

Trade journals are noting the fact that the price of wool is the lowest in its history.

From recent revelations made after the disaster to H. M. S. Victoria, it would seem to the Chicago Record that the British navy is considerably more powerful in picture books than on the briny sea.

There is one place where a woman gets a man's pay for doing a man's work. It is the Township of Marshfield, Maine, and any woman who wishes to work out her road tax can do so and have her day's work count for as much as a man's.

As an instance of the wonderful growth of the English language, it may be noted, observes the Detroit Free Press, that, whereas Noah Webster could not find 80,000 words to put in his compilation, the recent Century Dictionary comprises more than 200,000.

At the beginning of this year there were 1168 submarine cables in existence, of which 880 belonged to different dominions, and 288 to private companies. The former possessed a length of 16,652 miles and the latter had a length of 144,743 miles, thus the total length was 161,395 miles.

The Terra Haute (Ind.) Gazette exclaims: "Take all the noted cathedrals and public buildings and monuments and colossal statuary of the ancient and modern world and group them in the Elysian fields and one might see the equal in beauty and radiant splendor of the magical White City as viewed from the top of the Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building. But until that is done the White City will stand alone a peerless gem in the diadem of the centuries."

Vice-Admiral Colomb, of the British Navy, who is regarded as one of the leading naval authorities of the world, has expressed an opinion regarding the most available types of war ships, particularly for the United States. He says that we should build battle ships, armored cruisers and torpedo boats, because they will be what we shall need in case of any war we are likely to have. He says that if he had control of the Navy Department of the United States he would look at the Nations with whom this country might go to war, and would then provide enough battle ships to be superior to the battle ships of any one of these possible enemies, and continually keep up this superiority. He would also build fast cruisers, many of which should be armored—vessels like the New York for example—and then, in addition, fast torpedo boats as a means of coast defense.

The President of a life insurance company has recently made public some interesting facts concerning suicide. It said that in 1877, of the people whose lives were insured, 1.28 per cent. died by their own hands. Since then the life insurance companies have practically discontinued the policy of refusing to pay in case of suicide, and the result is that the ratio of suicides to the insured population has increased alarmingly. The President whose statements we have quoted says: "It is passing strange that men will deliberately contrive the means of their own destruction in order to get the best of a life insurance company and leave money to those who come after them. Perhaps there is nothing very strange in it, comments the Atlanta Constitution. In this country there are plenty of men who are afraid of nothing in this world or in the next. The only good thing about them is the natural affection they feel for their families. They belong to the utterly hopeless and desperate class. They see no chance of providing for the immediate wants of their loved ones unless they insure their lives and step out of the world. Free-thinking in religion and our social conditions are largely responsible for this state of affairs. The life insurance companies will have to change their regulations when they find that a very large percentage of their customers do not consider life worth living.

BETRAYED:

A DARK MARRIAGE MORN.

A Romance of Love, Intrigue and Crime.

BY MRS. ALICE P. CARRISTON.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—(Continued.)

He did not imagine for a moment that Clara would charge herself personally with the infliction of her vengeance; but she had said, he then remembered, that the hand would be found. She was rich enough to find it, and this hand might now be here.

"Flo," he said, "let us walk a little faster, I beg of you! I am cold."

He quickened his steps, and resolved to return to the house by the public road. When he reached the edge of the woods, although he still thought he heard at intervals the sound which had alarmed him, he reassured himself and assumed his flow of spirits as if a little ashamed even of his panic.

He detained Clara to look at the pretext of their walk. This was a small wall of rock over a high excavation. Two trunks of trees had been thrown across the narrowest part of the excavation, forming a species of bridge—always giving those who ventured upon it the most complete and picturesque view of a most wonderful and romantic spectacle.

He had never before seen this species of bridge, which her brother had recently placed there. After some minutes of contemplation, as he was showing her with his hands the two trunks of the trees:

"Must we pass these?" she asked, in a broken voice.

"If you are not afraid," said Eugene; "and, after all, I shall be with you."

He saw she hesitated, and her face, under the moonlight, seemed to him to become so strangely pale that he could not refrain from saying:

"I thought you were braver."

She hesitated no longer, but put her foot on the perilous bridge against her wish, always cautiously advancing.

She half turned her head, and her steps became unsteady.

All at once she staggered.

Eugene rushed to catch her, and in the trouble of the moment his hand struck her with some force.

The unfortunate woman uttered a shriek, made a gesture as if to push him off, and, repulsing him, rushed wildly over the bridge and ran into the woods.

Eugene, repulsed and frightened, not knowing her thoughts, followed her in great haste.

He found her near the bridge, with her back against a tree, her face turned toward him, terrified yet remembering.

"Clara!" she exclaimed.

He looked at her with real bewilderment, when he heard the sound of rapidly approaching footsteps, and a shadow passed out of the depths of the woods.

He recognized Mrs. Leland.

She ran toward him, palpitating, excited, seized the hand of her child, and turned to him.

"Both here!" she cried.

Now he understood all.

A strangled cry rattled in his throat; he pressed his forehead convulsively between his two hands, and let fall his arms despairingly; then he said in a hoarse voice:

"You take me for a murderer?" and stamped in the wild agony of his rage.

"Well, what are you doing here? Save yourselves then!"

Terrified, they obeyed him—they fled—the mother dragging her daughter with long strides; and he saw them disappear in the night.

He remained there, in this wild place. The hours passed on without his numbering them. Sometimes yet he went up and down in the narrow space which separated the bridge from the abyss; sometimes stopping suddenly, his eyes lowered and fixed, he seemed as immovable and senseless as the trunk of the tree against which he leaned.

If there is, as we hope, a divine hand which weighs in a just balance our griefs against our faults, these moments ought to have been counted for this man.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

RESTORED MEMORY, AND SORROW.

Warren Leland's journey to Roxbury resulted in a disappointment.

An interview with Clara's father revealed—that he had half expected to hear—that the remittances for the support of Mildred had all been made anonymously.

This knowledge filled him with a strange and undefined fear.

The liberal amounts supplied, and the regularity with which they were remitted, indicated that Mildred's brother must be a wealthy man, yet the fact that his address was not known, nor even that of his banker or agent in New York, lent an air of decided mystery to the whole transaction.

Without waiting even to see his mother, the perplexed and anxious young man hastened to catch a New York train.

Once seated in the rapidly moving coach, he gave way to serious reflection.

"There's something back of all this," he decided, after he had run over in his mind all that was known to him of the history of his affianced bride. "I should have thought of this before. I'll be surprised if I don't run against something in the way of villainy before I fathom it, as I surely shall."

The love which Warren Leland had entertained for Clara Denton had been pure and sincere, but it had been but a prelude to that which he now felt for her beautiful protégée, Mildred Lester.

Clara had done much to remove that which was gross from his nature, but his love for Mildred had purified him as with fire.

Her gentle influence had operated upon him in a manner exactly opposite to the way Eugene had been affected by the beautiful siren whose baneful love had wrecked his life.

It was nearly evening when he reached the Grand Central Depot.

Calling a carriage, he was driven rapidly to the house of his friends, whom he had not seen since parting with them the preceding evening.

Clara and Mildred were there to receive him.

"Where's Edith?" she asked, when he had briefly informed Mrs. Denton of the uselessness of his journey.

"She went this afternoon to call on her new-made friend, Miss Fielding, and has not yet returned," was the response.

"Hasn't she, though?"

This query was attended by the closing of a door, and followed by the tinkling of little feet, and a moment later the little maiden in question danced into the drawing-room.

"I'm always at the very place I'm expected to be," laughed Edith, merrily.

"That you are, daughter," replied Clara, greeting her with a kiss.

"And what did you find out?" asked Warren, eagerly.

"I found Miss Fielding out."

"How did that happen?"

"A misunderstanding as to the hour. They said she would be home at five o'clock."

"And you didn't wait?" interrupted her mother.

"How could I? Why, the wedding day is almost here, and I've lots and lots of things to buy for Mildred, yet."

The sprightly girl here opened her reticule, and disclosed a number of small packages.

"But I didn't forget my errand," she added, checking Warren, who was about to speak.

"I left a note for Miss Fielding, inviting her to tea, and promising that you should escort her home."

"But I was out of the city. You knew that I was to leave for the East on a morning train."

"True, but trains run West, as well as East, and there was an attraction here."

She laughed and pointed to the now blushing Mildred.

"By the way," she rattled on, "I saw the doctor, and told him about it. He said it might turn out to be the cure of Mildred."

At that instant there was a tingling of the door-bell.

Miss Fielding, announced the servant.

All rose, and an instant later Meta presented herself.

"Mr. Leland," said Edith, beginning the introduction of Warren.

She was interrupted by a sharp cry of seemingly mingled surprise and pain.

All eyes were upon Mildred, who, with uplifted hands, was swaying to and fro.

Warren Leland presented his strong arms none too quickly to prevent her from falling to the floor.

In an instant Clara was rising restoratively to recall her from the swoon into which she had fallen.

"Stand a little back, please, Miss Fielding," said the young man as he saw signs of returning consciousness in the fair, young face. "It will be better for her not to see you at first."

"Metal Metal!" cried Mildred, upon opening her eyes. "I'm certain I saw her."

An instant later and the two old-time friends were clasped in each other's arms.

You are better, darling? queried Warren, as he half-jestingly with-drew his affianced wife from the embrace of Meta.

"You remember the past now?"

"Remember the past?" she repeated, as if not understanding the question.

"Yes. You knew Miss Fielding long ago?"

"And my brother Ray?" added Meta.

"Yes, yes!" shrieked Mildred. "Oh, God! Better death than this!"

"Her mind wanders," said Warren, anxiously. "Come, rouse yourself, darling; my little wife that is soon to be do."

Your wife? Oh, God! What do you say? I am a wife already."

She then disengaged herself from the yielding arms of the bewildered lover, and stepped toward Meta.

"She raves," said Clara. "This shock, instead of restoring, has overthrown her mind."

But Meta shook her head sadly.

"Mildred is right," said she. "She was married some years ago."

"To whom?" demanded Leland, frantically.

"To Eugene Cleveland!" cried Mildred, answering for herself.

Warren Leland's husband? shouted Warren Leland. "There, there!"

"My husband married again?"

With a moan of anguish the deeply wronged and suffering woman fell senseless to the floor.

CHAPTER XXXV.

UNHAPPY MARRIAGE.

Unhappy, distracted, Eugene Cleveland had no doubt that he knew who had dogged the footsteps of himself and wife in their strange ramble through the woods.

The appearance of Mrs. Leland and the vague expression of suspicion on her part had convinced him that she had been the spy.

In this he was mistaken. Becoming alarmed at the long absence of her daughter, and filled with a vague fear that the warning of Phoebe Craven might contain a gleam of truth, the mother had hastened to find Edith, that she might protect her, if necessary, from the murderous hand of her husband.

She had arrived upon the scene at the moment calculated to confirm her suspicions.

But it was a man who had followed the pair before the unfortunate, almost fatal, episode at the rustic bridge, which had convinced Clara that at heart her beloved, idolized husband, the father of her child, was a murderer.

This man was the degraded, revengeful Oscar Sylve.

Rendered desperate by the failure of his diabolical schemes, and burning with a desire for vengeance, he had persistently dogged the movements of young Cleveland.

He had seen Eugene emerge from the Elliston mansion and had followed him to the Grand Central Depot, and taken passage on the train which bore him to Roxbury.

After the flight of the two terrified ladies, the wretch whose name was so truthful an index to his character, watched the distracted young man for some time.

He had come to Roxbury bent on taking his enemy's life, and now saw an opportunity to accomplish his end without danger of being suspected of the dastardly crime.

"It'll be reckoned a case of suicide," muttered he at length, as he produced a revolver and started forward.

But almost instantly he checked himself, and a smile of triumph swept his rage-distorted features.

Returning the weapon to his pocket, he glided swiftly from the spot.

With the good fortune which seems sometimes to favor the evil-minded, he caught a train, and was, not long afterwards, entering a cab at Forty-second street, New York.

Alighting after a short drive, he boldly ascended the marble steps leading to the Elliston mansion.

The hour was late for calling upon a lady, yet Sylve lost no time in ringing the bell, and in notifying the sleepy footman who answered it that he desired to see his mistress upon business of urgent importance.

Clara Elliston, looking peerless in her widow's weeds, received him in the library.

At first she had resolved not to see the ex-secretary, but upon reflection had changed her mind, deciding that he must know something of a startling nature to communicate.

"What brings you here?" she asked abruptly, without taking a seat.

"Your interests."

"Bah!" interrupted the siren, looking more beautiful than ever, in scorn.

"And my own," added the man, diplomatically.

"That's more to the point. State your errand, and that briefly."

"You despise me, and, perhaps, rightly; yet we have one interest in common."

"I don't imagine what."

"You love and would possess for your very own Eugene Cleveland."

Clara smiled bitterly, but made no reply.

"While I have but one object left in life."

"Revenge on him?"

"No. I love Flora Cleveland, his wife. She must be mine."

"I still fail to understand what interest we have in common."

To accomplish our several ends, we must separate the two, and that in a way that will leave no lingering trace of affection between them."

"I'm becoming interested," smiled the siren, as she threw herself languidly upon a sofa, and waved her caller to a chair.

Then, in hurried tones, Sylve related how Clara believed her husband guilty of her intended murder.

"A bold move now," said he, in conclusion, "and the thing will be accomplished."

"I will join you in the enterprise."

Oscar Sylve noted the changed expression upon the beautiful woman's face, and inscribed it to the inward promptings of her passion and guilty love.

With all his showiness, he was wrong; indeed he could not have been farther from the truth than Cleveland had forever departed from the heart of Clara Elliston, or rather it had turned to hate, and that of the kind which the poet placed a degree below that engendered in the infernal regions, when he wrote: "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned."

This change of sentiment on her part was favorable to Eugene Cleveland, for the love of such a woman is more blighting and destroying than her bitterest most implacable hate.

It was a full hour before Sylve withdrew, and when he did so a plan had been agreed upon.

But let us return to Roxbury, toward which all indications point as the scene of a coming tragedy.

Now Eugene Cleveland passed that dreadful night, he never fully realized. The wickedness of his past life rose before him like a veritable phantom.

He realized now that what he had thought to be love for Clara had been passion only. Even in his despair and black remorse, he could not comprehend how he had been so long enslaved, and had been so long guilty courses.

As he thought of his loving, trusting wife and innocent child, a full sense of what he had lost, or rather cast aside, dawned upon him, and he burst into bitter tears.

"I never loved another," moaned he. Then, with a feeling akin to guilt, he thought of his lost Mildred.

"She was pure and good," said he, "and had she lived we might have been happy together, and this frightful nightmare, from which I have just awakened, been avoided; but I now know that I never entered her love. I do for Flora."

Heaven send away my life, my earthly happiness, and my hope of heaven."

Thus tortured by bitter reflections, he had wandered away from the rocky chasm and approached the highway, near the house.

The night had long since passed, and the sun was mounting high into the heavens.

With a start he raised his eyes and realized his position.

A second shock ran through his nerves as he saw two persons approaching the house.

One he recognized as Warren Leland. His companion, a closely veiled lady, Eugene did not recognize, though he thought he detected something familiar in her carriage.

Another moment and they had entered the mansion.

With the privilege of a story-teller, let us follow them.

As the reader has no doubt surmised, the veiled lady was Mildred, the wife, the lawful wife of Eugene Cleveland.

The scene which ensued was too painful for one to describe in detail.

Flora had been crushed before. She was overwhelmed now.

To be wedded without having been ever legally a wife, was a thought too terrible for her to bear, and for a time her reason seemed likely to be overthrown.

As for Mrs. Leland, Warren and Mildred, their condition was but little better.

"I have regained my memory," came back to my old life, only to encounter misery," moaned Mildred. "I loved Eugene once, but that is now a thing of the past; I am bound to him by the law, while my heart is bestowed upon another."

At this juncture the door-bell rang, and to clasp the climax, to add, if possible, to the anguish that possessed the quartette, Oscar Sylve and Clara Elliston were ushered into the parlor.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

CONCLUSION.

Clara Elliston took a backward step, as her eyes fell upon Warren Leland, whose presence there she had not calculated upon, while her companion started in dismay as he recognized the fair girl he had claimed as his sister and whom he had so deeply wronged.

"You here?" cried Flora, indignation momentarily suppressing her grief.

"And why not?" returned the other, almost laughingly, regarding that wonderful situation which had always characterized her.

"Why not, indeed? I ought not to have asked that question of one like you who dares anything. What is your pleasure?"

Before replying, the wicked woman cast a quick glance at her companion.

Clara Elliston was quick-witted, and the look was a revelation to her.

She had never before seen Mildred, but she intuitively knew that the pale, trembling girl upon whose face the eyes of Sylve were fixed, could be none other than the one whom she had so cruelly separated from her newly wedded husband.

The two wives of Eugene Cleveland and met, the secret had been disclosed; there could be no doubt of it.

The plan which she and her guilty associate had agreed upon was destroyed. But Clara was a woman of great resources, and a surprise like this could not discomfit her.

"I have no pleasure," replied she, with a calm dignity. "My business here is of most painful nature."

"Have done with preliminaries," spoke up Warren impatiently. "To the business which brings you here."

"Very well, sir. I will speak, and without reserve. I have come here to make public a fearful and long hidden wrong."

"You might better have left that task to others," said Flora, scornfully.

"Spare your reproaches. I will not affect to misunderstand you. I learned last night that vile slanders have been trying to sully my fair fame. Such charges are false, infamously false."

"I ought not to have expected a confession," replied Flora. "What hidden wrong do you seek to make public, then?"

"When Eugene Cleveland married you he had a wife already."

"I know it. There she stands," Clara looked in the direction indicated, uttered an exclamation of well-feigned surprise.

"Is it possible?" she cried.

She started forward, and a repellant gesture, and a look of disgust on the part of Mildred, repelled her.

"You know very well that she was alive all the time," said Warren, rather warmly. "Was it not your tool, Sylve, there, who pretended to be her brother and presented proof of her death?"

"Yes, but not with my knowledge, far less at my instigation."

"At whose, then?"

"Oscar Sylve was working under the orders of Eugene Cleveland. Ten minutes after he was married he received a letter from my husband notifying him that as a bride present he would make him a partner in the publishing house where he was employed. This changed his ideas at once. He saw that he could look higher."

He sought Sylve, and set a plot in motion which sent Mildred flying from the city that very night. Is not that true, Mr. Sylve?"

"The beautiful woman raved, laid her white hand upon her heaving bosom and turned her dark eyes, so full of witchery and fascination, upon the face of the ex-secretary."

Sylve hesitated a moment. That he had lost all chance of gaining the love of Flora Cleveland he fully realized. He wavered for a moment. The eyes of the siren seemed burning their way into his very soul. An instant later his resolution was taken.

"The lady is right," he faltered. "I hate to acknowledge it, but I acted for Cleveland in the matter. He held a whip over my head, an old folly of which he had gained knowledge, and I was forced to perform the dastardly part."

"And you were the catch he had in his mind," added Mrs. Elliston, speaking to Flora, and bestowing a glowing look of gratitude upon Sylve.

"It is false!" cried Flora. "Your wives have led Eugene to wrong me, but he was never capable of such perfidy, such infamy."

"Thank God!"

These words in fervent tones, caused every one present a start of surprise.