

The Watchman and Southron

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BEAUTY'S SECRET

By ALAN MUIR

Author of "Vanity, Hardwear," "Golden Girls," Etc.

BOOK THREE. LADY BEAUTY'S LOVERS.

CHAPTER V. "GOOD-BY, SWEETHEART, GOOD-BY."

The two married sisters returned from their honeymoon about the same time...

The sisters soon met, and Sophia could not complain of any lack of sympathy on the part of her mother...

"You're right, mamma," said she, "but I don't think you should have..."

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"Only remember this: if your capital should run out, and you will find me no banker when the account has been overdrawn."

"Thank you again," the young fellow answered, "and that offer I do accept."

Under that offer he went off, but without any man's help I should be glad; but rather than fail, I should most gratefully avail myself of yours...

"Confound it!" cried Goldmore, "I wish you were my son!"

And the great man marched away down the street as like the other of Bahal as ever...

Little Mrs. Barbara Temple showed a singular mixture of astuteness and good feeling in her management of the affair from this time until she could get Sophia married...

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those tokens with which love's intercourse adorned, that she loved him not. And he, retiring, and even diffident, had taken the hint submissively.

"Very pleasing of Sophy!" the little woman said. "Very pleasing, indeed! If it would do any good I should lose my temper with her. But it would not do good—not yet. Prendergast was just the man for her. I am angry; but I will keep my temper."

And she had her reward. To her great joy, no sooner had they returned to Kettlewick than Prendergast appeared on the scene again, and his attitude toward Sophia had not shifted by a hair's breadth. Evidently, then, Sophia had not repented him after all.

"How fortunate I did not get into a passion," the ruler of her spirit remarked to herself. "It is a good maxim: Never be really angry; don't even seem to be angry often. I should have had Sophy's order, and set against Prendergast for life, and all on account of my own hasty judgment."

Prendergast's coming to Kettlewick was in a marked way. He did not stay with any lady, but on up to the hotel and, when he got to the Temple, he said that he had run over for a few days, in the hope of increasing the pleasant acquaintance with themselves.

Mrs. Barbara Temple beamed on him one of her sweetest looks. "You speak of your pleasure in renewing the acquaintance," she said. "You say nothing about ours. I can never forget all your attention to us in Paris. And what a pleasant time it was to meet you here!"

"Part of my visit to Paris," he remarked significantly, "I enjoyed more than anything in my life."

"In that case," Prendergast said, reading her like print and with rising spirits, "I am full of hope."

"You may be," she answered; "but still my daughter is not an ordinary girl. There must be great care. Every step must be taken with thought, and with an end in view. In a word, Mr. Prendergast, I think you had better be guided by me from first to last."

"I shall most thankfully," he said; "and then he composed himself to listen to his mistress."

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Capt. Tillman's Letter.

To the Editor of the News and Courier:

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And, first, let me correct some mistakes and misapprehensions of your Reporter. The effort to belittle the Convention and elevate me on the pedestal of the demagogue by saying, "It was Capt. Tillman's Convention," all the way through, &c., will not hurt our cause in the least, because it is not true. It was a representative body of earnest, intelligent men taking counsel for the good of the State, and of little account I exercised over its actions.

I had attacked existing abuses and the unanswerable arguments adduced to sustain my position. The committee on resolutions, who had full control of all business brought before the body, consisted of one from each county, as pointed by each county delegation. I had nothing to do with their selection.

I do not even know half a dozen of the thirty picked men composing that committee. What men would be said to show that these men went to Columbia with their minds already made up, and had no desire to hear lengthy discussions on the questions I have been agitating and others besides.

I went into the Convention on Friday anticipating a long and hot debate. I was prepared with facts and arguments to sustain each and every one of my resolutions of the Convention had required little labor and thought, while to show the justice, the wisdom, the necessity of the reforms I advocate has been my sole study for months.

The Convention needed no arguments other than I have already used in the News and Courier to convince it, and I am glad that the News and Courier will if it continues its present bombardment, give me an opportunity to use much of this ammunition, so I may say it is well to be prepared with it.

But I desire to make a prediction right here, and that is that the books in the State library can be spared for the agricultural library. Convict labor can be used in excavating the foundations of the buildings and in making brick, &c., provided they be spared from that blessed "Columbia ditch," and I guarantee that with these helps and with the money mentioned, the college can be opened on the 1st of January, 1888.

As for the experimental station, if Congress don't give the \$15,000 then the faculty will, as they now do in Mississippi and Michigan, carry on experiments without it.

My information is that the bill will pass if it is reached on the Calendar before Congress adjourns. If it is appropriated the money becomes available on 1st July prox., and if the present trustees of the South Carolina College spend it on the agricultural annex at Columbia, the demand next winter for a separation of the agricultural college from the South Carolina College would be met by the argument that the experimental station had already been established at Columbia, and another link would be forged in the chain which now binds the two institutions together.

This argument, which I used in the Convention, overthrew all of Col. Daucan's specious arguments and promises on behalf of the trustees, and the farmers passed the resolution because they prefer a whole lot hereafter to a crumb now.

If the legislators grants our wishes in December next, then the experimental station can be provided for in planning the college.

I am satisfied, also, that there is going to be a lively competition among the counties to secure the college, and I hope to enter Edgefield in the race if I can wake her up. This element in the estimated cost will amount to no small item, I imagine. If we allow the present appropriation for the Citadel to keep it up as a school for girls, if we give the South Carolina College \$5,700 in place of the land scrip fund and its tuition fees, both institutions, it would seem, could be thus bountifully sustained, so that there would be really no cost for any money save the \$5,700.

Now, as regards the Constitutional Convention, I cannot see why it should cost exactly \$100,000. Why not say \$1,000,000? It would appear that the changes needed in our organic law could be secured in at least as short a time as the Legislature takes to make an annual addition of patches to that already over-patched volume, the Revised Statutes, which won't stay revised, and I feel sure the savings which might be secured in our county government, by a return to our old way of managing these things, say nothing of many other leaks which might be stopped, will amount, many times over in one year, to what this convention would cost. There are many other urgent arguments why we should have a Constitutional Convention, but I will not give them here. I will sum up as follows:

Additional expenditures recommended: Real Agricultural and Mechanical College \$75,000. Additional tax on Fertilizers 25,000. Made up to South Carolina College for Land Scrip 5,700. Cost of Constitutional Convention 25,000. Total \$150,700.

There are those who believe a constitution of our own making is worth this much, if for no other reason than to call it our Constitution. The present instrument under which we live was made by negroes, traitors and carpetbaggers. It was forced down our throats at the point of the bayonet. It has provisions, mandatory at that, which have not and cannot be changed. Our legislators scorn and spit upon it when it suits, and give as excuse that they are obliged to disobey some of its provisions, and thus they have lost respect for it. If for no other reason, we need a new one and should have it.

But let us see whether the \$140,000, which is a little less than our bill, cannot be gotten without additional taxation. The work on the State House should be stopped as soon as a good roof is put on and needed repairs made. We need education more than we do a grand State House. Seventy-five thousand dollars can be obtained right here, and without searching for a Legislature anxious to be economical can easily obtain the rest and still reduce taxes. If the farmers do their duty in sending men to the next General Assembly there can be many thick-padded places found that will bear slicing. They can find "places to cut" if they want it. The Farmers' Convention has been blamed because they did not go into details. We were not a Legislature, and we knew it. We intend to elect one, though, that will carry out our recommendations if we can.

I will in another article notice some other things which have been said about the Farmers' Convention and its work.

B. R. TILLMAN. Hamburg, May 17, 1886.

MR. PRENDERGAST.

He spoke quietly, and Mrs. Temple, glancing at her daughter, saw her bend over her little morsel of lacework with a crimson cheek.

"She knows now, at all events," the mother said triumphantly.

And when Prendergast took his leave, Mrs. Temple resolved finally to open her mind to Sophia.

"I have never, Sophy," she began, "never in my life seen a man who more takes my fancy." The door was hardly shut upon him.

"At first I thought him rather dull and well-satisfied." Here our little vivacious singer made the most and gentlest face of scorn. "But that soon wears off; and I declare that, in spite of my first impression, I find him the most truly lively, entertaining, accomplished man I have ever met. What do you think, Sophy?"

"He is very agreeable," Sophia said seriously. "Polite without affectation, witty without coarseness, serious without coldness." Mrs. Temple went on, in true Eighteenth-century style. "He is a specimen of moderation in all things; and moderation, Sophia, next to repose of manner, is the great mark of a gentleman. A gentleman should be a little of everything, and not too much of anything."

"Yes," Sophia replied, dexterously offering not to hear the last part of her mother's speech, "he is all you say. I like him greatly."

"I am going to ask him to dinner," Mrs. Temple said.

"What, mamma?" exclaimed Sophia. "Company so soon? Child!" the mother answered. "All alone. He will like it better than a party."

"Did you spoil one of our little snug evenings, and then to get up at ten o'clock?" Sophia murmured. "Don't, mamma."

"Now what is there in our evenings you so enjoy, Sophy?"

"I do not know," she hypocritically answered, "I enjoy the quiet—and our music—and your talk, mamma, and all your funny, lively stories. You are the best company in the world."

She put her hand's crossly round her mother's neck, and the mother, who always showed herself pleased with every mark of affection from her daughters, drew one round white arm along her hips, giving it a succession of tiny kisses.

"Well, if you must have him, mamma, have some people to meet him."

"If he is so agreeable, he would do for that?"

"If he wants society, it is just what would care for mamma."

"But he does not want society," the mother replied; "only a little friendly chat and music."

"She's right," Sophia said, "she will write a note to him this morning."

The note was sent that evening, but no answer came. Mrs. Temple began to think she must be altogether out of her wits. She was so sure she had written a note to him this morning, when Sophia was walking in the town, the name of Mrs. Prendergast was announced, and he stepped into the room with an apology for the early hour on his lips, and with an air which plainly said, "My business is my excuse."

Mrs. Barbara Temple greeted her visitor that his call was not inopportune.

"In fact," she said, with one of her engaging looks, "I am fashinated for a little scandalous story."

"My call," Prendergast remarked quietly, "is not of that character. The fact is, I am continued, opening his business at once, if he had been greatly struck by your daughter, I should have said so, but I can't carry but assure you that never, never have I seen any young lady who seemed to possess half her attractions. She is a lovely girl!"

He stopped, and a slight blush in his eyes showed that he felt some of the force of Mrs. Temple's remark. He was so much inclined to look at his mother with a gleam of defiance in his eye.

"I came to see this morning partly on your account," Prendergast continued. "I know the responsibilities and anxieties of a mother, left in sole charge of so attractive a girl. I don't wish to soil to her name, and the just intimation of disapproval of my suit on your part will be sufficient to make me abandon it at once, and finally."

Possibly this grave gentleman, having eyes in his hand, may have known that Mrs. Temple was dying to call him son-in-law; and this noble speech may have had a trace of humbling in it. But Mrs. Barbara remembered this sort of humbling. It was more than she could bear.

"I am so glad," she said, "to hear that you are so well."

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"As to Sophia," continued the mother, joining the tips of her fingers in a pondering sort of way, "that is a much more intricate matter."

"She is not engaged, is she?" the tutor cried hastily.

"She is not. She is perfectly unfettered. There has been a sort of attachment; her affections have been..."

"I understand," Prendergast said with a grave face. "You wish to break it gently to me. I can assure you I should never try in the remotest way to take from another man affections I should so treasure if they were my own."

He was speaking his real mind now, and Mrs. Temple looked at him, looking between admiration and amusement. She had lived in a world of honor, but not quite honor of this sort; however, she always made her bow to virtue when it was well dressed and expressed itself gently.

"A most high-minded feeling," she said, "just as I should not myself. But in the present case such scruples would be out of place. This is only a boy and a girl affair; there is no money, no prospect, no hope. I have said myself—kindly, but firmly—that I marry, or even an engagement, is out of the question."

"And you do not think Miss Temple's heart irrevocably given away?"

"It was a lesson in posture and grimace to see the little workman's pantomime answer. The disjunctive fingers tips and her white hands with upward palm, her gently raised eyebrows, her shoulders quivering with a scarcely perceptible shrug, her quick significant smile, were each members of an unbroken sentence. The meaning was, 'The female heart—our heart—is seldom given irrevocably. Try for yourself.' It was perfectly Parisian."

"In that case," Prendergast said, reading her like print and with rising spirits, "I am full of hope."

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