THE PANGS OF REMORSE
—OR—
A COMPLICATED TANGLE.

CHAPTER III.

"Nothing," said Mr. Clifford, and there was a bitter echo in his heart. "Nothing, but I have left the Hall, Mrs. Markham, and in disgrace. I have no shelter to-night, and no money. Stay"—feeling in his pockets—"yes, here are a few shillings. You are a tenant of Sir Ralph's. Dare you—do you care to give me a night's lodging? Don't look so confused. I shall think no worse of you for refusing."

The woman looked at him at first questioningly, then pityingly.

"Bless me!" she exclaimed, sadly. "What can have happened to you, Mr. Clifford, as we thought so much of? Oh, dear me! There, I can't say no, though if Sir Ralph was to hear—— But, never mind, come in, come in, and I will see to th' face."

The tutor passed behind the bar and entered the little parlor beyond. But he would not let the good-natured woman look at his face; said it was nothing; thanked her gravely, and with a hollow smile tramped up to his room, supperless.

On the morrow he was up early, rested, though he had not slept, and, after pressing three of the six shillings upon Mrs. Markham, set out upon his way.

He had eaten nothing since the breakfast at the Hall, but he did not feel weak now, though the thought of food made him ill. He was warm, too, feverish, no doubt, and with a singing in his head that was fast singing all the memory out of it.

He walked on, on, on, till noon, then halted suddenly and looked back. He had caught the sound of horses' hoofs behind him.

Suspicious of he knew not what, he crept behind the hedge and waited.

It was the three grooms, and, as he recognized them, a bitter smile crossed the haggard face of the outcast.

"One more link in the chain of falsehoods, no doubt," he said. "They have discovered by this time that I have stolen the plate or rifled the strong room; and have sent to drag me back to prison and the hulks. Shall I let them? What does it matter? It is a losing game to fight against fate. No, it will but drag her name into the mire. No, let them hunt in vain."

Worn out, more by his enforced stoppage than by his continued tramping, he lay down painfully and waited for the return of the horsemen, for he judged that, not overtaking him, they would conclude they had overridden him and his back to the next inn.

His conjecture proved correct, for in the course of an hour or two the grooms returned, riding slowly and looking round searchingly.

They passed him; and, waiting until they had mounted the hill and dropped over on the other side out of sight he gathered himself together and resumed his tramp.

Night fell again, and soon from the dimness before him grew a shadowy, flickering haze. It was the lights of London.

"Home of the homeless, refuge of the fugitive, great graveyard of so many a hopeful life, I am nearing you," he muttered. "Once there I am safe, and can die in peace or live unknown."

He would not stop for rest or food, but trudged on, wearily, and with steady monotony of gait, his face set dully, with its flashing, hopeless eyes fixed on the light before him, and his hair blown back in damp, chill rings behind him.

A suburb was reached, and the houses grew thicker. Snug gentility in stucco made the earth hideous and the cold well nigh more miserable.

Lost in a labyrinth of streets all alike in drear monotony of form and size, he leaned against the railings of one of the houses, and stopped to collect his thoughts. Whither should he go? A cry, apparently springing from about his feet, startled him.

He stooped down, and in the dim twilight cast by the nearest gas lamps saw a little girl lying huddled up like a bundle of rags upon the steps of the house.

She was leaning her little head against the hard railings, one hand clutching the thin, flimsy rags round her poor, little starved form, the other grasping a box of matches.

The tutor touched her pityingly.

"My child," he said, seating himself by her side, and drawing her to him, have you no home?"

She opened her eyes, blue, pitiful ones, that told all her story at a glance, and the thin, cold lips muttered:

"No; no home."

"No father, no mother?" he asked taking off his coat and wrapping it round her.

"No," the eyes and lips said again.

"Poor child, poor child," he murmured. "Come, we must find some shelter; you are wet through, and"—as he took her in his arms and nestled her face to him—"cold as—death!"

A sharp, longdrawn sigh and—he had used the right comparison—she was as cold as death. She was dead!

He shuddered, and, trembling like a leaf, carried her to the nearest lamp.

Yes, she was dead, gone where there is no Poor Law Board nor relieving inspector, no charitable institutions, no systematic beneficent societies.

He leaned against the cold iron post and, holding her up in one hand, clasped his forehead with the other.

Her death had brought them both relief, for he wept big tears which almost choked him and probably saved his life.

His fit of weeping over, he laid the dead child under a sheltering porch, and leaving his coat wrapped round her, walked on, colder for the loss of it and sad, sad at heart, but with the singing in his head gone, washed out by the tears the little street waif's death had wrung from him.

CHAPTER IV.

Had Clarence Clifford been an outcast, disinherited heir instead of simply a dismissed tutor, there is little doubt but that before the morning the fever would have claimed him for its own, and then and there commenced cutting the gordian knot of his life's difficulties.

But Clarence Clifford had met the hard world face to face before this, had been rubbed and dragged along its roughness for three long, weary years, and so had served his apprenticeship to cold, rain and an empty stomach.

It is true he had the fag end of a weakness resulting from a broken limb, but the constitution, unvitiated and unharassed by unwholesome luxuries, made a stand against the combination of ills, and, after a hard, long sleep, a cup of coffee, and half an hour's deep and, alas! sad meditation, he left the humble coffee house and sallied into the busy East End thoroughfare, resigned to life and prepared, like a brave man, to fight for its continuance. In labor, hard, unremitting labor, lay his only chance, and he knew it.

The remembrance of the happy days at Rivershall, which was as bitter as the memory of his cruel expulsion, and the tearful shock of the street child's death, clung to him and he longed feverishly to throw them off.

"Work is the thing for me," he muttered; "hard, manual labor—the open air and enough food to exist on. But where to find it, that is the question."

"Come, sir, move on," remonstrated a policeman, as the outcast lingered a moment in the line of pedestrians and so caused a slight block.

He started and paced on, going with the stream down the broad thoroughfare without stopping till he reached a clear space, less crowded and with artificial make-believe of country about.

There were several hay carts standin, their contents for sale; some men leaning against a post, quaffing London blacking—that is to say, porter—eyed the pale-looking gentleman curiously, and, impelled by the impulse of the moment, Mr. Clarence Clifford turned back and accosted the ruddiest of them.

"Can you tell me what place this is?"

"Yes," said the man, mentioning it. "What place are you looking for, sir?"

Mr. Clifford smiled involuntarily.

"No place in particular," he said. "I am seeking some employment."

The man scratched his head.

"A clerk's?" he said, interrogatively glancing at Mr. Clifford's black garments.

"No," said he, "not a clerk's; anything else."

The man shood his head.

"I'm the last man to tell you of any," he said, "as you might have guessed, but—— Hello! here is the governor. He's your lay. Mornin,' sir," and he touched his hat to a short business-looking man who come up with a springy step, and much engrossed with three inches of straw which he held in his mouth.

"Gent looking for work," explained the man.

"Eh?" said the employer. "Your servant, sir," and he touched his hat.

Poor Mr. Clifford sighed; it was all against him this respect to his black clothes; he decided to be rid of them at the earliest opportunity.

"Looking for work, eh—what sort?" and the man eyed him keenly.

"Any," said Mr. Clifford, decisively.

"Well, that's mighty accommodating," was the retort, the speaker's eyes taking an inventory the while. "Well—hem!—I don't know of anything. Here, you look rather done up, rather pale about the gills; come over and have a glass of cordial—something warm."

(To be continued.)

SIDE TALKS.

By Ruth Cameron.

BETTER THAN A "DOT."

In one of the current magazines there is an article telling the tragic story of Charles Chapin, a brilliant newspaper man, who is serving a life sentence in Sing sing for the killing of his wife. His is a strange case. He shot his wife while she was asleep and then gave himself up to the police. Since his imprisonment he has written a book in which he tells why he shot his wife to death.

"He was involved in debt," says the magazine writer, "speculation had ruined him. He was getting old, his health was poor; he feared the loss of his job, feared poverty and want; feared more the loss of his mind. He thought he was going mad. But according to his confession what he feared more than anything else and most of all was that his wife, a sickly gently reared woman, a semi invalid already, would be left destitute."

Many A Man Knows Such Fears.

While no man would condone Chapin's crime for the reasons he puts forth, there is many a man who can sympathize with his fears. That his family may be left destitute and without sufficient means of support in case of his death is the fear that haunts many a husband and father of a family.

Chapin must have been nearer mad even then he feared let his worries so obsess him. He writes: "When her life fluttered and went out there came to me a strange exaltation and all the worries that had been tormenting me faded into nothingness. I had nothing more to worry about. No harm could ever befall her. Then my brain went dead."

The American Girl's "Dot."

The French woman brings a "dot" to her husband when she marries. The modern American girl more often than not brings a greater gift to her husband even than that. She brings a trained mind and the ability to earn her own living if it should become necessary.

Every girl should have something to fall back on if the need should ever come, some trade or profession to which she can turn and take the place of wage earner if the necessity should ever arise.

I know a man who has a very capable wife. There is no need for her to help earn their living, but before her marriage she was private secretary to a successful business man and and she has utilized all the knowledge and experience that she gained there to conduct her home in the same capable fashion.

A life insurance agent called upon her husband not long ago to try and sell him more insurance. "You're not carrying enough to support your family as you'd like to have them able to live if you should die," he argued. "It's your duty to protect them."

A Comforting Knowledge.

"I'm not worrying about that," said the man, "I'm carrying all the insurance I can afford to take care of just now, and I don't have to worry about what would become of the family in case of my death. I've got the smartest, brightest wife in the world. She could get a job to-morrow if she had to, and I know that with what I leave her she'd be able to take care of the children without much hardship."

What a blessing that knowledge is to a man.

I think that every prospective bride owes that assurance not only to her husband but to herself, in order that their happiness may be marred by no tragic haunting fears of what might befall her if she were left alone.

The evening slipper may be clasped over the instep with a strap elaborately studded with brilliants.

The new silk gloves are apt to have pleated or gathered ruffle cuffs.

BARGAINS.

I took a handsome roll of kale and visited the bargain sale at Rinktum's doodad store; handbills announced, in strident tones, that things which sold for seven bones could now be bought for four. It was a carnival of trade, and graybeard, matron, youth and maid blew in the shining plunks, they purchased lids and silken socks, and liver pads and eight-day clocks, and Saratoga trunks. It's difficult, I wot and wist, this sort of frenzy to resist, and so I joined the gang; I purchased things till late at night, I blew my kopecks left and right, and felt no twinge or pang. I thought that I was very wise; "the prudent man," I muttered, "buys when things are cheap as dirt;" and so I flashed my roll of bills, and bought a churn, two sausage mills, a gun, a buckskin shirt. Because I found them passing cheap I bought a couch on which to sleep, an icebox and a mat, I bought some pictures framed in oak, some boxing gloves, a ton of coke, a choice Angora cat. I thought, when I was homeward bound, that I had shown a judgment sound, in buying things while cheap; but morning brought me feeling punk when I surveyed the pile of junk, and watched the women weep. "here's nothing here," my folks decreed, "for which we have the slightest need, it's rubbish, first and last; oh, pile it up 'twixt barn and byre, and set the measly stuff afire, while neighbors stand aghast."

Funny Farewells

What ever dallying may have preceded it, the actual parting of a Briton and his sweetheart is usually sealed with a kiss. To us this seems the natural thing to do, but other nations have different ideas.

The Turkish lover bows low, his hands crossed reverently on his breast. This is a dignified farewell compared with that of the amorous Japanese, who, on leaving his sweetheart, removes a slipper and brandishes in the air! Lovers in New Guinea have the pleasing habit on parting of exchanging slabs of chocolate, while the lovesick man of the Philippine Isles vigorously rubs his sweetheart's cheeks before leaving her.

An ensemble of white pasha uses white crepe de chine to line the coat and trim the frock.