rescued a rich Brazilian from a gang of ruffians and escorted him to a hotel, picking his pockets of \$10,000 while on the way. A short visit to Monte Carlo as the Duke of Otranto netted him 200,000 crowns out of a rich Hungarian widow. After serving another sentence in jail for a hotel robbery at Nice, he visited Italy, where he met the Countess Angelica von Konigsbruck, a member of one of the most distinguished Saxon families. Posing as a wealthy Roumanian land-owner, he married her in Genoa.

The marriage was celebrated before a fashionable audience by the Archbishop of Genoa. The bride's large dowry was exhausted during the honeymoon. A child was born to the couple in Switzerland.

FURTHER ADVENTURES.

After a duel with the brother of another lady, this adventurer went to America again, and returned to Paris as the Prince Lahovray, bringing with him the proceeds of a jewel robbery in Philadelphia. Subsequently he went to Berlin and proposed to an American lady. Incidentally he ransacked the hotel bedrooms. When the relatives of the lady demanded financial guarantees, the Prince was arrested for a robbery at Genoa. He was tried in Berlin. He shammed insanity and deceived the experts completely, so that he was sent to an asylum. He escaped from this institution after gagging and binding the warden.

He next visited the Klondike, after which he returned to Italy, married a rich French woman and settled down to write his memoirs. He was suffering, he wrote, from an incurable disease, and only regretted that he had to leave his "angel of a wife and two pearls of children."

The Countess von Konigsbruck obtained a divorce from him in the Bavarian courts.

A horse is still a horse, even when turned into a pasture.