

## AT WAR WITH HERSELF.

The Story of a Woman's Atonement,  
by Charlotte M. Braeme.

### CHAPTER XXIV.

Sir Bertram bent forward and tried to look in the beautiful face, but it was averted from him. Lady Charnleigh would not let him see the happiness so plainly written there.

"I wish," he said, "that you were not so wealthy, Leonie. I should have liked to prove the purity and disinterestedness of my love. I wish there were a thousand difficulties in the way, that by beating them down, one after another, I might show how dearly I love you. I would serve twice seven years for you, as Jacob did for Rachel, he loved so dearly. I would be content, sweet, to wait upon you all my life if I might call you my own in death. Oh, Leonie, say one little word to me!"

Then the lovely face bent half shyly over him.

"Do you love me so well, Bertram?" she asked, in a low voice.

"You can never know how well, sweet. I might spend my life with you—I might give to your service every moment of it—I fill it with thoughts of you—know no other care or interest; and yet, when I came to die, you would not know how much I loved you. It is not given to all men to tell what they feel."

"I do not think you are very delicate in eloquence," she said, with a happy smile.

"Ah, my darling, if I were a poet, I might put my love into song—a song so beautiful, so full of divine harmony, that the world in reading it would know how I had loved you. If I were an artist I could paint you, and show to the world the form which to me is peerless. But not being either, I cannot do so. I can only tell you in plain words that I love you better than fame, fortune or life; and I plead to you, Leonie, for some little love in return."

"I am full of faults," said the girl. "I am not so perfect as you think me, Bertram. You might, perhaps, be disappointed in me after all."

"There is no fear of that; I know you have faults, but, Leonie, they are such as I cannot but love."

"You do not know what they are," she said.

"I am so worldly, Bertram—I love rank, wealth, position, money, gayety, life, fashion, and those things which the wise despise. I love them, and should never be willing to live without them."

"Love me with them," said Sir Bertram, "and I shall not care; those are very venial faults, Leonie, in one so young and beautiful as you."

"I am not very patient, either," she continued, "and in my life I have great want. I can give it no name, and know no name for it; but I want something that Ethel Dacre, for instance, has in perfection. I am changeable, as the wind—grave, gay, idle, industrious, good and wicked, all in an hour."

"I can only repeat that I love your faults, Leonie. I believe they are dearer to me than the virtues of other women. But, Leonie, sweet, have you heard what I asked you? Tell me—will you care for me, will you be my wife?"

It was the question that she had heard in her dreams a thousand times. "Will you be my wife, Leonie? My love shall shield you—my heart shelter you. Do not turn from me. Never mind those little faults of mine, each heart would urge, a prayer for me. Look at me—tell me, will you be my wife?"

Her fair head dropped near him; the passion of his words had conquered her. She could not resist.

He took her little white hand and covered them with passionate kisses. She made no resistance. She did not draw away from him. Then, raising the face so beautiful in its softened tenderness, he kissed the white brow, his lips murmuring the white words so full of tenderness that she never forgot them.

"Say only one word, Leonie. Tell me that you love me—even ever so little. I will hope for more in time."

"I can tell you that," she whispered. "You love me a little," he cried.

"Yes—just in the smallest possible degree," she replied, with a smile of perfect happiness.

"And will you try really to love me more?"

"I will try," she answered. "Do you think the lesson will be a hard one to learn, Bertram?"

He kissed the fair hands again, telling her she was as peerless as a queen. She tried to hide the happiness that surged through her heart, but he was thinking that it was not maidenly for her lover to see how well he was loved.

"My head is not a very firm one," she said, suddenly, looking up at him.

"It is a very beautiful one," he put in, drawing the blushing face nearer to his own.

"You have interrupted me, Bertram. I repeat, my head is not very firm—my brain will not hold many ideas at once. Just now it is filled with thoughts of the ball and several other things. Bertram," she continued, slowly, "ask me those questions again when the ball is over, and I will give you an answer."

He looked at her in a rapture of love.

"My darling," he cried, "how good you are to me! Oh, Leonie, shall I win you after all? The very hope dazzles me. If you sent me from you I should—"

"What should you do?" she asked, anxiously.

"Not kill myself," he replied, slowly. "Death is a coward's resource. But from my life every gleam of brightness would die out. I should go far away, darling, from home and friends, to some strange far-off land, where nothing could remind me of you. I should lose everything that makes life dear in losing you. And no face ever charmed me save yours. You hear how sweetly the birds are singing; there is more music to me in the word of yours than in all their song. So how fair the lilies are; there is more beauty to me in this one white hand of yours than in all the flowers that ever bloomed. Your face to me shines more brightly than the stars in heaven. I believe that if I died it would be found on my heart."

The impulse was strong upon her to tell him that she loved him just as dearly—that he was all the world to her, the soul and center of her being—but some strange instinct made her refrain.

"A fortress that is easily stormed is never considered a great conquest," she said to herself. "Bertram must make me angry and again—he will love me all the better in the end."

"After the ball, remember," said Sir Bertram; "Leonie, I shall count the hours until it is over, and yet I cannot help hoping. You are too good to torture me; if you meant to send me from you, you would do so at once. You are too good and generous to be cruel."

She looked at him with a smile. How little he knew, how little he guessed that he was the very sun of her existence—that if anything could surpass his love for her, it was her love for him.

"See," she said, suddenly, "the lilies are closing, and the dew is beginning to fall. Bertram, we must go in."

"I wonder," he said, slowly, "how I shall live through these hours. I could hardly do so but that I believe in the end you will be my wife. When the ball is over, Leonie, I shall be the ball to take place, Leonie!"

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Another hour passed before they walked back over the fallen rose-leaves to the house, and then there was little doubt left on Sir Bertram's mind that Leonie would eventually become his wife.

"Is it so beautiful, so peerless, so eagerly sought after, I could not expect her to say 'yes' all at once, but I know she loves me—she would have sent me from her if she did not."

"Remember," said Lady Charnleigh, as they drew near the long open window, "you are not to speak of this, Bertram, until—"

"Until your brain is clear and the ball is over. I will remember," he promised, with a smile. "You like to entertain one idea at a time, Leonie, and no more."

"You understand perfectly. See, there is Lady Fanshawe. Have you any idea, Bertram, whether it is etiquette for a countess of eighteen to linger among the lilies with a Saxon princess?"

It was the first time she had ever flattered him, and the fair, frank face flushed hotly.

"For your sake I wish I were a prince," he said.

"She looked at him with an assumption of perfect gravity."

"You please me best as you are," she returned, and when he would have caught that white jeweled hand she turned away.

"My dear Lady Charnleigh," said Lady Fanshawe, "do you not think it is late for you to be out?"

"Please blame Sir Bertram, auntie—he has beguiled the time."

Lady Fanshawe looked keenly at that gentleman's face.

"I am not anything to tell me," she said to herself. "No, he looks exceedingly happy, but not as though she had promised to marry him. Whom does she like best, I wonder?"

Miss Dacre looked up from her book at Sir Bertram, and the roses on her cheeks had faded into a pale pink.

Lady Charnleigh had lingered outside, pretending to fasten some drooping rose, but in reality to hide the beautiful blushes that had not yet died from her face.

"He has not asked her to marry him," thought Miss Dacre, "he looks like a happy lover, but nothing more."

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amused. It was quite early in the morning when Sir Bertram awoke, bringing with him a magnificent bouquet of flowers for Lady Charnleigh.

"I know I must not detain you now, Leonie, but remember, sweet, what you have promised me when the ball is over. I shall be jealous to-night if you dance with any one but myself."

"A little jealousy does most men good," said his lady-love, as she hastened away.

Sir Bertram rode off again. It was useless to remain at Crown Leighton; as he could not talk to his beautiful mistress, he was quite as well away. He had not been gone long before Captain Flemmyng arrived and sent to request five minutes with Lady Charnleigh.

"I am afraid, Leonie," said Lady Fanshawe, "that you find so many lovers embarrassing."

"No one said anything about lovers, auntie. I presume gentlemen may call on business without being suspected of wishing to make love. And the Countess of Charnleigh walked out of the room with her head proudly erect."

Lady Fanshawe's remarks were rather cutting.

"Captain Flemmyng was in the morning-room, looking very handsome. Leonie's quick eyes discovered some trace of emotion on the high-bred patrician face. His errand was much the same as his predecessor's; he had brought two superb bouquets, one for Lady Charnleigh, and one in no way inferior for Miss Dacre."

"I have something to say to you, Lady Charnleigh," began Paul. "I know that I must not detain you now, but when all this is over, you will grant me an interview? All my future depends upon it."

His face flushed, and his eyes were full of fire. He took one of her hands in his. "I will not detain you, Leonie; but the hours will be full of painful suspense until I see you again and have your answer."

He liked him so well that long after he had gone away she stood with tears in her eyes, knowing the pain she must inflict on him.

"I would have done anything to prevent this," she said. "I have robbed him of his inheritance, and now I must bid him go. He has brought me so much happiness and peace."

Oh, Paul, you shall never see me again. He liked him so well that, although it was the day of her magnificent ball, she wept bitterly for the sorrow that must be his.

"If he had only liked me as I like him," she said, "in his place, sisterly way, without any of this tiresome love, if he had only loved Ethel, who is worth a dozen of me! He will not reproach me, but he will go away from me looking so sad and so wretched that I shall never see him again—he whose love might honor a queen."

She was obliged perforce to dismiss all thoughts of him, for servants and assistants required her superintending. She was wanted in twenty places at once.

It was not until the hour came for dressing that it occurred to her that she was in a sad dilemma over the two bouquets. Which must she carry?

"I will take a few flowers from both," she said, with a sigh. "I shall avoid any tragical denouement for this evening at least."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

**HORRIBLE CRUELTY.**

The "Smelling-Out" Ceremony of the Zulus of South Africa.

"Smelling-out" is one of the customs among the Zulus of South Africa and is practiced in the Matabele nation, now at war with the English.

The witch doctors and doctresses are consulted and declare the evil to be the work of an "umatiga" or wizard. Then they proceed to name the wizard, who, by art magic, has contrived the ill in question, and who, oddly enough, very often happens to be a man rich in cattle, of whom the King or chief is anxious to be rid.

The circle is formed, the doctors and doctresses, bedizened in skins and bones, go through their antics and ceremonies, calling on the shades of their forefathers and consulting the spirits by means of bones, which they throw like dice till at length the name of the guilty person is miraculously revealed to them. Perhaps he is sitting there in the circle before them safe in his innocence and believing himself to be a trusted servant and soldier of the King when the isanusi creeps up to him and touches him with the fearful wand, denouncing him as the man whose spirit thought the evil thing.

From the touch of the wand there is no appeal for the moment, but the victim dies within the hour. He is led away and his neck is twisted or his brains dashed out, and his name becomes a reproach. That same day also the King's heralds start for the kraal of the man whose name has been named, have five or six wives and fifteen or twenty children, together with dependents and slaves. At night, when folk sleep heavily, they surround it and set it on fire. The victims rush out to fall upon the flames, and so back living into the flames. And so with the death of all ends the very common tragedy of a "smelling-out."

**Millions of Dollars Sent to China.**

Congressman Hilborn, of California, delivered his maiden speech at Washington last week on the subject of the Chinese in this country. All the money they make here, he said, they send back to China. Since their first settlement in California, from that State alone they have sent \$394,000,000 to China, he said.

In 1880, the total Chinese population of the United States was 105,465; in California it was 75,132. In 1890 the total population was 107,475, showing a total gain of population in the United States of 2,010. The Chinese population in California is 72,724, showing a falling off in our particular State. They seem to have turned their faces eastward. In New York in 1870 there were only 29 Chinese; in 1880, 909; in 1890, 2,935. In Pennsylvania in 1870 there were 13; in 1880, 148; in 1890, 1,144.

**Victoria Has Fifty-five Pet Dogs.**

The greatest private collection of pet dogs in the world is said to be that of her Majesty Queen Victoria of Great Britain. The Queen has fifty-five canines, and they live in the grandest canine style that ever was known.

Their dining-room is handsomely carpeted, and ornamented with the portraits of their celebrated ancestors in oil and water colors. Some of the pictures are adorned with tufts of the hair which belonged to the departed pets of her Majesty. The dogs are proud of their portrait gallery, and they despise all the low-bred curs of creation. One of the Queen's pleasures is to make sketches and paint portraits of her dogs, and many of the pictures in her canine pantheon are from her hand. Others have been made by Prince Albert, the Prince of Wales, and Princess Louise of Lorne.

**MAMMA—"Harry, I want you to come in now and amuse the baby."**

"You'll have to excuse me, mother; I'm not in the mood to-day."

## OUR RURAL READERS.

### SOMETHING HERE THAT WILL INTEREST THEM.

**Tool House for the Care of Farm Implements—Success in Fruit Gardening—Action of Frost—Wheat for Sheep—Farm and Household Notes.**

**Care of Farm Implements.**

There are farmers who leave their tools exposed to the action of the weather for twelve months of the year, but, fortunately, these are comparatively few. There are, however, a great many farmers who, at the opening of spring, bring forth their tools from safe winter quarters and for six months or more expose them to the action of sun, air, and rain.

Tools used one day are left in the field, or out of doors, for expected use on the coming day. The expectations are frequently not realized because of rain or dull weather, during which these implements of iron, wood, and steel, suffer constant depreciation. It is a slipshod method to leave tools lying about out of doors during the season of farm work, and this practice goes a long way in leading to the conviction that "farming doesn't pay." No business man could afford to thus expose his machinery or stock in trade. In fact there are very few business operations in the country that do not require the use of tools. The implements used are to be seen on many farms. A little effort will soon establish the habit of putting tools in a safe and proper place when not in use. Thus the implements will be preserved; it will always be known where to find them, and much time will be saved that is now spent in hunting them. It will wonderfully assist to secure all these advantages if a separate tool house is provided, a building that is given wholly up to the housing of all the farm tools. The illustration accompanying this shows a conveniently arranged tool house, where all the implements in use about the farm may be secured when not in use. One end of the building is partitioned off and floored where the small tools can be kept, while the rest of the building has an earth floor covered with gravel and entered by two large doors, permitting mowers, rakes, and other machines to be driven into the building.—*American Agriculturist.*

**Success in Fruit Gardening.**

Published accounts are given of the success of small orchards planted a few years ago in Northern Ohio. Among others is that of Aaron Teeple, who ten years ago bought three acres of land, built house and barn on it, and planted it with a general collection of fruit-trees, including peaches, pears, and plums, and twenty of the most popular grapes. One half of the ground is devoted to market-gardening. For three or four years he has taken premiums for fine fruit. It is said that the receipts this year will exceed \$800. The plum crop was over fifty bushels this season, and the fruit large and highly colored. This furnishes a fine example of the brief time required to bring fruit-trees into profitable bearing.

**A Strong Hog Trough.**

A very strong trough may be made of sawed lumber, as shown in the accompanying engraving. For every three feet length of trough use a plank support two or two and one-half feet long, twelve inches wide, and two inches thick. Saw out from the middle of each place a right angled triangular piece with the sides forming a square of the same length. Use boards one inch thick for the sides, and nail the trough together as usual with the triangles sawed out of the two-inch stuff for the ends. Now set the trough in the angles sawed out, but far enough away from the end piece to nail from the inside of the trough into the supports and put the triangle sawed from the supports for the center, and nail that after cutting down to let water run through.

**Buying Cotton-Seed Meal.**

There is great difference in the quality of cotton-seed meal, and those inexperienced in its use are quite apt to be put off with feed of poorer quality. That with black specks in it is largely composed of the hull, which is nearly indigestible and of little value except to go into the manure pile. Cotton-seed meal mixed with the hull should never be fed to young animals, as its indigestibility makes it prove fatal in many cases. The pure meal without hull is also too concentrated for feeding, except as it is diluted with some thing giving a greater bulk in proportion to its nutrition. Wheat bran is one of the best feeds for this purpose.

**Wheat for Sheep.**

Wheat mixed with other grains is the best food for wool and mutton. I have ever used I have fed it to yearlings and aged ewes to a great advantage when it was worth double the price it now commands. I am feeding over 100 head of lambs and yearlings for the butcher. Their main ration has been two parts oats and one part wheat, sandwiched with barley, corn, and bran. I don't know whether this is a well-balanced ration or not, but I have never had sheep improve quite so fast as they have done so far. They are in four lots, and the lambs have a good clover pasture. I feed twice per day about all they will eat.—*Exchange.*

**Location of an Aplary.**

The location of an aplary, on a farm is an easily solved problem. There is always some corner in which stock does not go, sheltered by trees, or orchard, or along some hedge, and on every farm this spot might as well be occupied by bees as by weeds; and if a season comes when the cornfield or stubble are overrun with weeds, owing to too much rain or other unfavorable circumstances, the farmer may rejoice in the fact these same weeds will increase his honey crop. With a little forethought and some labor what a source of plenty and profit these unused nooks would be.

**Hints for Housekeepers.**

MEND the torn pages of books with white tissue paper.

GLOVES can be cleaned at home by rubbing with gasoline.

TOOTH powder is an excellent cleanser of filigree jewelry.

MORTAR and paint may be removed from glass with hot, sharp vinegar.

NEVER put salt on a steak until it is cooked and removed from the fire.

HARD putty may be easily softened by passing a red-hot iron over it, so it can then be removed with a knife.

CORKS warmed in oil make an excellent substitute for glass stoppers.

The brown discolorations may be removed from cups used in baking by rubbing with a flannel dipped in whiting.

GUM arabic and gum tragacanth, in equal parts dissolved in hot water, make the best and most convenient muckage you can keep in the house.

**The Bite of a Hog.**

It is a serious thing to be bitten by any domestic animal, and the danger is probably greater when bitten by a hog than by any other. This is not because there is an active, poisonous gland with hollow tooth through which the poison is pressed. That is the way a rattlesnake bites, or rather stings. The danger from the bite of a hog may be as great as from a rattlesnake, but it is the danger from bloody poisoning caused by carrying on the tusks the hog some poisonous saliva with which its mouth is filled. We call this saliva poisonous because the hog is an indiscriminate feeder, and not careful about getting particles of dirt or even of excrement of

other animals with its food. It is poisonous, just as are the scratches from finger nails, which always leave an inflammation, hard to be healed in proportion to its abrasion of the skin. This is because with each scratch of the nail some of the dirt that always gathers under it is brought into contact with the blood. A cut with a clean knife heals more quickly, especially if treated at once with some antiseptic and the air is carefully excluded.

**The Best Poultry Cresses.**

Opinions differ as to what breeds and crosses are the best business fowls. A writer in the *Faucer's Journal* has selected the Light Brahma for roasting fowls, the Black Minorcas for eggs and the Black Minorcas for broilers. The Black Minorcas used are not strictly pure bred, they having an outcross with Langshans to give them extra hardiness and larger bodies. The Light Brahmans are used both in their purity and crossed by Indian Game. But there are other Good breeds that can be selected, notably the Plymouth Rock, the Wyandotte, the Houdan and the Leghorn, with probably as good results as this writer obtains with his selections.

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