

# AT WAR WITH HERSELF.

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

## CHAPTER XXXII.—Continued.

A pleased light broke over his face. "I understand perfectly, darling. I appreciate your delicate consideration for others. It shall be just as you say—my happiness is purchased by another's pain. You accept me, and respect me as one else—do you?" "Yes," she said in a low voice. "Wait at least three or four months before anything is said about it."

"I will do anything on earth you wish, Leonie. See, I must have some visible sign, known only to myself, that you are mine. I have brought this ring—will you wear it for me? It was my mother's. When she was dying she took it from her finger, and gave it to me. Will you wear it for my sake, and for hers?"

She held out her hand to him, and he wondered that it should be so cold. He took it, and then held it to his lips.

"Some day I pray Heaven not far from now—I shall place another ring on its dear hand."

He wondered again that she turned from him with what seemed a shudder. Her eyes lingered on that ring; to her excited fancy it would not have been strange if it had suddenly changed into a living serpent, and had turned about hissing to sting her. It had belonged to the "mother" whose son she had deeded, whom she had robbed of his birthright. She could never look at it without keen pain.

"Leonie," said Captain Fleming, "although our engagement is to remain a profound secret as yet, you will let me come over to see you often—you will write to me—you will not be cruel, and keep me at a cold distance, as though I were a stranger."

"No, I will not do that," she answered.

And after a few days, when the novelty of being engaged had worn off, you will be kinder to me than you are now? You will, perhaps, then lay your hands in mine, and say, 'I love you, Paul, and will be your wife.' You have only written the words, Leonie; you have not said them."

"I will say them now." She clasped her white hands together and laid them to his. "I love you, Paul, and I will be your wife."

But there was something of sadness in her voice, something he could not understand in the expression of her downcast face. He said to himself that it was but girlish coyness—she would feel more at ease with him in time.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

"Has Captain Fleming gone without coming in to see us?" said Miss Dacre. "How strange!"

She looked so disappointed that for the first time it occurred to Leonie that she had loved the man she had just promised to marry.

"How was it?" repeated Lady Fanshawe. "Captain Fleming always seems to enjoy an hour with us."

"I do not know; he will come over again to-morrow. He inquired very kindly after you."

Something in the words or the voice struck Ethel Dacre, and she looked inquiringly at her friend. Leonie's face flushed under that quiet, calm scrutiny.

"Why do you look at me so strangely?" she cried, impatiently. "I object to being looked at as though my thoughts lay bare, and every one could read them. I cannot help Captain Fleming's abrupt departure; he professed himself quite unable to remain so long as a matter of course I allowed him to go."

She did not tell them that he had gone with tears in his eyes—tears of earnest, heartfelt happiness; and that he had told her he could not talk "conventionalities" to her people after his interview with her.

Lady Fanshawe raised her eyes in mild rebuke.

"My dear Lady Charnleigh, if it were possible to imagine one as charming as yourself could be pettish, I should say you were inclined to be so."

Leonie hastened to Ethel's side.

"Will you forgive me? I spoke with a bad temper. Have patience with me, Ethel—I am not very happy just now."

"Will you not trust me and tell me why?" said Miss Dacre.

"I do not know why. I am out of spirits—inclined to be cross, not only with every one else, but with myself also."

"Sir Bertram Gordon," announced the footman, who had just received a parting vale from Capt. Fleming, and who, with a grim sense of humor, smiled at the situation.

"The moment Leonie was inclined to give way, she was happy and him so soon, and coming to him—bright as the sun, and down that, hung unconscious of the hours, he over him."

"He has been counting, Leonie," said I in a low voice to her, "would never really thought to-day."

He looked so bright with the gladness of his heart that Lady Fanshawe bethought herself of something that required attention in the housekeeper's room. Sir Bertram did not even hear the apology she made—had no eyes or ears save for the lady of his love. Miss Dacre took up a book and wandered away into the cool, pleasant fernery.

"Sir Bertram looks as though he did not want me," she thought with a smile.

The fernery was very pleasant and the waters looked cool and refreshing; the waters fell with a soft ripple, the air was laden with sweet subtle odors. Miss Dacre sat down with her book, but she turned no page in it. A sudden chill had come over her. Why should Lady Charnleigh look and speak so strangely? Could it be possible that she cared for Paul Fleming?

"It cannot be possible," she said to herself. "If there be any truth in looks and actions, she loves Bertram Gordon."

To the plash of the falling waters she went, and bright in that hour this own-of-the-day when she sought her own among men, and who her to be with—bright dainty fancies of a life that would be spent in ministering to him, in looking up to him as the flowers look up to the sun. Would it ever be so? She had loved him so long, so faithfully,

fully, that it seemed to her her love must meet with some return—that the very force of her own affection must win something from him. On the night of the ball he had held her hand in his, and had spoken so kindly to her with delight. The music of that falling water, the breath of that warm, sweet wind, helped to fill her mind with fancies melodious and sweet as themselves.

"Leonie," repeated Sir Bertram, "I thought to-day would never come. I have counted the minutes and the hours, yet I have had hope. You have not been trifling with me?"

She stood before him, her colorless face drooping from his sight, her hands trembling in his strong grasp.

"I want your answer," he said, bending his hands me Saxon head over the white hands and kissing them. He asked you to be my wife, and you told me to come to-day for the reply."

"Let us go out," she said, with a strange stifled gasp; "I cannot speak—I cannot breathe here."

A sense of horrible pain had almost mastered her. How was she to tell him that she must part when she loved him so dearly that she would have given her life for him? How could she inflict that anguish upon him when she knew that his life was wrapped up in hers?

Silently she passed through the long open window, over the green lawn, where great clusters of scarlet verbena shone in the sunshine, past the great sheaves of white lilies and the fragrant roses, past the tall chestnuts, until she came to the grove of blossoming limes. Their tall branches met overhead and formed a deep shade. The sunshine came through the dense green foliage with a mellowed light such as is seen in the dim cathedral aisles. The turf was thick and velvety; the banks were covered with wild thyme; the whole place was lovely as a fairy's glade. A fall on tree, over which scarlet creepers had grown, lay half across the path, and on it Leonie sat down, raising her beautiful face to the rippling foliage above her head, then suddenly hiding it in her hands. She had no right even to look at the smiling summer heavens—she who had stolen an inheritance, and was about to barter her love for it.

"I could not breathe in those warm rooms," she said. "How quiet and beautiful it is here."

"Leonie," said Sir Bertram, earnestly, "I am sure that you are no coquette; and you cannot help having many lovers—all fair women are so much admired. You are no flirt; you would not lead a man on by kind words and kind smiles until his heart lay under your feet, and then trample upon it."

"No, I would not do that," she answered, with white set lips.

"And yet, darling, do you know that I am growing frightened? I fancied your little problem was but to try me. I have never looked at it so closely. I believed that when I came to you to-day you would all smiles, all sweetness, all gladness. Yet, Leonie, your face is turned from me—you have no word for me. What does it mean? Remember, darling, though I ask the question I do not doubt you."

His generous trust, his devoted love, smote her as no pain could have done. She had to take this noble heart in her hands and break it; no wonder that her strength failed her, and that, with a long, shuddering sigh, she turned away, burying her face in her hands.

The next moment he was kneeling by her side, his noble face full of deepest anxiety.

"Leonie, what is the matter? What has changed you so utterly? My darling, where have all your brightness, all your ray-splendored? Let me look at that dear face."

He raised it in his hands, and cried out in surprise when he saw it.

"Where is your color? Your lips are white as these wild strawberries blossoms. Years, sorrow, and pain have passed over you—what is it, Leonie? Have no fear—tell me all."

"I hate to inflict pain," she said hoarsely, "and I know that I must pain you."

"Why, my darling? I do not see the need."

Her courage and self-command broke down all at once.

"I cannot marry you, Bertram—I can never be your wife, and it hurts me to tell you so."

His face grew very white, and a stern, angry light came into his eyes.

"Repeat those words, Leonie! My senses must surely have played me false, not you!"

"I can never be your wife, Bertram; do not be angry with me. If you turn from me in anger I shall die."

"You can never marry me, Leonie! Am I dreaming, or are you? Do you know that you had almost given your promise? Do you know, although you have not said the word yet, that you pledged yourself over and over again with the pledges which a true and loyal woman considers as sacred and as binding as an oath?"

"I know," she said, raising her white, despairing face to his; "but I cannot marry you—I cannot be your wife."

"Will you tell me why?" he asked, and a gleam of hope came to him—might only be some girlish fancy, after all.

"I cannot tell you that," she repeated, with the same quiet despair.

"Do you know what you are doing to me, Leonie? You are killing me! You would be ten thousand times more merciful if you stabbed me and let me die at once. Do you know that I cannot live without you? Heaven help me, I cannot. My love and my life are bound together that if one goes the other goes."

"I know," she said, raising her white, despairing face to his; "but I cannot marry you—I cannot be your wife."

"You do not mean it. You want to see you can't love me. Oh, my love, how do I love you! It is sad, my love, but it is true."

"It is not sad," said the girl, "it is sad, sober, earnest truth."

"But, Leonie, you love me. I am not vain, but—darling, I am not blind—you love me. I have seen the light come over your face that has shone for no one but me. You have told me in a hundred different ways, slowly words, that you love me."

"Yes," she repeated, slowly—"Heaven pity me—I love you."

"You do," he cried. And before she could speak he had clasped her in his arms and kissed her trembling lips.

"You love me! O, Leonie, if that be true, what shall part us?"

Then she knew that in admitting the fact of her love she had made a terrible mistake—one that she knew not how to remedy.

"Tell me," he cried again, "if you love me, Leonie, what in the wide world can part us?"

She looked at him, her lips trembled, but from them came no word.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

"I must know the truth," said Sir Bertram, in a clear firm voice. "You owe it to me. What am I to think of you, when you own that you love, yet refuse to marry me?"

"You must think as you will," she replied, despairingly; "I can only repeat my words—that never, while the sun shines and the birds sing, can I be your wife."

"Did you know this when you lured me on to love you—when you stole my heart from me by the witchery of your beauty—when you let me speak to you of love, and did not hide me? Did you know this then?"

"No reply—but the beautiful face grew more ghastly in its pallor. He grasped her wrist, and held it as in a vise."

"Answer me," he said—and his voice was more pleasant to hear—"did you know this then?"

"No," she replied, "I did not, Bertram."

"Oh, Leonie, be frank—my love deserves it. If there be any difficulty, tell it to me—I can perhaps remove it. Trust me for I trust you. I have no secrets from you, my love. Who would be so loyal, so true to you, as I would be?"

"I have nothing to tell you," murmured the white rigid lips, "except that I can never marry you."

Hot anger flashed in his face. For a few moments he lost sight of his outraged love.

"Tell me one thing more, Lady Charnleigh. I have a right to ask for the right of a man who has been duped and deceived. You say that you cannot marry me. Pray may I ask you going to marry any one else?"

There was a silence for some minutes; the wind whispered among the blossoming limes; the harebells seemed to ring out faint, sweet notes in the wind; then, clear and even, her answer came.

"I know you will hate me, Bertram—I have promised to marry some one else."

"I am answered," he said, bitterly. "You, Leonie, whom, only one short hour since, I looked upon as the very flower of womanhood—you whom I thought more pure than a lily, loyal and true as the angels in heaven—you tell me deliberately that you love me, but have promised to marry another?"

"Have pity on me, Bertram! I have been sorely tried."

"There is no pity for you," he cried, indignantly. "You are false—false to me, whom you have pretended to love, and false to the man who has been duped and deceived by you."

"You have done me the most cruel wrong that woman can do to man—you have lured me by false words, false looks. You have deceived me—you have betrayed me. I denounce you for being as false and cruel as you are fair. O merciful Heaven, keep me from losing my reason! I fear I am going mad!"

He flung himself on the turf with a terrible cry; a strong man, in his agony he sobbed aloud, for the anguish of his loss was full upon him. She sat quiet and motionless, until she could bear the sight of that prostrate figure no longer. Then she came to her a good impulse—to kneel down there by his side and tell him all the truth; poverty, privation—anything would be better than this knowledge or sight of that terrible pain. And yet, if she confessed to him she would lose all.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## Old-Time Games.

It is curious to note how some of the games of the early ages have been handed down to the present time. The game, for instance, known as "Old and Even," was a favorite with the young Egyptian, and many of the little counters that he used are still preserved in the British Museum. There is also the game of draughts, which was played on a chequered board in the earliest times. The poor children were content with draughts-men and boxes of rough pieces of clay. But the richer ones usually had beautifully carved iron-headed draughts-men and boxes.

The young Greeks, too, were well provided with toys and games for their amusement. The toys were chiefly dolls made of baked clay, the arms and legs being jointed with string, and therefore movable. There has never been a game called "Chytrinda," which has been preserved through many ages, and is now played by boys of "Pess in the Corner." In France the game is called "Quatre Coins," or four corners. Both in the old game and the modern version five players are required, one occupying each of the four corners, while the fifth player stands in the middle.

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## TARIFF BILL DEBATE.

### PARTY LEADERS DISCUSS THE WILSON MEASURE.

Democrats, Republicans and Populists All Take a Hand in the War of Words Which Is to Shape the Nation's Tariff Policy.

#### Synopsis of the Speeches.

At the close of Mr. Wilson's speech on the tariff bill, Mr. Burrows of Michigan made an address on behalf of the Republican minority. He said the measure under consideration involved the complete reversal of the economic policy. The act of 1890 was designed not only with a view of securing revenue for the support of the Government but for the further purpose of giving encouragement to the creation of new enterprises and protection to American industries and American workmen, against unequal and injurious foreign competition. In its practical workings it accomplished both these results. The decline in the public revenues is not attributable to any defect in the act of 1890, but rather to general overproduction and prostration of business throughout the country. The ascendancy of a political party pledged to the destruction of our protective policy has not only crippled and suspended the operation of our domestic manufacturers, but the importer of foreign fabrics naturally created his importations in the hope of securing their admission into our markets upon the most favorable conditions. I confidently assert that if the election of 1892 resulted in the retention of the Republican party in power, accompanied as it would have been with the assurance of a continuance of the American policy of protection, the effect upon the public revenue, as well as the general prosperity of the country, would have been entirely the reverse of what is now seen."

Mr. Burrows (Rep., Mich.) referred to Mr. Burrows' picture of dire disaster in this country and said the suffering depicted by him existed after thirty years of laws written by his own party. Not a law has been placed on the statute books by the Democratic party since 1890. The Democratic party's responsibility for the laws came only with this Congress. "Before we can discuss the merits of the tariff act of affairs had begun. If that condition is due to existing law you cannot say we did it. So far as the law is responsible for the present condition it is the law of the high protective tariff."

Mr. Hopkins (Rep., Ill.) said that the bill that had been reported by the Ways and Means Committee was certainly an anomalous and unbusinesslike measure. It comes up to the standard of the bold and defiant declarations of their party platform nor meets the expectations of the more conservative element of their party. A revenue measure it is a confessed failure.

Mr. Johnson (Dem., Ohio) denounced the attack of his party in the prolonged debate of action on the tariff bill after coming into power. If Mr. Cleveland had shown the sagacity and courage the situation demanded, the ink would not have been spilled on the committee of secretaries ere Congress would have been called into executive session to relieve the country of its burdens of taxation. After a delay of several months the committee given a Democratic report and a Republican bill. He would vote for the bill if he could get nothing better, but he did not like it.

Mr. Johnson (Dem., Ohio) said that the bill would not only injure but trust, the sugar trust.

Mr. Cockeran (Dem., N. Y.) said the objection that the bill would not allow a sufficient amount of revenue to be collected in the hands of the government, he said, but it would not only increase the revenues of the government, he said, but it would also increase the revenues of the labor. For every dollar that goes into the treasury, hundreds of dollars are collected by the processes of consumption and trade throughout the country. The amount contributed for the support of the government is but a feature, a mere extent of this system of taxation, the real extent of which no man can tell.

Mr. Reed (Rep., Mo.) undertook to refute Mr. Cockeran's statements. He said the Democrats would sacrifice their market at home for a more extended one abroad. Even, as a favorite with the young Egyptian, and many of the little counters that he used are still preserved in the British Museum. There is also the game of draughts, which was played on a chequered board in the earliest times. The poor children were content with draughts-men and boxes of rough pieces of clay. But the richer ones usually had beautifully carved iron-headed draughts-men and boxes.

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troubles he found in the intolerable burden put on the agricultural classes by the system of indirect taxation. He illustrated his remarks on the deplorable condition of the agricultural classes by displaying a dilapidated overcoat which he got from a farmer. He said he could duplicate it on the backs of a million farmers in the United States to-day. He said the People's party stands pledged to the principles of free trade.

Mr. Hopkins (Rep., Ill.) criticized statements made by Mr. Simpson in speaking of the farmers. Mr. Pickler (Rep., S. D.) opposed the bill. He said South Dakota had all the natural advantages for the raising of sheep for wool, and had facilities for raising many more sheep than it now possesses; but under the operations of the Wilson bill this industry would be ruined. And so with the raising of cattle, horses, and other farm stock.

Mr. Burrows (Rep., Mich.) submitted a letter from a wool-grower at Adrian, Mich., showing that the wool industry of Michigan would be killed by the passage of the Wilson bill.

Mr. Sprague (Dem., Ill.) said it was unjust to attribute all the distress which had been prevailing to the threatened changes in the McKinley act. The sooner the pending bill was passed the better it would be for the country. "And just as soon as this bill is passed every loom in the country will be started, every furnace fire will be lighted and every instrument of production will be put in active operation. Give this country free wool, free ores, free coal and free raw material, workman's industry, and we will take a front position in the markets of the world."

Mr. Dilliver (Rep., Iowa) said that the remedy for the present depression is the employment of our own people, not giving it to those of other countries. The opportunity to create the wage fund on which the prosperity of our people depended.

Mr. Harter (Dem., Ohio) said that a protective tariff put down and lowered their purchasing power by putting up the price of goods.

Mr. Turner (Dem., Ga.) undertook the refutation of the charge that the Wilson bill was framed in the interests of Southern as against Northern farmers, and said he believed in free trade.