

# Diamond Cut Diamond

OR,  
THE ROUT OF THE ENEMY.

CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

Florence Dane had, like many of the best people, a perfect mania for setting her fellow-creatures to rights. Her natural instincts had been fostered by the nature of her life and its occupations, so that she was constantly employed in reproving the world about her for its sins. She had no sinister motives. She honestly desired to do good, and to improve those about her, solely and simply for their own benefit, and welfare. When her father dismissed her somewhat curtly from his study, she was pained and hurt by what she considered his injustice to herself, but she was in no way deterred from her fixed resolve to turn her brother, if it were possible, from the error of his ways. This, she conceived it to be clearly her duty as a sister and Christian to do. She loved Geoffrey sincerely, and desired his temporal as well as his eternal welfare. And it was plain that if Madame de Brefour were bent either on entrapping him into a marriage with herself or in converting him to the tenets of the Roman Catholic faith, one or other, or perhaps both, he must be in considerable jeopardy.

As she wiped away her tears after she left her father's presence, she said to herself:

"Poor papa, he is so easy-going! He calls it uncharitable to suspect people of bad motives, and unchristian to open one's eyes to the truth of bad things. But I know better than he does. It is perhaps natural that he should take an old-fashioned view of things. But if he will not lift a finger to save Geoffrey, I must do it alone, for I am not going to see him fall into the hands of that woman and sit by and do nothing till it is too late."

And then she went upstairs and put on her jacket and hat, and sallied forth from the house by herself.

Rose de Brefour came sauntering slowly towards her house along the winding moss-grown drive. The thick trees interlaced their branches overhead, the sombre evergreens bordered the way on either side. Here and there a few crouches and snowdrops had sprung up dauntlessly out of the brown wintry earth, making little patches of light and colour in unexpected corners. But Rose's head was bent over her book, there was more beauty to her in the "Essay on Man" than in all the silent voices of nature that were about her. Books took her out of herself and her identity. Nature brought her back to the daily monotony of material existence. In that lies the superiority of the one as a means of consolation over the other. Just as the turn of the road, however, brought her in sight of the house, she lifted her eyes and lowered her look at the same moment in sheer surprise, for she saw a lady come towards her from it. The lady wore very short black skirts, displaying a stout and serviceable pair of feet and ankles, whilst a rough brown jacket and a green felt hat completed her attire, both in the last stages of shabbiness. She carried a black leather bag on her arm, and when Rose was near enough to see her face she became aware that it was Geoffrey Dane's eldest sister whom she knew by sight from seeing her about in the village.

There was something very aggressive in the manner in which Miss Dane pulled up in front of her, and addressed her.

"You are Madame de Brefour, I believe?"

"Yes, that is my name. Can I do anything for you, Miss Dane?"

"I came to call upon you, but your servant shut the door in my face."

Rose smiled. "You must forgive my poor manner; her manner is perhaps abrupt, but she does not mean to be rude; and she has my orders. I receive no visitors; my life is so very secluded. But if you will come back, Miss Dane, I shall be happy to see you, as you have come to speak to me."

Rose spoke very graciously and sweetly. She had within her the essence of truest gentility, in that she never willingly hurt any one's feelings. It is the most golden rule of manners to not up to. There are many hundreds of well-born and well-educated persons, who, for the lack of that one thing—consideration for the feelings of others—have failed in attaining the true secret of good-breeding. Rose was not at all pleased at Miss Dane's visit, nor by her short and almost uncivil method of addressing her; but she reflected that Florence was probably unaware of her own brusqueness, and that she had, no doubt, come to beg for some subscription for her poor people.

"Turn round with me, Miss Dane, and come in and rest after your walk," said Miss Dane.

"I don't want to rest, Madame," said Florence, turning, nevertheless, and walking a few paces beside her. "I don't want to force my way into your house. I only want to ask you one question, and may, as well ask it here as anywhere else."

Rose bent her head politely.

"Pray ask me anything you like," she said; but the reply was a more startling one than she had anticipated.

"Madame de Brefour, are you engaged to my brother?"

"Miss Dane!"

It would be impossible to describe the indignation, the proud reproach, that was concentrated in the simple exclamation. Rose flushed crimson from brow to chin, and the light in her beautiful eyes was one of burning anger. Florence Dane realised all at once how gloriously handsome she was, and with the realization felt to the full what her brother's danger must be.

"Was any woman the right to ask such a question of another?" asked Rose

with those flashing eyes fixed upon her antagonist. But Florence was brave, too. Many was the drunkard and the blasphemer whom she had triumphantly faced and worsted. She was not going to flinch now at the storm she had evoked. Moreover, the righteousness, as she conceived, of her cause, sustained her. Her answer was as bold as her attack.

"Yes, Madame de Brefour, most decidedly, when, as in this case, the answer concerns the happiness of a woman's only brother."

Rose controlled her anger with a violent effort. For a few moments she did not speak, but there was a tumult of emotion at her heart. Something of the nakedness of the truth became rudely and cruelly revealed to her, and she perceived that this woman had some show of right and justice on her side. Oh, yes; she felt that she had. Her heart still beat hotly within her, but her voice was cool and even when at last she spoke.

"I will answer your question, then, Miss Dane; I am not engaged to your brother, and, what is more, I am never likely to be. Is that all you wanted to know? Yes? Then I think you must excuse me if I wish you good-bye!"

And Florence Dane, as she walked slowly on the steep, rough, chalky round from Hidden House to the valley below, was not quite sure in her own mind whether she had not been considerably worsted in the interview which she had sought with such rash courage.

Her adversary had indeed answered—nay, more than answered—her questions. But was she any wiser than she was before. Was her brother's position made any clearer to her? Was Madame de Brefour's connection with him more comprehensible—or had she any further guarantee for his future conduct and security than when she had climbed the same road a little while ago, burning to encounter and to attack the woman whose privacy she had so rudely invaded?

As to all these things, Florence Dane was forced to own herself to be still plunged into a sea of doubt and uncertainty.

CHAPTER X.

She must go. That was what it meant to her. She did not conceal it from herself, or blind herself any longer to the inevitable; only her heart was torn in sunder.

Martine, who met her in the doorway, clasped her hands together in dismay, as she entered, for the faithful soul saw at a glance how her mistress trembled, and how the beautiful eyes were dim with tears.

"Ah, madame!" she cried despairingly, "you met her, then, that insolent one? What has she said to you? What has she done to you?"

But Rose put her back gently with her hand as went into the library, closing the door softly behind her. She went and stood by the window, looking out upon the trees. There was very little of the outer world to be seen, only that short bend of shrub-bordered drive, with the strip of rough grass at either edge, and the daffodils, and violets, and primroses, cropping up thickly along it, with a certain luxuriance in their untended sweetness.

Such a little remote corner it seemed of the world's wide face, in which to rest and to be at peace! And yet for her there was neither rest nor peace in it.

Only a day or two ago she had said to Geoffrey that she would leave it, and yet her heart had rebelled against the verdict of her own words, and she had told herself in secret that she would stay on—through the summer at least—that she would brave all and step a little longer. She had learnt to love it as she had loved no other place. The utter seclusion of the little old house, the free breezy Downs behind, where she had been able to wander for hours unseen and unnoticed, all this had grown dear to her. Dear, too, perhaps by reason of the perilous associations which were growing up, week by week, concerning every foot of ground around the sad little domain in the hollow of the chalk hills. And now it had come to this—that she must leave it all. Driven forth once more into the world to find a new home—often this had happened to her before, either from the one cause, or for the other—that she had had to fly—only this time it hurt her more—much more.

"Ah!" she cried aloud, striking her hands one into the other with a piteous hopelessness, whilst the tears rained down over her face—"Ah! and it is my own fault—my own fault!"

Does not that always make the troubles of life worse? The poignancy of self-reproach adds so bitter an ingredient to all else, that it seems almost to treble the misery of the rest.

If she had not made that tiny first step in the wrong direction—if she had not stifled and smothered that small, small voice within, that is sometimes so heard, and sometimes so easy, to silence—if she had not blinded herself wilfully and persistently to what she must have known to be inevitable, then she might have been saved from this wrench, and she might have lived on here at peace.

She had listened to a siren song, and she had dreamt a fond and impossible dream, but now the siren's voice had been transformed into a cry of danger; now the dream was at an end, and she was awake to the unlovely reality.

She loved Geoffrey Dane; and her love for him was hopeless! There was no parrying these two facts any longer. The love was so strong as to have

overmastered her judgment, and so hopeless as to render it almost a crime that it should exist at all. Turn where she would she could not escape from these inexorable truths which hemmed her in like walls on every side. Woman like she had deemed herself to be stronger than her love—to be able to cherish it in silence, to bury it for ever in the secrecy of her own heart. But, however jealously she guarded the sacred things of our inner souls—howsoever secure we are in our strength, there comes a time when the world's rude hand draws aside the veil in which we have shrouded ourselves and the prying eyes of others look in upon our sanctuary, and rude hands scatter the ashes of our idols to the four winds of heaven; and as our innocent things are turned into sin, and our holy things become debased and degraded.

Florence Dane, in her well-meant fervour for benefitting her fellow creatures, had done this thing to her.

All the romance and the sweetness was scattered, and all the poetry had gone out of it for ever. Nothing now remained but sordid unpalatable and crude realities. That she was doing Geoffrey an injury, from a worldly point of view, that his name was coupled with her own in a manner likely to be prejudicial to him with his family and friends, and that his character might very likely be discredited within the precincts of his father's parish. All this was hideous and unlovely. The idyll was at an end.

She forced back the scalding tears from her eyes and took up her cross once more.

"I did wrong," she said brokenly, half aloud to herself. "I had better have been content with my books. God had given me so great a consolation in my loneliness. I ought to have remembered that I am not like other women—that I have had my portion out of this life—that nothing now is permitted me but to study and to stagnate!"

There was even a fine, scornful humility in the last words, by which she recognised and bowed to the exigencies of her position. Then, with a swift, impetuous movement, she turned and left the room.

Upstairs, the old man sat crouched by the hearth in his deep armchair. A hissed rest was fastened to the floor by a long brass arm as his feeble fingers guided it. Upon the desk was an open book. He, too, sought consolation in books, but the book from which he read was not of philosophy, as hers were, but for prayer.

The door opened and the beautiful woman came in, breathing of life and spring to his tired eyes.

She sank by his side upon her knees and murmured a fond word as she laid her cheek for an instant upon his shoulder.

"Mon Pere."

How he loved the soft, filial word upon her lips! His withered face brightened as she entered. His bonny dark auburn head. They had had nothing between them to begin with, these two—nothing but duty. Of different race—of different blood—without a taste in common, yet they were held together in a bond stronger than aught in life could dissolve. He, from the pathetic dependence of a man who is infirm and old and poor, to the woman who comes nearest to him, and who is strong and vigorous and able to support him. She, from that beautiful French pley which is essentially a French which owes its origin to the days long ago in the history of human nature, and to that lovely legend of the world's primitive history that is so touching through all time in its utter simplicity and its unselfish devotion.

"Where thou goest I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

That had Rose de Brefour said in her soul to the poor old man who depended upon her, and upon this covenant the lines of her life were cast. Death alone could sever the bond.

Duty bound them together—a common duty, a common cause—and yet out of duty affection had sprung up unawares, as bright-hued flowers are wont to spring up out of the dry and arid crevices of broken stone walls. Had drawn them close together, as a common misfortune is apt to do, and since that day Rose had given up a life that was seemingly useless for any other purpose to the man who was her father only in name. When the shock of that blow had fallen upon him, bringing with it the paralytic seizure from which he was destined never to recover, when subsequent fears and anxieties had united them still more closely together, then Rose conceived it to be her duty to forsake her own people in order to cling more permanently to herself. She had money of her own settled securely upon herself. Without the help of this money he would be a pauper, with it she was able to make a home for him now in one place and now in another—a home which was filled with every comfort and luxury that could alleviate his lot. Her own tastes were simple. She lived austere and dressed herself in the old-fashioned stuffs and velvets which had come to her out of the wreck of the old house near Lyons, where she had gone as a bride. She had only two extravagant tastes—her books and her little English-built brougham—for all else her existence was one of primitive simplicity. But the old man had everything of the best, and the two French servants who had followed their master's fortunes, and who were friends as well as servants, waited upon both with an ever affectionate devotion. For many years now this strangely assorted couple, the paralytic and helpless old man and the beautiful, blooming young woman, had wandered about from place to place, making short, temporary homes, in the different places where they pitched their tent.

For a long time they never left France, a strong inclination kept

kept them both upon French soil, but by and bye it became necessary to come to England, and for the last two years they had rented different furnished houses in remote corners of rural districts. They never made friends—they never seemed to desire any society but their own; and always a black shadow brooded unceasingly over their life, hunting them forth time after time from their resting-places. Usually it was some rumor that went forth about the mystery which surrounded them—Some rumor that reached their ears and seemed to fill them with a nameless terror; but once or twice it was due to a very natural thing, Rose's great beauty had attracted some would-be suitor. The lovely young widow had been sought out and wooed in her self-elected seclusion, and she had had no other alternative but flight. Hitherto this peculiar phase of the fate to which she was subjected, had occasionally, indeed, annoyed her, but more often it had amused her, if she had caused suffering in others she had been temperately sorry for it, in that mild and vicarious fashion in which women, who are accustomed to the idea of worship, are wont to be sorry for the pains which they inflict. But a new element had entered into the situation—the love which she heart as well as in the lover's. It caused her an unspeakable anguish to uproot it, and the usual remedy of flight offered her no consolation, but only a prospect of unprecedented pain. Nevertheless, it was with unflinching determination that Rose knelt by the old man's side and told him that the fiat had gone forth, and that they must strike their tent once more.

To be Continued.

KING OF FISH.

The Tuna is to the Pacific as the Tarpon is to the Atlantic.

As the tarpon is to the fish that swim in Atlantic waters, so is the tuna to the finny tribes of the Pacific. Conceive, if you can—for imagination staggers behind reality—a gigantic mackerel from five to seven feet in length and weighing from 100 to 300 pounds; a marvel of strength, speed, symmetry and color, which bears about the same relation to the coarse and monstrous black bass that the royal Bengal tiger does to the hippopotamus, or Phoebus Apollo to Daniel Lambert!

My introduction to this prince of the Pacific was in this wise: My brother and I were trolling for yellow-tail off the Island of Santa Catalina. The sun had just risen above the low fog banks that obscured the mainland and was dispersing with gentle authority the children of the mist that loitered upon the face of the waters. Around us in palest placidity, was the ocean—vast, vague and mysterious; abeam, snug in the embrace of the bare brown hills, slumbered the tiny town of Avalon. We could see plainly the real facade of the big hotel, the gleaming canvas of a thousand tents, and, dotting the surface of the bay, long rows of pleasure boats, gay with white, green, yellow and blue paint, whose reflected colors danced and sparkled with joyous significance; for these tender tints resolved into sound, murmured a rondo of recreation and rest—a measure enchanting to the ears of work-a-day Californians, whose holidays are so few and far between.

Suddenly out of the summer sea a flying fish—the humming bird of the ocean—flashed athwart our brows, and then, not a dozen yards distant, the waters parted and a huge tuna, in its resplendent livery of blue and silver, swooped with indescribable strength and rapidity upon its quarry, catching it, mirabile dictu, in midair. In a fraction of a second the deed was done; the ocean, recording the splash of the leviathan, rippled applause, and our questions pattered like hail upon the somewhat hard understanding of our boatman, a son of Alsace.

"Yes," he said, his white teeth, in curious contrast to a lean, bronzed face "yes, messieurs," that is a tuna; a two-hundred-pounder at least."

ASSASSIN'S FAVORITE GAME.

The Czars of Russia have been the favorite game of the assassin. The nobles attacked Czar Paul in 1801. Alexander II. was attacked four times before he was finally killed in 1881 by a bomb thrown by a man, who was himself killed, in St. Petersburg. Two attempts were also made on the life of the late Czar, Alexander III.

BENEFITS OF BANKING.

George—I say, Jack, change me a five, won't you?

Jack—I haven't more than enough for lunch and car-fare in my pocket; Fact is, I don't carry money loose in my pockets any more. I put it in the bank and pay by check.

I don't care to bother with checks. I always carry money in my pockets, and I never miss a cent.

Y-e-s, but you are not married.

AN UNANSWERABLE ARGUMENT.

Dr. Oldschool—Well your humbug homeopathy has killed another man, I see.

Dr. Newschool—Eh? Killed a man? Dr. Oldschool—Yes, sir. The man tried to give a dose of your miserable little pellets to a member of his family and he swallowed the cork. Yes, sir. Such a horrible accident couldn't happen in the allopathic treatment. No sir. We use big bottles, with corks big enough to stay out of people's insides. Yes, sir.

## WILL BREAK THE RECORD

### A NEW ATLANTIC GREYHOUND BUILDING AT BELFAST.

She is Expected to Cross the Ocean in Five Days—Facts Showing the Wonderful Progress Made in Navigation.

The famous Great Eastern, in these days, might parade her 680-foot length from ocean to ocean and look in vain for any signs of the wondering admiration that greeted her appearance when she was by far the biggest ship afloat.

There are many vessels that approach in length very close to that of the erstwhile queen of the seas, and among the transatlantic beauties now building and shortly to be launched there is one that surpasses her. This is the new White Star steamship Oceanic, at present in course of construction in the Belfast shipyard. The Oceanic is over 700 feet in length, and is expected to lower the Atlantic record to five days. Her enormous engines will require not less than 700 tons of coal a day, and her equipment will be the finest ever put into a steamship.

It is doubtful, however, if the Oceanic will continue long to hold the record as the finest vessel afloat. So keen is the desire for supremacy in shipbuilding and naval architecture that no sooner is one marine beauty launched than orders are given for the construction of one that will surpass her.

The story of nineteenth century shipbuilding, from the time when the first ocean-going vessel driven by steam, the Savannah, made the Atlantic trip EIGHTY YEARS AGO,

in the then remarkable time of twenty-six days, is one of triumphant progress. In tracing the evolution of the modern steamship from the 350-ton Savannah to the great Oceanic the era of progress begins with the establishment of the first regular line of Atlantic steamships, when a Cunard vessel made the voyage from Liverpool to Boston in 1840.

This pioneer in the vast ocean traffic of to-day was the Britannia, which was one of a fleet of four wooden ships with side wheels, the other three being named the Acadia, the Columbia, and the Caledonia. The appearance of the Britannia in Boston made almost as profound an impression as the Great Eastern did later. The side-wheeler made the trip in the unprecedented time of fourteen days, eight hours. Her measurements were: 207 feet in length, displacement 1,154 tons, capacity of engines 740 horsepower, coal consumption 88 tons daily.

What a poor showing the marine monster of 1840 makes in comparison with the splendid screw steamer of the same line to-day; the Lucania and Campania with their 620 feet of length, displacement of 13,000 tons, engines of 30,000 horsepower, and making the Atlantic voyage in six days with ease.

The Cunard line held a prominent place in the early history of shipbuilding. The queer old peddlewheel steamships of this line were doomed, when, in 1862, the first Cunard vessel to be propelled by a screw was put on in the shape of the China, a steamship of 3,000 tons displacement.

TWELVE YEARS LATER

there were launched the Bothnia and Scythia, of 4,500 tons, and passengers who crossed the ocean in these vessels wondered how they ever had the courage to make the trip in the wretched little side-wheel affairs which were thought so much of once. The 4,500 tonners were soon surpassed, however, for in 1881 the Servia, a 7,392-tonner appeared on the Atlantic. The Servia was considered a gigantic boat then, being 515 feet in length, and possessing engines of 9,900 horsepower. She made a record run of seven days and eight hours, and timid people held up their hands in horror at such tremendous speed on the ocean.

Then came the City of Rome to snatch the palm for size and speed from the famous Servia. The City of Rome was forty-five feet longer than the Servia, 1,061 tons heavier, and most remarkable thing of all to some people, she had three smokestacks. With the appearance of the City of Rome began the rivalry for the ocean record that has been kept up among Atlantic steamships ever since.

The record was reduced in 1882 to six days, twenty-two hours, by the Alaska, of the Guion line. This remained for a good while the best time made, but all records were shattered in 1892, when the Umbria made the trip in 5 days, 22 hours, 7 minutes.

The new Oceanic will seek to do the trip in the extraordinary time of five days, thus enabling a traveler to cross the ocean in less time than he can cross this continent. The record that the Oceanic is expected to make will place her ahead of the Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse, a splendid ship of 14,000 tons, 649 feet in length, and 66-foot beam, which is at present the finest vessel afloat.

JAPANESE TEA ROLLER.

The Japanese newspapers are rejoicing over the invention by a native genius of a machine for rolling tea. The great cost of the production of tea lies in the labor. Each individual leaf must be plucked from the plant and handled with the fingers severally; times before it can be sent to market.

In Instalments—Is her hair her own? I believe about half of it is. She's getting it on the instalment plan.