

In The Furnace of Temptation

His friend had his way about framing it, and it was gone into the exhibition. The hanging-committee offered it the hospitality of an obscure corner; but it was there, and it stood its chance. Nobody seemed to know that it was there, however, unless confronted with it by Ferris' friend, and then no one seemed to care for it, much less to buy it. Ferris saw many more of those pictures, and all around it had begun gloomily to respect it. At first it had shocked him to see it on the Academy's wall; but it soon came to have no other relation to him than that of a picture, like a poem in which a poet celebrates his love or laments his death, and sells for a price. His pride as well as his poverty was set on having the picture sold, and he had nothing to do, and he used to lurk about, and see if it would not interest somebody at last. But it remained unsold throughout May, and he had ceased to frequent the exhibition, and only chance visitors from the country straggled in by twos and threes.

She dashed the gathered tears angrily away, and went on: "Perhaps you knew, too, what that poor priest was thinking of?" "Yes," said Ferris, stolidly, "I did at last; he told me." "Oh, then you acted generously and not to let him go on it was kind to him, and very, very kind to me?" "What could I do?" demanded Ferris, amazed and furious to find himself on the defensive. "His telling me put it out of my power to act." "I'm glad that you can satisfy yourself with such a quibble! But I wonder that you can tell me—any woman of it?" "By Heaven, this is atrocious!" cried Ferris. "Do you think—look here; he went on saying, 'I'll not let you see it, and you shall judge it. Remember that I was such a fool as to be in love with you. Suppose Don Ippolito had told me that he was going to sell everything that he had, and to come, religion, friends, and the twentieth part of a chance that you might some day care for him. I did not believe he had even so much chance as that; but he had always thought me his friend, and he trusted me. Was it a quibble that kept me from betraying him? I don't know what honor is among women; but no man could have done it. I confess my shame that I went to your house that night longing to betray him. And then suppose your mother sent me into the garden to sell you, and I saw—what has made my life a hell of doubt for the last two years; what—No, excuse me, I can't put the case to you after all." "What do you mean?" asked Florida. "I don't understand you." "What do I mean? You don't understand? Are you so blind as that, or are you making a fool of me? What could I think but that you had played with that priest's heart till you owned it?" "Oh!" cried Florida with a shudder, starting away from him. "Did you think I was such a wicked girl as that?" "It was no defence, no explanation, no denial; it simply left the case with Ferris as before. He stood looking like a man who did not know whether to bless or curse himself, to laugh or blaspheme.

She stood and tried to pick up the things she had let fall upon the floor; but she seemed not able to find them. He bent over, and gathering them together, returned them to her with his left hand, keeping the other in the breast of his coat. "Thank," she said; and then asked timidly, "Have you been hurt?" "Yes," said Ferris, in a sulky way. "I have had my share." He held up a conventional, he added. "It isn't much of a hurt; but then I wasn't much of a soldier." Her eyes looked reverently at the conventional arm; those were the days, so long past, when women worshipped men for such things. But she said nothing, and, as Ferris' eyes were fixed on her, she received a novel and painful impression. He said, hesitatingly, "I have not asked before; but your mother, Miss Vervain—I hope she is well?" "She is dead," answered Florida, with stony quiet. They were both quiet for a time. Then Ferris said, "I had a great affection for your mother." "Yes," said the girl; "she was fond of you, too. But you never wrote or sent her any word; it used to grieve her."

Her unjust reproach went to his heart, so long preoccupied with his own troubles; he recalled with a tender remorse the old Venetian days, and the kindness of the graceful, silly woman who had seemed to like him so much; he remembered the charm of her perfect ladylike-ness, and of her winning, weak-headed desire to make every one happy to whom she spoke; the happy soul that in an imaginably better world than this will outvalue a mere intellectual or aesthetic life. He humbled himself before her memory, and as he gently reproached himself as if he could have made her hear from him at any time during the past two years. He could only say, "I am sorry that I gave your mother pain; I loved her very truly. I hope she did not suffer much before."

"No," said Florida, "it was a peaceful end; but finally she was very sad." She had not been well for many years, with that sort of decline; I used sometimes to feel troubled about her before we came to Venice; but I was very young. I never was really alarmed till that day I went to you." "I remember," said Ferris, contently. "She had fainted, and I thought we ought to see a doctor, but afterwards, because I thought that I ought not to do so without speaking to her, I did not go to the doctor; and that day we made up our minds to get home as soon as we could; and she seemed so much better for a while; and then, everything seemed to happen at once. When we did start home, she could not go any farther than Switzerland, and in the fall we went back to Italy. We went to Sorrento, where the climate seemed to do her good. But she was growing weaker the whole time. She died in March. I found some old friends of hers in Naples, and came home with them."

"The girl hesitated a little over the words, which she nevertheas uttered unbroken, while the tears fell quietly down her face. She seemed to have forgotten the angry words that had passed between her and Ferris; to remember him only as one who had known her mother, while she went to some little facts in her mother's last days; as a higher, serene, as he to his regret, as she to his loss. And why you left a helpless young man that trouble alone? I hope you refused me your arm, and turned your back on me, and me? Oh, many thanks for

BRITISH WAR BUDGET

Passed by the Commons Without Opposition.

London cable says: The House of Commons was crowded to-day, and all the public galleries were thronged, in anticipation of the budget statement. The return of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, introducing the budget, shows that an expenditure of £154,082,000 has to be provided for the budget of 1900-1901. The surplus statement shows that the exchequer account of 1899-1900 would have given a surplus of upwards of £5,000,000, but that the supplementary estimates of £23,000,000 make the expenditure exceed the revenue by £17,770,000.

CHANCELLOR HAS A SCHEME.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, after laying the figures before the House, pointed out that the country had to face a total estimated expenditure, in consequence of the war, no less than six times as much as had been estimated in October last. He explained the present financial situation, dwelling with satisfaction on the increase of the actual over the estimated revenue, due to the steady and substantial increase of business, and pointing out that, as an increase in the value and volume of foreign exports had been quite exceptional, it had not been at the expense of home industries.

REVIEW OF THE ITEMS.

Reviewing the principal items of revenue, the Chancellor of the Exchequer said tobacco had been disappointing, and that the increase in duties had not been as large as expected, perhaps due to the absence of the ordinary winter festivities. Against the estimated expenditure of £154,082,000 for the coming year the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated the revenue on the existing basis of taxation at £116,900,000, or a deficit of £37,000,000.

THE WAR EXPENDITURES.

Dealing with the war expenditure, he said the Government had made the best calculations as to the amount it ought to ask from Parliament, with the view of a successful prosecution of the war, but it was impossible to say how long the war would be concluded, and the expenditure might be larger. On the other hand, however, a happy change had recently taken place in the military situation, and the fact that the season now fast approaching was, in the opinion of all the authorities, unfavorable to Boer operations, led him to be considered.

APPEAL TO THE TAXPAYERS.

He asked the taxpayers to subscribe to the cost of the war by an increase of the income tax to one shilling in the pound, which would produce an additional £8,500,000; he also proposed that the stamp duties on stock exchange contracts notes be extended to the sales on the produce exchange; that beer duties would be increased to a shilling a barrel of 36 gallons, and that there would be an increase in the duty on spirits when six pence per gallon, tobacco sixpence per pound, and tea twopence per pound. He anticipated that the above measures would increase the revenue by £12,317,000, and he proposed to save £4,640,000 by suspending the sinking fund in relation to certain terminable annuities. He proposed to borrow the rest of the necessary funds—£43,000,000 to be raised.

METHODS, NOT IMPRACTICABLE.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer characterized the proposals suggested as in no way impracticable, saying the Government felt justified in raising a portion of the war funds by a loan, but he added, it was also justified in calling upon the taxpayers for an immediate and substantial sacrifice. In this connection he thought that the more earnest and anticipative phases of the war would not last long.

WASTED SYMPATHY.

She is a charming widow, pretty bright and light-hearted. She was a charming young woman before she married Mr. Blank and moved away to live in Georgia. Her married life was most happy, and the death of her husband was a great loss to her. After the funeral and a general packing up of things she returned to her old home. The day after she arrived there she was met on the street by one of her very old-fashioned friends, who intended to give her a cluster of that sympathy that makes one feel as if the sympathizer had received something at and on the "sympathizers."

SHATTERED NERVES, COULDN'T SLEEP.

Weak, Nervous and Run Down, Had Dizzy Spells, Would Shake With Nervousness—A Terrible Case—A Remarkable Cure.

Mr. Chas. H. Jones, Perceon, Que., writes: "For several years I have been running down in health and have been a great sufferer with my nerves. I would have shaking spells so that my feet would bound up and down, and a dizzy, swimming feeling would come over me. I could not sleep. Night after night I would never close my eyes, and my head felt as though it would burst. It seemed as though I would go out of my mind. At last I had to keep my bed for a time, and was so weak I could only sit up for ten or fifteen minutes at a time. My doctor said it was my heart and nerves, and I took his medicine from fall to spring without doing any good."

THE WIDOW WINS.

In High Court: Potts vs. Potts.—Walton, J., decided, appealed from judgment of Rose, J., in action by the mother of R. E. M. Potts, deceased, claiming to be a beneficiary for value named in a policy in the Supreme Court of the State of New York. The World on the life of deceased, the proceeds of which have been paid into court and an issue directed between plaintiff and defendant, who is the widow of deceased, and a maternal aunt, who claims to be a beneficiary. The trial held that the plaintiff was not so benefited by the policy, and that the defendant was entitled to the proceeds. Appeal dismissed with costs.

THE CANADIAN GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY.

The Canadian General Electric Company is applying for letters patent increasing its capital from \$1,200,000 to \$1,500,000.

"An uncle from New York see me, and told me that I was so low with nervous disease."

THIS ORIGINAL DOCUMENT IS IN VERY POOR CONDITION