

Diamond Cut Diamond
OR,
THE ROUT OF THE ENEMY.

CHAPTER XV.—Continued.
"Look at me," he said—and she lifted her timid frightened eyes reluctantly to his. "Now listen. You are to try and make him talk and open out his heart to you. Talk to him about this woman; you might ask him if he has ever been in love—make him confess it to you—even offer to arrange a meeting."

"Matthew!"—with a cry of horror—"But it is wrong, wicked!—and if, as you think she is a married woman—"
"Pooh! how squeamish you are. There'll be no harm done; it's only till I find out, then she will be dropped at once. It's only an amusement to him," he added soothingly—"the sort of thing every man goes through before he marries and settles down. Besides, he is gone on the girl now. Why, he almost made love to her this evening, his attentions were most marked I consider, too much so, to draw back, and so I should tell him if he were to turn restive. Why you must have noticed it surely—he was quite lover-like—"

"I noticed that he took a great deal of champagne," she answered with a frightened look.
"Matthew Dane scowled at her, and seized her roughly by the wrist, so that she uttered a little cry of terror."

"Don't let me hear you say that again!" he cried angrily. "I know what you mean. I saw you look at me with your miserable begging face at supper. Don't you think you are going to stand in my light—you poor, useless creature! What do I keep you here for, do you imagine, except to do as you are told? That's all you can do. If you had got a son of your own, Madam, you might have a right to speak—but as it is—"

And she was helpless. She had no strength either of mind or of body to resist his will. She would have to obey him. Always the scenes between them ended alike. He jeered at her, or swore at her, as the case might be, for her one great sin against him—that sin, which, as long as they both should live, he would never forgive her—for—the sin of being childless. In time, she too had grown to believe it to be almost a crime that she had so bitterly disappointed him, and to feel a shame of herself for having so fatally failed. It seemed to her, in her morbid misery, that she ate his bread, and lived under his roof, and was clothed by his money, all under false pretences, since she had not done that one thing for him for which he had made her his wife. When he reproached her with it, she always gave in to him. She had done nothing for him. Perhaps, then, he was right, and that blind obedience was her sole and only method of reparation for all she owed him.

How many such tragedies are there not in the world, hidden away under a veil of conventional life, of seeming courtesy, of mock kindness and affection, so that the prying eyes of friends and acquaintances are not able to discern them, but which, all the time, smoulder and burn in the innermost private lives of those who bear themselves so irreproachably in public. Of all Mr. and Mrs. Dane's acquaintances and relatives, not one had the remotest idea that they were not a perfectly orderly and well-conducted middle-aged couple, living together in respectable harmony—save only Geoffrey Dane, who had seen behind the scenes, and whose heart ached for the poor weak-natured woman who clung to him, and whose doom had gone forth that she was to deceive and betray him.

Geoffrey had gone home that night with a strange whirl of complex feelings in his mind. The long day upon the summer river, the near proximity of a girl who was beautiful and tender as a poet's dream, the belief that he had but to put forth his hand to take her for his own—all this had had its full effect upon him. Added to which, the fumes of the wine were in his head, that wine with which his uncle had piled him so persistently. Was that the reason that he had been carried away a little beyond his own natural self? Why had he murmured a word or two in Angel's ear, that had better, perhaps, have been left unsaid? Why had he pressed her hand at parting with a fervour that had called up the tell-tale blushes on to her face and neck? As Geoffrey recalled it, walking home through the cool night air to his rooms, he felt a certain shame at himself that so poor and bad a reason should have led him to make love to such a one as Angel Halliday.

"She is as good as she is beautiful!" he said to himself with contrition, as he came to his own door, "and I, at least, am utterly unworthy of her." And as he made his way up his narrow staircase, he thought: "Yet, perhaps she loves me! Perhaps this girl, so good, so pure, so perfect, is destined to be my very own, whilst Rose de Brefour—the first madness of my manhood's love—has drifted away from me for ever, and by now, has forgotten me!"

He opened his door, and there, upon the round table in the middle of his room, right under the radiance of the lamp, lay a square parcel, in brown paper.

It was a beautifully bound edition of the works of the poet Congreve.

Rose de Brefour, then, thought of him still!

CHAPTER XVI.

In the deepening twilight of a still, grey evening, two women stood outside a high brick wall thick fenced in a small, cottage-like looking residence,

about ten miles to the north of London.

There was no village, no other house even, within three or four miles, save the railway station, a small and unimportant one, from which the women had walked, and even that was over two miles away, down a narrow winding lane, along which they had not met a single living soul as they came. Both were wrapped up in long cloaks, and were thickly veiled. One woman was shorter and stouter than the other, and carried a large basket upon her arm; the taller wore a large brown silk bonnet, she clung on to her companion, and trembled violently in every limb as they stood before the high painted wooden door in the wall.

"Ring again, Martine," she said with chattering teeth.

And Martine rang again, and the small melancholy tinkling of a loosely-strung bell echoed in a ghostly fashion behind the closed door.
"For the love of all the Saints, Madame," murmured Martine, pressing her mistress's arm closer to her side, "be not so much afraid! Am I not with you, as I was last time? Can any harm come to you? Is it not an errand of love, and of charity, that we have come upon?"

"Alas, Martine," answered Rose, "if it were, indeed, love that brought me to this house, how much easier would it not be! But the loathing and the abhorrence which fills me every time that it amounts to a crime so deep that God himself can never pardon my wickedness." A stifled sob cut short her words, and then the door was slowly unbarred from within, and a man admitted them into a small stone-flagged yard.

"Courage, my beautiful one," murmured the old servant. "Am I not with thee?"

A long, low, shivering sigh was the only answer. And then Madame de Brefour drew herself up, and threw back her head with a resolute action, which told old Martine that the momentary weakness was subdued.

The man who admitted them seemed to expect their visit. He led the way in silence into a small dingy house, whose windows were closely barred up with thick iron bars. A lunatic had once been confined in this melancholy house—a raving madman, who had been kept here for years. There was a prisoner here now, but he was not mad.
The two women were ushered into a small room on the ground floor, where an elderly woman rose civilly at their entrance, and set chairs for them by the table. This was the wife of the man who had admitted them; and they were Madame de Brefour's servants, paid by her twice a year for the work they did for her; paid to look after the poor gentleman, who was not mad, but who was weak in mind, who, had delusions—to whom absolute seclusion was necessary. That was how it had been explained to them.

Every six months Madame de Brefour came to see her brother—that was what they believed him to be; and she paid the couple who took care of him for her. Paid them for the house-rent and the taxes, for the coals and the firing, for the food and for the medicines, down to the fringe of laurel shrubs, until after it was dark.
When the business was over, Madame de Brefour asked a question or two, to which the woman replied.
"How is my brother?"
"Much the same, Madam."
"Is his appetite good?"
"Excellent. He has not had a day's illness since you were here last, and he sleeps perfectly."
"He still takes his little airing in the evening?"
"Regularly. Generally in the yard, but occasionally he will go a little way along the lane, if we are both with him and the night is dark."
"You are careful, of course, to humour him in his strange fancies?"
"Oh, most careful, Madam. Poor gentleman, it would be cruel to thwart him, he is so harmless and so quiet."
"That is well. Now I will go and see him." And she rose, with a certain determination, from the table.

Anyone who knew her face well would not have failed to notice the odd, strained lines of her mouth, as she asked those questions, and the dark rings round her eyes, that told of some inward terror at her soul. Martine watched her with bated breath. The faithful woman's heart ached for these signs of suppressed agony, of which she knew how to read every word. But the caretaker and his wife saw nothing.

A candle was lighted and they went up the narrow stairs.

In an upper room, a small, shrunken figure sat, crouched up in an arm-chair by the table.

He turned his head quickly as the door opened.

Madame de Brefour, with a fixed, white face that might have been that of a martyr led to the stake, advanced to the middle of the room.

Martine stood by the door, in the shadow. The man and his wife withdrew.

An evil-looking man. A low, flat head, with a great gash across the forehead, from which the rough, black hair was tossed back; narrow eyes, of a reddish hue, set close together; a sensuous mouth, with a pendulous under-lip, in which weakness and vice were strangely blended; a shrunken form, shapeless and devoid of symmetry, grief, coarse-looking hands, and a narrow, incurving chest.

Such was the man to whom once, long ago, in the absolute ignorance of her early girlhood, Rose had given away her glorious maiden beauty. She had been loved by him! That was the crowning shame and horror of it! He had loved her, this poor, shrivelled wretch—had kissed her on the lips—drawn her white arms, in tender love, about his neck. That was the abyss of disgust and disgrace into which she had fallen! That was why, every time she looked upon the escaped felon, the man who had been a swindler and a thief—whose baseness had been revealed to her in all his atrocity—that was why the hideous past arose out of its tomb, and glared and gibed at her, like a demon out of a living hell. For this cause it was that she shuddered at the sight of him, with a loathing that was stronger than duty, more infinite than all her Christian compassion.

"I allowed that thing to love me once!" That was what she said to herself now, as she went across the room to him, and the very shame of it made her humble and gentle to him.

"How are you, Leon?"
"I am still alive," he answered, with an evil grin. "That grieves you, no doubt?"

"My friend, it is God's will," she answered gently, too truthful to deny what his words implied.

He answered nothing.

She glanced at the open book at his elbow. It was a low type of French novel. She turned from it in disgust.
"Why do you not read the books I brought you? They, at least, would elevate, and not lower, your nature."
"I have not your passion for improving my mind," he said, with a sneer. Then, suddenly, his whole face changed; and he half-raised himself in his chair, so that she recoiled from him, whilst Martine made a swift step forward, and stood by her lady's side.

"Look here," he cried, angrily, "have you done as you said, have you been to old Dan?"
"I have seen him, and it is hopeless. I went against his own judgment, in defiance of my strong misgivings. I went, not for your sake, but for your father's. But it was useless. Nothing that I can say or do will wipe out the past, and he holds in his hands, as we knew, the proofs of your crime."

"Which he would give up to you, if you were to persevere."
"Never. You do not know him. I have made a supreme effort, and it has failed. By your death, he considers himself to have been cheated of his just vengeance. If I pleaded again, he would suspect the truth; and it would be a positive joy to him to know that you were alive, and to hunt you down—"

Then the wretched man laid his head on the table, and burst into weak, miserable tears.

"Well, better so—better far, than this life of a dog. I will give myself up to justice, and end it—"
"Not whilst I live to prevent it!" she cried, a terror worse than death blanching her face to a livid pallor.

"What I have suffered for all these long years shall not be thrown away by my action which would be a fresh crime. You sinned, and it is just that you should suffer, but your father's name shall not be dragged in the mud; he, at least, shall go down to his grave, not happy—that can never be—but, at least, he shall not die dishonoured. I have sworn it. It is for that I live—for that alone I have striven. As long as he lives the secret of your existence shall be kept, and you shall not, by a selfish impatience, crush the old man, who has endured such anguish on your account, and whose sole remaining hope is that he may carry to his grave the unsullied name which he has inherited from a long line of honourable men. After the life he has led you may do as you like."

He was cowed by her energy, and whimpered miserably behind his hand:
"And so you condemn me to this living death just to gratify an old dotard's empty pride? How could any prison be worse than this? A nice wife you are! And yet you used to say you loved me, Rose."

"I did love you, Leon," she answered quietly, though a hot blush leapt in a flame into her face, "but love can be worn away and destroyed. Love is no more everlasting than any other human passion or than any other earthly thing. My love is absolutely dead, as my esteem, which your sin destroyed. I do not pretend either to care for you or to respect you. As a husband you were untrue to me, as a man you have covered me with the shame of your crime. I do not even pity you. If it were not for your father I would not have sheltered you from justice for all these years. Leon de Brefour, I owe you neither love nor duty, and you know it; all that I have done, all that I am prepared to do, is not because you are my husband, for you have broken every link between us, and in the sight of Heaven you are nothing to me; but for your father, who is as my father, and whose failing years I desire to protect with all a daughter's love and a daughter's devotion."

"And yet you swore before the altar of God—" he began.

"And then a great passion broke from her. Bitherto she had spoken coldly and sternly, in grave measured words, that were cruel only because they were as ice, but now all the pent-up agony of her life burst from her in the wild leap of indignation and anger.

"Ah! do not take God's name upon

your lips—you, the vilest of men, unfit for truth either towards God or man! Are such actions as yours, infidelity and theft, not enough to cancel the holiest bond that the Church ever tied? In all my life I own to but one sin—one irreparable shame—the sin of having belonged to you, the shame of having borne your name! To man upon earth I may still be your wife, but if there be a Higher Tribunal than that of man, to that Tribunal I will appeal. There are sins which cancel the holiest vows—blows which leave scars that can never be healed; for these things Leon I will never forgive you—not because you have destroyed my happiness, but because you have ruined my nature, shattered my belief in goodness and in purity, tarnished even my faith in a God; these are offences for which there is no pardon, either in this world or in the next."

To be Continued.

HOW TOMMY ATKINS DRESSES.

There are 132 Varieties of Uniforms in Use in Great Britain's Army.

The English soldier is an apparently insoluble puzzle to the continental caricaturist, says the London Daily Mail.

When in their illustrated papers, foreigners desire to represent a Frenchman, a German, an Italian, or a Russian of the rank and file, they know what is expected of them, and execute the article with despatch; but the military Englishman presents the greatest difficulties. To begin with there are 132 of him. No two pictorial representations of our army in continental papers ever agree. One day our brave British battalions are marching bare-legged and hushed to give battle somewhere; on the same day the same troops are depicted in another journal wearing tight trousers and pill-boxes set jauntily over their ears. A third genius will show the soldiers still the same, marching on to victory in great coats and forage caps.

All this must be perplexing to the foreigner. It is even a little perplexing occasionally to ourselves.

In consequence, therefore, Sir Howard Vincent has given notice that he intends asking the Under Secretary for War to-night if he is aware that in the English army, there are, in addition to distinctive badges, 87 different patterns of frocks and jackets

FOR RANK AND FILE
forty-five different patterns of tunics, and dress-coat jackets, 47 different patterns of trousers, 35 different patterns of caps, and 30 different patterns of full-dress headgear, the greater part unsuitable for campaign work, and whether any steps are being taken or are contemplated in the direction of greater uniformity, as in the case of the Royal Navy and foreign armies.

It is common rumour that both Lord Wolseley and Lord Roberts have for a long time been in favour of a reform in the matter of Tommy Atkins' uniform; and it is possible that the above question will have the desired effect of calling public attention to the extraordinary state of things that exists in this direction.

Years ago, it is interesting to recall, when the present commander-in-chief was Sir Garnet Wolseley, he said: "Our men are dressed for show, for theatrical effect, instead of for work. My experience of the soldier is that the first thing he does is to take off his coat, and either fight or work in his shirt sleeves." In Lord Wolseley's opinion the most suitable dress was the Norfolk jacket, or something of similar character.

We have a force, including regular forces, army reserve, militia, yeomanry, and volunteers of about half the size of the armies of France and Germany, and we clothe it in 132 different ways, and then speak of the "uniform" of the British army.

Several reforms in the matter of dress are imperative in the army. Complaints for years have been loud against the great coat, head-dress and the boot. "The infantry great coat," says one authority, "is not

NEARLY SO IMPERMEABLE
to wet as might be desired; even in peace time a wet march brings the soldier in shivering to his barrack room, and wet to the skin."

As for the pipe-clay belt, it is doomed, whatever Mr. Brodrick may say as to the rest of the soldier's equipment.

"If there is a monstrous absurdity in our army it is the use of pipe-clay. Why should you send a man into the field where he will have to sleep out of doors, exposed to all sorts of weather, dressed up like a scarecrow, with white stuff all over him, that falls off in the first shower of rain, dirtying his boots and his clothes, I cannot understand."

These are not the words of a captious critic; their authorship lies with Lord Wolseley. Between them the latter and Lord Roberts could construct a very admirable, effective sort of uniform for Tommy Atkins, if they chose. Perhaps they are at present engaged in this agreeable task.

If so Mr. Brodrick's reply to Sir Howard Vincent's query may shed some light on the result of their labors.

LOOKING FOR A SCRAP.

The tramp had been very impertinent and dictatorial, until the hired man unexpectedly made his appearance and inquired:

"Are you lookin' for a scrap?"

His manner changed entirely, and at once he answered:

"Yes, sir; that's what I'm lookin' fur—a scrap of cold turkey or cold ham, or anything that happens to be handy."

La Grippe's Victims.

THE AFTER EFFECTS MORE DANGEROUS THAN THE DISEASE.

A Well-Known Quebec Farmer Suffered Untold Misery for Three Years Before He Found Relief.

The epidemic of la grippe which has swept over Canada like a scourge this winter, has left thousands of weak and despairing sufferers in all parts of the land. Grippe is a treacherous disease. You think you are cured, yet the slightest cold brings on a relapse. Its victims are left in a weakened condition and fall an easy prey to its manifold complications. The blood is left impure and impoverished; the nerves shattered, and heart trouble and nervous prostration are too often the result.

The following statement made by Mr. Daniel Clossey, a well known farmer living near West Bromo, Que., indicates the ravages made by the after effects of this scourge. Mr. Clossey says:—"Some five years ago I had an attack of la grippe. The earlier symptoms passed away, yet I continued to fall in health, and suffered intense pain in my head. I was subject to attacks of dizziness, and unless I would grasp something would fall. I gradually grew so weak as to be unable to do any work. My legs and feet were as cold as ice even in the summer months. If I attempted the least exertion my heart would beat violently. For three years I was in this helpless condition, and although during that time I was attended by three different doctors, their treatment produced not the slightest benefit. At this time I read the statement of one who had suffered from similar trouble, who was cured by the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and I decided to try them. The result was simply marvellous. A dozen boxes did what three years of expensive medical treatment failed to accomplish—restored me to full health and vigor, and I am again able to do my work about the farm. I honestly believe Dr. Williams' Pink Pills saved my life and I am glad to make this statement for the benefit it may bring to others."

After an attack of la grippe Dr. Williams' Pink Pills is the only medicine that can promptly restore you to health. They drive every trace of the poisonous germs from the system, build up and enrich the blood and strengthen the nerves. Sold by all dealers or sent post paid at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50 by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont., Always refuse imitations or substitutes.

WINTER FUN.

The Poet (insinuatingly)—Don't you think we would make a good couplet? She (coolly)—I am not averse.

Anna—They say I have my mother's mouth and nose. Hanna—Well, your mother was lucky to get rid of 'em.

Rosemary—Should you call young Mr. Callowell clever? Marianne—Clever! He doesn't know enough to turn around when he wants to go back!

Frank—Some genius in Birmingham has invented a buttonless shirt. Billy—Why that's odd. I've worn them ever since my wife learned to ride a bike.

Some men, said Uncle Eben, wouldn't hab no trouble 'tall 'bout gettin' rich ef dey held on as tight to de money dey earns as dey does to de money dey borrows.

As to Heredity.—Isaac—You do not believe dot we inherit our qualities from our forefaders? Cohenstein—Surely nod! If my forefaders had de same peensness aplity as me, would I hat to begin mitout vun cent?

Business Man (angrily)—You were here last week. Did I not tell you never to show your face in my office again? Life Insurance Agent (cheerfully)—Yes, sir; I called to see if you haven't changed your mind.

The railroad engineer, said the smart boarder, must be a happy man. He whistles at his work. Begging your pardon, said the cheerful idiot, prompt to crush all possible rivalry, he works at his whistle.

She knew him.—Mrs. Potts—It was rather late when you came home last night. Where were you? Mr. Potts—Why, my dear, Wednesday night is the regular weekly lodge meeting night, you know, and— Mrs. Potts—Yes, of course, I know; but did you win or lose?

A Bad Blunder.—Visitor (in jail, to prisoner)—What are you here for? Prisoner—For stealing. Visitor—What did you steal? Prisoner—I stole a girl's affections. Visitor—Well that is no refection of the law. Prisoner—H—m. I carried 'em off with her father's horse and cart.

Once upon a time a Blubird piped his lay very early in the season. Thereupon numbers laid aside their winter undergarment and fell accordingly ill. Unsanitary piping, remarked the doctors, acutely, for there were unmistakable zymotic symptoms. This fable shows how important it is for singing to have a scientific basis.

NOT QUITE SURE.

Do you think bachelors ought to be taxed? some one asked.

I'm not quite sure yet, she answered, dreamily. Give me another week and maybe I'll be able to land him without any outside help.

UNDER COVER.

Parson Primrose—Did you know your mother was looking for you? Freddie—You bet! That's why she can't find me.