

(CONTINUED FROM TENTH PAGE.)
 Before starting on his day's work, he scribbled a long letter to Edith, telling the truth from beginning to end, blaming himself freely, and imploring her to forgive him sufficiently to work with him for the recovery of her sister.

But not even news of this sort could rouse Edith Maxwell into independent action.
 She took the letter to her uncle, who read with darkening face when he saw it threatened to disturb the pleasant tenor of his existence.
 'You say this man telegraphed information to your sister's absence my dear?' he said. 'What reply did you make?'

Edith repeated her carefully thought out message, and was told that it did her great credit.
 'This letter may or may not state facts,' the vicar pursued. 'It may be a net to draw you also into the net of this wicked man. Possibly he and that artist, Curtis—whom I shrewdly suspect to be the Curtis Lockhart mentioned by this Maxwell—are boon companions, acting in collusion. Curtis admired you, I think? My dear niece the wickedness of the world is colossal. Your sister has been swallowed up in it through her own headstrong willfulness. You owe it to us, and to yourself, to cast her out of your mind.'

'You cannot touch pitch without being defiled. You acted modestly and rightly in making this deceiver Maxwell—I regret he should bear our name—responsible for your unfortunate sister's disappearance. Leave to him the task of finding her. I am sure your aunt agrees with me that this is the best advice I can give you.'

Edith took the advice, because it was easier and pleasanter for her to do so than to disregard it.

Her hundred pounds was considerably diminished, a good part of it having been paid away to dressmakers and milliners whose work adorned Miss Maxwell's person and filled her wardrobe to overflowing.

If she offended Uncle John, she must in future, earn her own living; a possibility far worse to contemplate than any fate that might threaten Donsa.

Besides Edith found it difficult to forgive 'Mr. Curtis' for having fooled her, and for preferring Donsa to herself.

She was inclined to think that her wilful sister had met with nothing more than a just remark for her reprehensible show of independence.

And, it may be, they were all troubling themselves for nothing.

Curtis Lockhart had probably won Donsa's heart, and she had accompanied him willingly enough.

They were very likely married by this time and beyond the reach of interference.

In this way, following in her uncle's footsteps, Edith quieted her conscience, and continued to tread the 'primrose path' which had already proved so much to her liking, and when news of Charles Maxwell-Grant's path reached the quiet Cornish village, and his lawyers communicated to Edith the delightful news that she and her sister inherited the fortune bequeathed to their brother by the late Miss Grant, it still made no difference in their attitude towards Donsa, though advertisements were not inserted in all the London papers for information concerning the missing girl.

That was what Lockhart had been waiting for.

His behaviour to his prisoner had been marked by consideration for all her wishes, save in the one point of release.

Donsa had quickly learned how foolish she had been to trust him.

Instead of taking her to the supposed residence of his mother at St. John's Wood, he had taken advantage of her ignorance of London to shut her up in a lonely house many miles from town, and to tell her that she must stay there until she consented to be his wife.

He told her plainly why he wished to marry her.

'You are being advertised for by Barry and Coleman, my own lawyers. You are to hear something to your advantage from them, which means, of course, that you inherit half of your brother's fortune. I am in rather hot water pecuniarily, so a rich wife will be very welcome.'

She saw that pleading and abuse would prove equally futile with this man.

She must meet him on his own ground; and fight him with his own weapon—deceit; and this she did not hesitate to do.

Only she must have time to think out her plans; and, to begin with, she must not appear to yield too easily, or his suspicions might be aroused.

'I shall get away, if I can!' she said, with a determined nod at the window.
 'Better not try that way, unless you want to break your neck,' he advised.
 'I shall try where I like, and when I like. Who lives in that big house over there?'

she turned away with a shudder, and, seating herself by the fire took up a book and appeared to read.

Lockhart anxious not to increase her already evident dislike of him, took the hint, relieved her of his presence.

CHAPTER VII.

Had he known that one of the women who had stared up at the window where Donsa had momentarily shown herself was Mrs Charles Maxwell, he might have been inclined to wish he had selected another cage for his captive bird.

Before she married Maxwell, Lockhart had gone through an ardent flirtation with Clara Lodge, in which she, at least, had been in earnest, and she had found it hard to forgive him for having only played at being in love with her.

They had parted in a manner the reverse of friendly, and he had been careful to keep out of her way afterwards.

This partly accounted for his not having come across Maxwell until they met in the restaurant on that eventful day when Donsa made the acquaintance of both.

Donsa retired early during the time of her captivity.

The silence depressed her, country-bred though she was; and something else depressed her, too, and that was the mental picture she drew of Charlie Maxwell sitting alone in their cosy lodgings, thinking of her ingratitude in having left him with nothing but a word of reproach for his kindness to her.

All her anger against him had faded. As in a flash she seemed to read his motives for having acted as he had done, and she longed now to thank him for trying to save her from Curtis Lockhart.

Lockhart felt the gloom and silence somewhat depressing also.

He drank heavily to drown reflection, and when one night at the end of the week he staggered upstairs to his room, he was in a condition which easily explained what followed.

There was no blind to his window; the moon shone brightly, and he did not trouble to light the candles, being desirous—with all the consciousness left to him—of getting into bed before he fell into the heavy sleep which already made his eyelids droop.

But as he took off his coat he saw something which roused him to partial sobriety.

Standing on the wall at the foot of the garden was a girl whom he mistook for Donsa.

She was holding by the bough of a large tree in the asylum grounds into which she appeared about to spring.

Lockhart's first thought was to prevent her doing so.

He had a revolver at hand, and he was a good shot.

Surely he was sober enough to disable without killing her?

He did not pause to think that a fall from the high wall might injure her for life; he was not sober enough for common sense to control his actions.

A moment later his revolver spoke sharply, and the girl fell into the garden belonging to the cottage.

No one at the asylum appeared to hear the shot.

The old caretaker of the cottage was too deaf to be disturbed by it; and Donsa, though roused out of a sound sleep, concluded the sound must have been part of a dream, and dozed off again, as Lockhart sat in the garden and into the garden to recover his wounded prey.

The shock of the discovery which awaited him sobered him completely.

It was not Donsa who lay there so ominously still in the bright moonlight, but Charlie Maxwell's unhappy wife!

She was quite dead.

Lockhart's shot had missed her by a good half-yard but, started by it, she had lost her footing, and had fallen almost on her head.

an omnibus without troubling to find out where it was going.

But Fate was befriending her that morning.

She was taken along the Strand, and by chance caught sight of the street where Barry and Coleman's offices were to be found.

It was early. Neither of the partners had put in an appearance as yet but when they came identification was easy enough.

They had obtained Donsa's signature from her sister, and quickly satisfied themselves that she was the person for whom they had advertised.

But they looked askance at her, she felt, and matters were not improved when she told her story.

Very hesitatingly Mr Barry informed her that Miss Edith Maxwell had authorized him to say it would be useless for her to think of holding communication with the occupants of Penreac Vicarage.

'Do you mean to say my own sister has cast me off?' asked Donsa, with flashing eyes and flaming cheeks.

Mr Barry was regretfully compelled to state that such was indeed the fact.

Maxwell had left the office soon after noon that day in response to a telegram received from the doctor at the asylum, informing him of his wife's death.

He felt depressed and weary in mind and body, as he returned to his lonely lodgings for dinner.

He could not help the thought occurring to him that had this happened a month—aye, even a week ago—what a difference it might have made.

He sighed as he thought of his lost love and wondered how she was faring at the hands of her deceiver.

Wearily he entered the little garden and let himself in.

Wearily he divested himself of hat and overcoat before entering the room which had once seemed so home-like to him.

An then—on the threshold of that room—he stood and drew a long quivering breath of keenest joy, for Donsa herself stood before him with outstretched hands.

'Charlie—oh Charlie! They have all cast me off and I have come to you.'

Without a word he caught her to him and fed his hungry heart with long delicious kisses.

She nestled to him yielding herself gladly to his tender embrace until she began to remember things.

'Your wife!' she uttered.

'She is dead,' he said simply, and he told her how it came about.

Then Donsa told her story, being interrupted a dozen times by his exclamations, first of indignation against Lockhart, and then of relief and joy.

At her concluding words he took her in his arms again.

'I could not feel happy, Charlie, until I had asked your forgiveness for my ingratitude in leaving you as I did, and I meant to settle down here again as your sister without caring what anybody said or thought.'

'Instead of which you will settle down as my wife, dearest heart. We will go away from here to the other side of London, where no one will know your story or mine and as soon as it is practicable, we will be married. Can you trust me until then, Donsa?'

'Can I trust you? What a question! Don't talk nonsense, Charlie! Only we will, if you please, stay here until our wedding day; and our landlady shall be my chaperon.'

Comparatively Easy.

A benevolent old lady stopped on a street corner to wait for her car, and was attracted by the bright face of a young Italian, who was grinding his organ near by.

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 FRILLS OF FASHION.

The embroidered mulls and batiste gowns are quite as chic as any of the thin gowns, and it is in this material that we see the three flounce skirt. The flounces are circular in shape and with the embroidered edges they are very effective, but not so popular as trimming which gives the longer effect.

Very chic are the mull gowns embroidered with tiny pink rosebuds, with here and there black silk dots. To be distinctly modish the embroidery is done to order and arranged according to the style of the gown. One elaborate model has three rows of lace insertion set in the skirt above a lace flounce and the embroidery in front of the bodice extends around the back in trailing vines, bolero in form, rounding up in the back.

One feature of the dressy, thin gown for evening wear at the casino hops is the little lace coat not unlike some of the silk ones in shape except that it is quite short in front, finished with draped revers of lace and no collar. It has the plaited tail just the same and is decorated at the waist line in the back with two handsome buttons, studded with real jewels if you can afford them.

The most charming thin gowns worn by the matron this season are the black flowered muslins made over white taffeta and trimmed with the openwork, black mousseline embroidery which forms the flounce, and the sleeves lined only with white chiffon and finished with a black Chantilly frill over one of white lace. A pretty idea for the yoke in these black muslin gowns is all over black Chantilly decorated with narrow black satin bands, stitched on in some fancied design. Black and white is decidedly the thing this season, both for young women and matrons. Applique flounces of colored silk on black mousseline makes a very effective decoration embroidered around the edges and in the centres with black.

Embroidered linen forms the very smartest morning gown worn at the fashionable summer resort, and it may be pink, pale blue or green, yet white is the most popular. Embroidery around the hem extending up nearly to the waist in vertical lines is one form of skirt trimming, especially good style in white on white linen. The bodice is a blouse with an embroidered vest, or a bolero worn with a thin batiste waist.

One of the yellow brown shades of linen is very much liked because it is so becoming, and it is embroidered either in white or brown of a darker tint. Gray linens trimmed with white bands and white stitching are very good style, but lace is not too elegant to trim these morning gowns. Bruges and Irish lace are both being very effectively used.

A simple model for linen or mohair is shown in the illustration trimmed with tucks and stitched bands. An elaborate white lawn gown has a bolero with postillion back and fichu finish, of taffeta glace edged with a ruche made of ribbon loops. This trims the hem with two rows of insertion set in above, the skirt tucked in vertical lines all around.

A pretty dinner gown of cream chiffon shows diagonal tucks, the seams outlined with beading through which black velvet ribbon is run. Chiffon platings edged with a ruche are the finish at the hem; sleeves and neck are trimmed with Cluny lace.

Another skirt model in flowered silk muslin with a silk coat is trimmed with two bands of silk in some dark color in the flowering. The bands are made double, stitched three times through the centre and sewn on the skirt.

We are in receipt of the magazine. What to Eat. We knew that before. The rouble with us, where to get it.

and they take the usual form of rounding down in the front and up at the back. This is a distinctly novel trimming, as the bands are attached to the skirt in the centre only leaving the edges free. The coat is of the same silk and the idea is entirely new in the way of muslin frocks.

This mode of using bands is at least a change from the miles of bands seen everywhere on every kind of a gown, stitched down flat on the edges. It is exemplified again on a pale blue silk muslin, striped between groups of tucks up and down, with a double band of white mousseline run through the centre with one row of narrow black velvet ribbon.

At first glance our gowns are not so materially different from those of last season, but if you confine your attention to details you will find no end of novelties. As for the frocks designed for special uses, chiffon, silk, mousseline and lace are the materials most in evidence in the casino ball rooms at the various fashionable watering places, while for the more formal entertainments given at private residences more dignified gowns of crepe de chine and soft satin are required.

A conspicuous feature of these ceremonious gowns is a scarf draped about the shoulders and falling in long ends either in front or at the back. Ends of some sort, falling from the bust or waist line, are a distinctive feature of the latest dressy gowns, so there are sashes of soft ribbon sashes of hemstitched chiffon and sashes of soft crepe and Louise silk.

Strands hanging from the bust line are especially effective on a white lace gown in princess form. It is made over silk in the pretty pale green so popular this season, and pale green chiffon draped around the shoulders in folds ends in long scarf ends caught at the bust with a jabot of lace.

Sash ends may fall from the waist line, at the back, in front, or at the side as you fancy, but you will have this little accessory in some guise if your dinner and ball gowns have the latest touch.

The prettiest gowns of all are worn at informal dinners and dances where the soft thin materials are in order. Taffeta mousseline in either black or white is one of the most popular fabrics, with everything desired in the way of lustre. It is made up in various ways with fine tucks, and lace insertions in vertical or horizontal lines, but the latest phase in its construction is a foundation dress of flowered white taffeta. This for a white mousseline of course, the colors having a very mysterious but pretty effect showing through the lace insertions. A chiffon sash is a pretty addition to this gown, but it must be white, and first draped around the figure to form the belt. One form of chiffon sash is tied at one side in rather short ends which are finished with loops of white satin ribbon in varying lengths.

The fashion for ends is seen again on a mousseline gown with a narrow black velvet belt fastened at one side with a rosette and many loops and ends. Two rosettes at the back each with its bunch of ends from another style of sash.

A feature of the summer gowns which becomes more conspicuous as the season advances is the collarless neck sometimes round in shape and again cut out in a V. The drapery on the front of the bodice being arranged in surplice or fichu form. The comfort of this sort of neck, in warm weather is obvious; but it has serious disadvantages in its unbecoming effect on most women.

Flowered muslin gowns are often supplemented by some sort of fancy silk coat either fitted or loose, like one shown in the illustration. This is made of a dull soft pink satin, decorated with ruches and bands of silk muslin of the same color; and black velvet rosettes; but the same model is very prettily carried out in crepe

Charles Bonneton, Gans, Malone, Carleton, 27 Waterloo.