

CHAPTER XVIII.

SETTLEMENTS.

To go back a little.

When Mr. Falkirk came to dinner that first day, he was very taciturn and grumpy indeed until soup and fish and third course were disposed of. Then he got a chance with Dingee out of the room, Mr. Falkirk opened his mouth for the discussion of somewhat besides grapes and peaches.

"So I understand, Miss Hazel, you have arranged with your other guardian to dispense with my services."

Wych Hazel was not in a mood even for blushing, that day. Thoughts were too deeply and abstractedly busy, and spirits were under too great a weight, for the usual quick play of lights and colours to which Mr. Falkirk was accustomed. A faint little extra tinge was all that came with the grave answer.

"May I ask who has been talking about me, sir?"

"Your future guardian, Miss Hazel; no less. Stopped at my door last night, on horseback, to say in three minutes what would have been much more fittingly talked off in three hours."

Slowly at first, then quick and vivid, the roses stirred and flamed up in the thoughtful face, but she said nothing. Only pushed away her plate, as if peaches and that could not go on together.

"I would like to know from you whether it is a thing fixed and settled and unalterable; absolutely done? I suppose it is, or he would not have said it."

She darted a look at him.

"Do you found suppositions upon such slight circumstantial evidence, Mr. Falkirk?"

"Sometimes, Miss Hazel, when the thing happens to be particularly difficult of belief."

"Unalterable?" Hazel repeated, half to herself,—"few things are that. Suppose your supposition were a mistake, Mr. Falkirk,—what then?"

"Can you tell me that it is?" he said, looking across the table to her with a gaze that would find the truth.

"Would you be glad?" she answered. "And will you tell me why?"

Then Dingee came in with coffee, and a bouquet; and Hazel sat playing idly with the flowers while Dingee set out the cups, the scent of heliotrope and geranium filling the room. While Dingee was near, Mr. Falkirk was silent; but eyeing the girl however, the flowers, her action, with a glance that took it all in and lost no item; not a graceful movement nor a tint of the picture.

"Yes," he said firmly when the boy was gone, "I should be glad. You are just fit for the play you are playing now; it is not played out, and should not be, for some time to come. You are young, and ought to be free; and you are rich, Miss Hazel, and ought not to marry somebody who will ruin you."

For a minute Hazel spoke not for surprise, and then she let a prudent pause lap on to that. For she had no mind just then to get up a tirade for Mr. Rollo's benefit, and all the same she felt her blood stirring.

"Is this all I am fit for?" she said; but the laugh was a little nervous.

"I said nothing you need take umbrage at," her guardian returned somewhat bitterly. "I spoke only in care for you, Miss Hazel; not in depreciation. I am about the last man in the world to do that."

"It is nothing very new for you to speak in depreciation of me, sir," said his ward, in her old privileged manner. "You know you never did think I was good for much."

"Enough to be worth taking care of," growled Mr. Falkirk in a tone which bespoke a mingling of feelings.

"Well, sir,—I never was fond of that process—but I have submitted indifferently well, I hope."

"Allow me to ask, Miss Hazel,—what sort of care do you expect in the future?"

Hazel fairly looked at him and opened her eyes. "Really, Mr. Falkirk," she said, "you are very amazing!"

"You know, I must suppose, that your guardian—has proved himself unfit to take care of your fortune, inasmuch as he has thrown away his own. And when fortune is gone, Miss Kennedy, the means of taking care of you are gone along with it. I warn you, though it may not be in time."

Wych Hazel's hands took a great grip of each other. It was pretty hard to bear this to-day.

"For the last year and a half, Mr. Falkirk, the care of me—in every respect—has been referred, and referred, and referred, to other judgment than your own. I used to think you were tired of me,—that you had lost your wits—Now, you think I have lost mine."

"The judgment which I was obliged to consult, and which could not hurt you as long as I remained a consenting party, will have no restraint when my decisions are dispensed with. He can pitch all your thousands after his own, if he thinks proper."

"Yes, you can do nothing with an 'if,'" said Hazel, trying to keep herself quiet.

"He will think it proper," said Mr. Falkirk. "You must have learned a good deal in three minutes, sir."

"He is an enthusiast—a fanatic, I should call it; and an enthusiast sees but one object in the universe, and that the object of his enthusiasm. It is all right to him; but it is all wrong for you."

It might have been the sheer pressure of ex-

citement, it might have been some idea that the present object of Mr. Rollo's enthusiasm was nearer at hand than Mr. Falkirk thought; but Wych Hazel's sweet laugh rang out. She knew again that the laugh was nervous, but it was uncontrollable none the less.

Mr. Falkirk's countenance changed slightly, as though he had winced with some secret pain; but it did not come out in words, if the feeling existed. He waited till the laugh had died away, and even the stillness spoke of the reaction in the mind of the laugher, and then he went on with a quiet unchanged tone:

"There is no use in going into this now. I wish merely to say, Miss Hazel, that the habit of taking care of your interests is too old with me, and has become too strong, to be immediately laid aside. I shall do my best to procure a settlement of your property—as much of it as possible—upon yourself; and I mention this now simply to beg of you that you will not interpose any sentimental or quixotic objection on your own part. I shall endeavour to get Dr. Maryland to back me; he must see the propriety of the step. I only ask you to keep still."

Mr. Falkirk rose. In a moment Wych Hazel was at his side, linking her little hands on his arm in the old fashion.

"What have I done," she said, "that you speak so to me? Have I been so wayward and wilful that I have really chafed all your love away, and there is nothing left but dry care?"

He touched her hand as he rarely had ever done, with a caressing, glancing touch, slight and short; but the man was silent. Wych Hazel drew him along, softly walking him up and down through the room, but she too said nothing, feeling perplexed and hurt, and not well knowing why. It was nothing new for Mr. Falkirk's words to be dry, but to-night they were so hard!—and when had he ever called her Miss Kennedy, in the worst of times? For once her instinct was at fault.

"I must go," said Mr. Falkirk, stopping short after a turn or two.

"It is such an old story for me to make a mistake—" Hazel began hesitatingly.

"Have you made this one unwittingly?" he asked with sudden eagerness.

Hazel dropped his arm and stood off with the air which Mr. Falkirk knew very well.

"This one does not happen to exist," she said. "But I mean—I should think you were so used to the reality, sir, that the idea would not give you much trouble. And there is one thing more I ought to say."

"I am not troubled by an idea, Miss Hazel. What is the other thing?"

Not an easy one to speak, by the shewing, as she stood there gathering her forces. But the words came clear and low.

"It will be a good day for me, Mr. Falkirk, —I shall have more hope of myself,—when I am as willing to be poor for the sake of other people, as—Mr. Rollo—is. Would you feel more sure of my being taken care of, if you knew that he spent all he has upon himself?"

"Yes. He is spending it upon a vagary—a chimera; and that is as much as to say he is throwing it into a quicksand. He will go down with it."

"I wonder what will be the result of that?" said Wych Hazel, in the cool way she could sometimes assume when she felt particularly hot.

"I don't like to look at the result," said Mr. Falkirk. "I will go, if you please, Miss Hazel. —But if you will be so good as not to oppose me, the result shall not be your destitution."

"Oppose you?" said Hazel. "With such an object in view?"—But then the mocking tone changed, and she said sorrowfully—"I beg your pardon, Mr. Falkirk!—But you are vexed, sir, and then you always vex me. And—I was not just ready for this to-night."

"You need not be vexed that I want to take care of you," Mr. Falkirk returned.

"No, sir. There are a great many things I need not be," said Hazel.

"I will try to do it. I may not succeed. Good-night."

She put her hands on his arm again, following his lead now towards the door. But on the way another thought struck her.

"Mr. Falkirk," she said suddenly, "if you try to do something which you know I would not like—or in a way I should not like,—you must remember that I will never say yes to it. Not if there were fifty quicksands in the way!"

"Miss Hazel," returned her guardian, "I have not so long held my office without finding out that it is impossible to tell beforehand what you would like, or in what way you would like it. I must work in the dark; unless you prefer to give me illumination."

"I should like," said Hazel bravely, "what Mr. Rollo would have a right to like. I suppose Mr. Falkirk will know what that is."

"Pardon me. My only concern is with what you would have a right to like."

"Very well," she answered,—"if you choose to put it so. But I could have no right to like anything which should seem like a reflection,—anything that could cast the least possible shade of dishonour.—Further than that, I do not see how it matters."

"Does it matter to you whether you are your own mistress or not?" said Mr. Falkirk, confronting her now with the question.

"I suppose that is past praying for," said Hazel with a deep blush. "But I have never been, yet."

"You have in money matters."

"About my own silks and sugarplums. No further, sir."

"Do you wish to be 'no further' always?"

"I like my own way better than anything in the world," said Hazel, "except"—and she paused, and the crimson mounted again,— "except the honour and dignity and standing of the people I love. You know better than I, Mr. Falkirk, whether both things can be cared for together; but if one has to go down, it must be my will."

"If it can be done consistently with other people's 'dignity and standing,' you would like to have control of your own property?"

"It cannot be so done."

"It can be so done—if I and Dr. Maryland do it."

"No," said Hazel, "there is too much of it."

"Will you please explain?"

"Too much money,—too much land,—the property is too large."

"Too large to be divided, that is."

Hazel turned off with a gesture of distressful impatience—then faced her guardian again.

"Don't you see, Mr. Falkirk?" she said,—"do you need to be told? Mr. Rollo could not possibly be only my agent."

"I do not see that he need. You are competent surely to spend your own money, in the way you like best."

"Very competent!" said Hazel gravely.

"And to manage my estate. Then I will begin at once, if you please, Mr. Falkirk, and you can send up to-morrow all the deeds and leases and writings in your possession. It will be quite a nice little amusement for me."

"Miss Hazel, you talk nonsense," said her guardian. "I cannot deliver up my charge, except into hands that will have absolute rule over it; unless I can secure a separate portion for you. The will makes him master, in the event of his marrying you."

Hazel made no reply. The speech was full of words that she did not like. And Mr. Falkirk quitted the room.

If he had wished to render his ward uncomfortable, he had made a hit,—stirring up thoughts and questions which had been ready enough before, only always held in check by the presence and influence that were stronger yet. But to-night she was heart-sore to begin with, and it had chafed her extremely that not all her pleading of the night before had carried a single point. The words "master," and "absolute control," came with peculiarly jarring effect. She brought a foot-cushion to the front of the fire, there where she was in the dining-room; and rested her head upon her hands and thought.

(To be continued.)

THE GLEANER.

TOM THUMB is said to be worth \$100,000.

The new political sensation in Paris is the MacMahon pipe, price five sous.

The Bishop of Lichfield is going to provide a floating church for the benefit of the boatmen in his diocese.

It is not generally known, but it is a fact, that a ton of ice is used every night to aid the ventilation of the Houses of Parliament.

SOME surprise is caused that the body of Mr. Ward Hunt was not brought to England; but it is said that the German undertakers' charges were so enormous, that the idea had to be abandoned.

THE drainage of Marlborough House is to be entirely reorganized. An excellent mansion, with a fine park, in the north of London, will be used as a kind of nursery for the Royal children in the London season.

It is considered to be very improbable that Colonel Wellesly will return to the Russian headquarters. Although of late he has been well received, he has not been allowed to visit the front.

THE Committee on Christ's Hospital has finished its report. There is nothing in it. The suggestion is made that flogging is "little use," and caning ought to be done by the masters, and a record of it kept in a book. There is no proposal of an ennobling character—an English boy is still to be treated differently to a foreign boy—and as a brute.

THE site of the ancient City of Sybaris, in Catania, Southern Italy, famous for its habits of luxury, is to be explored by the Italian Government. Excavations will begin during the coming autumn. Sybaris was destroyed by the Cretans about 510 B. C.

Some of the city physicians of New York have, it is stated, discovered that the public free baths of that city are the means of disseminating contagious diseases among the people that use them, and it is demanded, therefore, that they either be closed altogether, or have such changes introduced into their management as will insure different results.

Some Parisian *élégantes* amuse themselves with painting Louis XV. porcelain buttons, which they wear on their plaited dresses, and when there is a long row down the front they have all the effect of miniature plates. The studs on the cuffs, and the earrings worn at the same time all match, although the latter are composed of enamel and not porcelain.

THE following conversation on the subject of the Russian war is supposed to have taken place at a Swiss café, so celebrated for its echo that, it on approaching it any one exclaimed, "Ah, ça, ici, ne boit-on rien?" the echo would answer "Rien."

Quels seront les résultats de cette guerre d'orient? Echo—Rient!
Que pensez-vous de la Prusse? Echo—Russe!
Et de l'Italie? Echo—Allie!
Et la Suède? Echo—Aide!
Quant à l'Autriche? Echo—Triche!
L'Angleterre? Echo—Erre!
Mais Paris? Echo—Rit!
Que réclame la Turquie à l'Empire du Nord? Echo—Or!

VARIETIES.

CAPOUL is booked for Russia. He is said to be still the best love-maker on the operatic stage.

LOLA MONTEZ'S HAIR.—John Hull Pennville, who passed through this city a day or two since from Plumas County, Cal., on his way to Esmeralda County, in this State, has in his possession a relic of that strange and adventurous woman, Lola Montez. Mr. Pennville is an accomplished violinist, and at the time when Lola was residing in the Grass Valley, California, was in the habit of playing for her that she might practice some new dance of her own invention. The violinist had a strong passion for making collections of human hair, particularly the long tresses of women. He had several times hinted to Lola his great desire to possess a tress of her hair, but she refused to take these hints, however plainly made. At this time Lola had in her possession in her home in Grass Valley, a young bear that she was training for some purpose, she being at that time but twenty-nine years of age, and still full of life and ambition. One day, when Pennville again hinted about the tress, Lola said: "Mr. Pennville, if you will go into the back-yard, throw that bear to the ground, and hold him one minute by my watch, I will give you a strand of my hair large enough for the bow of your violin."

"Done!" cried Pennville, and he at once proceeded to the yard for his tussle with the bear, Lola followed to time him.

The bear was a grizzly, not yet old enough to be very dangerous, and Pennville, proceeding as though at play with the animal, with very little trouble or risk succeeded in winning the much coveted lock of hair. The tress was promptly surrendered, and Pennville long kept it among the other specimens in his collection but when he heard of Lola's death, somewhere in the State of New York, in 1860 or 1862, he remembered her words at the time he won the memento, "I will give you a strand large enough for the bow of your violin," and he then proceeded to place the hair in the handsomest bow he could procure, where it remains to this day.

"Will you play us something with the bow. Mr. Pennville?" said we, anxious to be able to say we had heard even the smallest thing played with so strange a relic of a now almost forgotten woman, and trembling lest we should be refused such gratification.

To our surprise he then proceeded to play a most mournful, fearful bit of something, and as he concluded, he said: "That was not only a favourite piece with Lola, but was also of her own composition."

Pennville is now quite an old man, and does not appear to be overburdened with this world's goods, but it would take a large sum of money to purchase that fiddle-bow.

HUMOROUS.

Now does the wily bank director find a deficit of ten thousand dollars, and exclaim: "This comes of supporting men in idleness. Ordered that there be a reduction of ten per cent on the salary of the night watchman."

AN old Aberdeen coachman who was extolling the sagacity of one of his old horses the other day, concluded by saying that "if any one was to go and ill-use him (the horse), would bear malice just like a Christian Radical."

WHEN you are tired of twirling your twumbs, sit down and see how fast you can say: "Shoes and socks shock Susan in an inexplicable manner, and inexorably she ceaseeth sheathing her shoes." It is worse than "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers."

AN exchange thinks that the most important improvement now needed is a kind of green corn with a handle growing out of each end of the cob. This of course would be an advantage, but what a large percentage of American citizens are most praying for is a kind of green corn that will timidly and submissively release its hold upon the cob before the awful presence of a double set of false teeth.

Among the many improvements that have been made during several years, for lightening labor, and more particularly woman's labor, nothing has proved a greater success than Calkin's Champion Washer, and few machines have caused more pleasure and satisfaction. The simplicity of the thing and its perfection of work must make it a necessity in every household, and it only requires to be seen and tested to convince the most skeptical of its actual merits. See advertisement.

NOTICE TO LADIES.

The undersigned begs respectfully to inform the Ladies of the city and country that they will find at his Retail Store, 196 St. Lawrence Main Street, the choicest assortment of Ostrich and Vulture Feathers, as all shades; also, Feathers of all descriptions Repaired with the greatest care. Feathers Dyed as per sample, on shortest delay. Gloves Cleaned and Dyed Black only.

J. H. LEBLANC. Works: 547 Craig St.