

Diamond Cut Diamond OR, THE ROUT OF THE ENEMY.

CHAPTER XXVII.—Continued.

But assuredly it was the "Parents and guardians" of the newly wedded pair to whom that marriage-day brought the chiefest and fullest measure of satisfaction.

Both Geoffrey's father and Angel's were radiant with delight, whilst to Matthew Dane the day was the realization and accomplishment of all his dreams and desires. He had never, perhaps, in the whole course of his life, been so sublimely happy, nor so completely satisfied. He had already loaded the young couple with gifts. To Geoffrey a brougham and a pair of horses, and to Angel a diamond necklace, which glittered and shone around her white throat. And he had still a further gift in store for the highly favoured nephew who had done as he was told, and fallen obediently into his plans. This was nothing less than the title deeds of a small country residence which were even now securely resting in his breast coat pocket. It was about this that he was at this very moment whispering to his brother, the clergyman, in a corner.

"You see, I don't mean him to work hard yet. There is no occasion to. He can't sit in the clerk's office now he is a partner, and I don't want him perpetually in mine. There's plenty of work in me yet, Bob, and when I begin to fail, then Geoffrey can come in and help me. Now, I mean him to have his fling. A young fellow ought to see life, and a bit of sport. He can be away for a month at a time if he likes. He doesn't want a country estate exactly, what he wants is a little box where he can run down for hunting or shooting, and where Angel can get a breath of country air to keep up her pretty looks. Now what do you say to this, Bob?" pulling a packet of long blue papers surreptitiously out of his pocket. "Look here, the purchase was just completed in time, only yesterday! I didn't think you would like the idea any the less for having them for your parishioners, brother, eh?"

"My dear Matt, you are, indeed, too good, too generous!" cried Parson Dane with a flush of surprise and pleasure on his face as he looked over the papers.

Matthew was pleased, his brother's evident gratitude and delight fed his love of power, and to-day ran in smiles and beneficent channels. He took his brother's arm confidentially, nodding and winking at him, as he pointed his forefinger along the lines.

"See, here, that's the purchase; this is the deed of gift," to the said Geoffrey Walter Dane and his heirs—do you see that—his brother Robert; that's the way he has got to pay me back again. As to the place, it was your daughter Florence who put it first into my hand. Nice girl, Florence. Not at all pretty—plain, in fact, but most amusing."

The Reverend Robert looked surprised. He had not been wont to derive amusement out of the conversation and society of his elder daughter, very far from it. However, he remembered that a prophet hath no honour in his own country, and resolved to swallow the compliment in good part.

"You think so? You think her amusing?"

"Oh, very much so. Never laughed so much in all my life as the day she lunched with us in town. Your younger girls promise to be pretty, Bob, I am glad to have seen them."

"My dear brother, I do not know how I can ever thank you enough for your goodness to my boy—here broke in the clergyman with real emotion. "You have simply done everything on earth for him, and now this marriage is so suitable, the girl is so beautiful, so sweet and charming; it will certainly be the making of him for life."

"Well, to tell you the truth, Robert, it is a merciful thing for him, for there was another little entanglement, as perhaps you know—a married woman, lived over in this very house by the way; however, it will all be altered before he goes there. Geoffrey behaved very well, quite like a gentleman. Gave it up directly I spoke to him about it. It's over now, so we can afford to laugh, ha, ha! Young men, you know, must have their fling, and he's very well out of that affair."

The Rev. Robert looked serious and slightly scandalised, as in duty bound, and trusted gravely that Geoffrey, although foolish, had not been led into acut sin. At which his wicked old brother, highly delighted at the moral sentiment, dug him in the ribs with his knuckles, and, with a playful chuckle, sauntered off to make himself agreeable to his new niece.

It was rather hard upon the great man that in this the very hour of his triumph two distinct sources of annoyance should have crossed his path in the very short space which he traversed between the drawing-room and the adjoining dining-room, where a stand-up luncheon was being done full justice to.

The first of these was the sight of Dulcie and Miles Faulkner, comfortably ensconced in a window-seat together in the hall, with a plate of cold chicken upon the lady's lap, and a tumbler of champagne in the gentleman's hand, both of which articles were apparently common property between them. Old Dane went at least ten paces out of his direct route in order to interrupt these delinquents, who started guiltily at his sudden approach.

"You seem to be making yourself very much at home, Mr. Faulkner," said the great man to his clerk with a freezing politeness.

Miles blushed sheepishly, but Dulcie looked up defiantly at him.

"He is very much at home here, Mr. Dane. I should be sorry if he wasn't,

considering how often he comes to see us," for Dulcie was ready to speak up for her love now that Angel was married indeed.

Mr. Dane uttered something between a grunt of rage and a snort of scorn, and turned his back upon them, only to come face to face with the scowling physiognomy of his other clerk.

"Do you see them?" whispered Albert Trichet in his ear. "Are you going to allow that sort of thing to go on, sir, and that beggarly fellow Faulkner to take the girl you promised to me from under my very nose?"

"My dear fellow, don't be melodramatic," replied his master coldly. "Do you own loveliness, if you please, and, by the way, did you not tell me that it was our lovely bride, and not her sister, whom Miles admired? It seems to me you have made a mistake, my friend."

"Oh, it is only like his impudence to have transferred his attentions from one sister to the other! But you must take up my affairs now, sir; now that your dear Geoffrey is settled. You must see about making me a partner next, and you must square the Halliday into giving me the other daughter."

Albert Trichet was a very small man, and Matthew Dane was a big broad-shouldered one. He looked down into his clerk's face with an ominous frown upon his heavy brow.

"Must, must indeed! A pretty word to address to me, sir! I must make you a partner, must I? Don't talk business to me out of the shop, please—and just get out of my road, will you!" and with that he took him by the shoulders and swung him roughly to one side, and strode away past him into the dining-room.

Albert Trichet looked after him for a minute or two, with an evil smile, and then he hitched up his shoulder with a little foreign way he had, and went and planted himself deliberately in front of Dulcie and Miles Faulkner, and there he went through a series of little bows and smiles, which he no doubt conceived to be of an ingratiating nature.

Dulcie looked at him with cold surprise.

"Allow me to compliment you, Miss Halliday, upon your charming dress. I never saw you look more lovely," he said meekly.

"Thank you, Mr. Trichet; hadn't you better go and have some lunch? You will find it in the next room."

"I have had all I require, thank you, and if your good friend Miles will kindly get up—he has been absorbing your attention for some time now—I should like to take his place, and have a little chat with you."

"Isn't it a pity I didn't bring Trouserers with me?" said Miles, looking at Dulcie, in a perfectly audible voice.

Dulcie looked up at Albert and laughed.

"Thank you, Mr. Trichet, I don't know that I can turn Mr. Faulkner out just now, but I will tell you what you can do for me, if you will be so kind?"

"Oh, anything of course, Miss Halliday," cried the deluded youth eagerly. "pray tell me what it is?"

"How good you are! Then, please take my empty plate and glass, and put them into the dining-room for me," and she thrust them straight into his hands.

The wretched man had nothing for it, but to obey her; he bit his lip savagely and carried off the crockery.

"You had him that journey, Dulcie!" laughed Miles.

"Yes, but we must make a bolt of it now, and hide somewhere, for he will be back again in no time!"

At that moment two things of a very different nature, were put into the bridegroom's hands. Mr. Dane had just given him the packet of blue papers.

"Don't look at it now," he whispered, "not till you are off in the carriage—it's only a little souvenir from your old uncle, my boy."

Geoffrey put the long envelope in his pocket as he was told, and pressed his uncle's hands. He felt certain that it was a roll of bank notes, and as he had plenty of money already for his trip to the Riviera he felt almost annoyed that Mr. Dane's liberality should take this practical form.

And then a servant came up to him, and handed him a telegram on a tray. He opened it and read:

"God bless you, be happy," nothing else; there was no name, not even an initial, but he knew instinctively from whom the message came.

With a slight flush, which died away again suddenly leaving him very pale, he crushed up the paper and put that also with the other into his pocket, feeling a vague annoyance the next moment to find that his wife's eyes were fixed upon him somewhat wonderingly and enquiringly.

So there they lay together, Rose de Brefour's telegram, and the title deeds of the Hidden House, and it was only when Geoffrey was well away on his road to the station, with his bride, that he realized what they both were and the full significance of each.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The Hidden House amongst the Chaik hills was so transmogrified that its former inhabitants would scarcely have recognized it. A whole army of men, builders, carpenters, plasterers, and painters, had been at work within it for two months, whilst another army of labourers and gardeners had been at work outside for the same period. The result was so astonishing a change, that it was no longer the same place.

Only the low picturesque centre portion of the house, with its grey walls, and twisted chimneys, remained, and even that had been improved, or as

some might think disfigured, by a solid comfortable modern stone porch over the doorway, once draped only by the Virginia creeper, whose tangled beauty had had to be sacrificed in order to make way for it. To the right a new wing had arisen, consisting of a drawing-room and dining-room, with bow windows and a row of bed-rooms above them. To the left there were sundry enlargements and improvements in the offices, whilst in the rear the old stables had been considerably extended and increased, whilst their internal fittings had been adapted to the requirements of small but compact hunting quarters. The alterations without were no less remarkable.

The tangle of "brake and briar" which had been one of the chief charms of the mysteriously secluded house had been completely cut away, leaving only a few of the best of the trees and shrubs remaining, the cleared space being tastefully laid out in gardens and lawns, and not only that, but also the two projecting shoulders of the hill that had shut in the place from the outer world, had, by a clever piece of engineering, been shaved away so that from the windows of the house there could now be obtained that delightful extensive view, which, in former days, could not be enjoyed without a toil up the steep face of the down at the back.

A smooth road now wound easily up from the valley below to the restored and remodelled gates in lieu of the old rough track worn into deep ridges by cart wheels and peppered over with flints, whilst the drive itself, re-gravelled and slightly altered in its course, landed the visitor unshaken and with no injury to his carriage springs at the handsome new portico.

In short Hidden House was now a compact and charmingly situated gentleman's house, replete with every modern comfort and convenience, with a grey old centre part to give it a flavour of romance and antiquity, and no trace remaining of a cause for the queer strange name that fitted it no longer, yet clung to it still, as names have a habit of clinging, like the "scent of the roses," which is said to remain long after the vase is shattered and broken.

Was Geoffrey Dane glad or sorry for these changes? At the first, when he came back to his new property, after his wanderings in the South, the sight of this house—this house, which was the very last on earth he would, of his own will, have chosen to live in—this house, which was the same, yet no longer the same, struck him with a sense of pain and dismay, and he told himself that he was ungratefully sorry.

And now that a month had gone by, and the first pang of the change, the first dreaded moments of a return to a place that had once held so much for him was over, he had come to the conclusion, that since by a strange fortune he was destined to live here, he was glad—very glad, that in almost all things it was altered well-nigh beyond recognition. For there was one room in the house that was not changed—the long, low library in which he had first come to see Rose de Brefour—and into this room he could never enter without pain.

It was now his own sitting-room, and his wife fortunately, perhaps, did not come into it much; she found it gloomy and cheerless—so he had it pretty well to himself. The dark paneled walls, the low, uneven ceiling with its heavy oaken beams, the three deep-set windows with their cushioned window-seats, were his constant companions on reading his paper, or in the evening when he sat writing letters or reading his paper, or in the evening when he shrank from going into it; for memory played strange tricks with the firelight in the twilight, when the ruddy gleams. Once, coming in to fetch a book, when there was no other light in the room, he could almost have sworn that he saw, in the shadowy chimney corner, a deep, low chair, and the faint outline of a female figure leaning back on one white hand uplifted against the blaze, and the flickering light playing fitfully upon the soft folds of a dark-hued velvet dress. He had started and drawn back, and then the delusion had faded away, and he saw that there was nothing—nothing but an empty chair and a portiere curtain drawn across a corner. He had laughed at himself, had even been angry at his own foolishness, but he avoided the room after that at that gloaming hour, which had so strange and vivid a power of reproducing the past in his imagination.

On the whole, then, he was glad, when seated in the pretty modern room in the new wing, or standing at the open door looking forth on to the pleasant slope of new turf towards the blue line of country beyond, that there was so little left to remind him of the Hidden House to which, as a poor, foolish young lover, he used to come down a year ago, week after week, with such a beating heart and with such eager and expectant gladness.

All that was over and done with now—Geoffrey Dane had put away his past; he had begun a new life, and was a new man altogether.

He was very quiet and grave now—the face that had always been a thoughtful one was perhaps a shade more serious in these days, and that bright, flashing smile that had redeemed it from sadness came and went less frequently than of old; but let it not be imagined that Geoffrey was unhappy. He possessed a lovely wife who was good to him; he was genuinely fond of her, and he became fonder of her as the days went by.

They were apparently an ideal couple. Angel always welcomed him with a smile, studied his fancies and obeyed his lightest wishes religiously. Her temper was sweetness itself. They never quarrelled or contradicted each other—there was no putting on her side, no rough words on his—and they were never in the very least jealous of one another. But there was something else that was left out as well.

After Geoffrey said to himself, "How cold she is!" At the first it had been

a relief to him; but now he sometimes caught himself wishing she was not so. It irritated him, it almost angered him. Nothing ruffled her unbroken sweetness, nothing aroused in her even a momentary excitement, and, alas! nothing warmed in the very slightest degree the ice-like frigidity of her nature.

"It is my fault, no doubt," said Geoffrey to himself penitently. "How can I expect it, when I married her, poor girl, from duty and not from love!" And yet, at the very bottom of his heart, he began, almost unconsciously to himself, to crave for the passion he was powerless to awaken.

It had come upon him by degrees after his marriage, with a cold sense of disappointment, that she loved him no better than he loved her. He had not been prepared for this discovery; it disturbed him when he did discover it more than he would have cared to own. Vaguely he wondered why, if this was so, she had decided to marry him. Had the golden bait been held out to her too, by his scheming old uncle? Had her father over-persuaded her to give herself to him out of prudential and mercenary motives? Could this inducement, which to him had been so contemptible, have been with her all powerful and all convincing? Looking at his wife's pure spiritual face, learning to know a little of the refinement and grace of her character, he could not bring himself to believe it of her.

But if not that, then what was it? There was the difficulty.

(To Be Continued.)

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

A Few Paragraphs Which Will Be Found Well Worth Reading.

The owners of plantations in Cuba refuse to employ Spanish laborers.

Horse meat is sold in 193 meat shops in Paris. The prime cuts sell for about 20 cents a pound.

Female school-teachers in Kone, Pa., are required to sign a pledge that during their term of service they will not accept lover-like attentions from young men.

Huge snakes, from twelve to fourteen feet long, are domestic pets in the residences of Manila. They are petted for their skill in catching and devouring rats.

Henry Labouchere considers the House of Lords a useless body. He divides the members into three classes—the "mentals," the "ornamentals" and the "detrimentals."

Pyrotechnic birds are made in Nagasaki, Japan. When a light is applied to them they sail through the air, fluttering their wings and performing other bird-like antics.

Some of the clergymen in Melbourne advertise their readiness to perform the marriage ceremony for the low fee of 2s, 6d. For 7s, 6d, the ring and a wedding breakfast are supplied.

There is in Paris a drinking saloon called "The Cafe of Death." The guests drink their wine and beer while seated at coffins, on which lighted candles rest, and cast a ghostly glare around the tomb-like place.

In the Whitechapel district of London, where roughs are numerous, nine per cent. of the police who patrol that quarter are constantly registered on the sick list, the result of personal assaults by the vicious.

Two Chicago footpads attacked Charles McConnell, an humble pedestrian, dragged him into an alley, and robbed him of all the money he had—fifteen cents. To prevent pursuit, they cut off one of his legs, which was of wood.

Glass tubes for water, gas and sewage are about to be introduced. A Pennsylvania company, which is manufacturing these pipes, expects that they will displace iron pipes, as the glass ones will not corrode, and are more durable than iron.

An immense growth of hair ornamented the head of Miss Mabelle Ette-ling Wallace, of Battle Creek, Mich. When unbound it reached almost to her feet. Its great weight caused her frequent headaches, but she would not have it cut. Finally it caused an attack of brain fever, which resulted fatally.

Ten years ago Charles Burrell, of Thonkakee, Ill., lost his reason by being struck on the head with a brick. Recently the X-rays disclosed a particle of bone pressing on his brain. The pressure was removed, and the man is now thoroughly recovered. His first words, on regaining his senses, were: "Why did you hit me?"

WELL DONE.

Recently a boat's crew from a wrecked steamship were driven about at the mercy of the sea. A gale was blowing, it was bitterly cold, and the suffering of the poor men was beyond description. Their hands and feet were frost-bitten, and finally, crazed with cold and pain, some of the men wished to commit suicide. Then Sailor Green, although suffering as much as the rest, encouraged them. All through the terrible night he told funny stories, sang cheerful songs, and kept up the spirits of his companions by every possible means. In the morning he and his companions were rescued. This man, undaunted, although wet, hungry, benumbed and exhausted, and thinking in his extremity not of himself, but of his comrades, teaches a lesson that is worth remembering.

Success Must Follow

THE FAIR USE OF DR. WILLIAMS' PINK PILLS FOR PALE PEOPLE.

That is the Experience of Mrs. Sydney Druce, of Deseronto, Who Had Suffered for Many Years with Rheumatism and Catarrh of the Bowels.

From the Tribune, Deseronto.

Our attention was lately directed to the wonderful cure effected upon a resident of Deseronto, which illustrates in a very marked way the merits of that widely known health restorer "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills." We refer to the cure of Mrs. Druce, wife of Sidney Druce, caretaker of the High School building. Being desirous of giving our readers the facts, a reporter of the Tribune called at Mrs. Druce's residence, and is therefore enabled to present our readers with the following facts, which can be vouched for by many neighbors and friends of the family. Mrs. Druce had from the early age of ten years been a sufferer from rheumatism and had endured an untold amount of suffering from this dire disease. She had tried scores of different medicines to dispel the malady but in vain. Doctors told her it was impossible to eradicate the disease from her system and she had at last become resigned to the belief that rheumatism was incurable. In addition to rheumatism, about seven years ago she began to suffer from catarrh of the bowels with its attendant headaches and depression of spirits. The pain of the rheumatism and constant headaches wore her out. The doctors prescribed opiates which only dulled the pain, but did not repel the disease. The two diseases continued to make steady headway and at times she felt such pain that she could not even allow her husband to raise or move her. The neighbors thought she would never get up again. All kinds of remedies were suggested and many of them tried, but all in vain. Eventually, as Mrs. Druce expressed it, the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills was mentioned. It was not until the end of the second box that she realized any benefit. She then began to realize that she was regaining strength. Before she mentioned this to others her husband also observed the change, for he remarked one day "those pills are doing you some good, you look livelier than you have for some time." She continued the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills until she had taken fourteen boxes, with the gratifying and almost remarkable result that she was completely cured of the rheumatism and catarrh not a solitary symptom of either trouble remaining. Mr. Druce was present during the interview and confirmed all that his wife had said and was as delighted as she in praising the virtues of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Mrs. Druce said that out of gratitude for this wonderful restoration to health she had told scores of other sufferers from different diseases of the virtues of the medicine which had been the undoubted means of prolonging her life. She hoped that others would follow her plan of giving the pills a fair and prolonged trial as she was confident that in the end success would surely follow as in her own case.

POINTED PARAGRAPHS.

Gray hairs that can be counted don't count.

Trouble never troubles the contented man.

The woman who marries for spite invariably gets it.

All things come quicker to the man who meets them half way.

When some actors attempt to sing there is no place like home.

The receiver is often as bad as the original board of directors.

Satan is the father of lies and matrimony is the mother of excuses.

The only swell thing about some men is located directly under their hats.

"Every man for himself," is a doctrine that girls do not take any stock in.

Starting for heaven on a grave-stone recommendation is a pretty risky business.

The wise man never loses his reputation by attempting to answer fool questions.

Some of the ancients were pretty swift, but Simson was the first to get a gait on him.

Mr. proposes and later on he sometimes wonders how he managed to make such a fool of himself.

"Evil is wrought by want of thought," says the poet. Very true, and much is wrought by thoughts of want.

But few angels have cause to boast of the attention shown them when they happen to be entertained unaware.

ARTIFICIAL RUBBER.

An artificial rubber, as good as the real thing, is now made of glue and glycerine, mixed with sulphur oil, such as ichthyol.

COAL MINERS.

About 1,500,000 persons are employed in the coal mines of the world.

WHITE TIGER.

A white tiger was shot lately in the Dibrugarh district of Assam, according to the Calcutta Englishman. He was nine feet long and in the prime of life. The Calcutta taxidermist who prepared the skin states that in 18 years he had never seen nor heard of such a thing as a white tiger.