

THE DEAN AND HIS DAUGHTER.

After all, I thought to myself, why should I not captivate and marry some young officer? I must tell him everything, of course, as I did poor Mr. Meadowsweet. But he will have no religious scruples in the matter, and we may very well live very happily together. Besides, I can find the money for his exchange if he should ever wish to do so, or if he liked, we should have quite enough to enable him to retire comfortably, and to busy himself, if time hangs heavily on his hands, in the yeomanry or the militia, although it would be best, of course, to persuade him to cut the thing altogether, and settle down quietly somewhere.

This, however, as I felt, was discounting the future somewhat too liberally; and yet I was not altogether without reasonable ground for my speculations, inasmuch as a certain Captain Maltby had during the evening paid me a degree of attention which, although not effusive, had yet been more than was strictly necessary.

I was full of these thoughts, or rather vague plans, as I brushed out my hair for the night, and discovered to my horror, not that it was turning gray, but that its extreme tips sadly needed singeing. Then I drew the curtains, for the sun was shining pleasantly, and I was soon enough fast asleep. I believe really that dancing, if you thoroughly enjoy it, tires you more completely than even riding or skating.

Captain Maltby had asked me if he might call, and I had said he might, provided it was not that day, for he had preferred his request during the cotillion and long after midnight; so I lay in bed with an easy mind until I felt thoroughly refreshed, and then proceeded to improve my personal appearance after the most approved principles.

First, I went down to the beach and had a delicious plunge in the rising tide. Then I had a substantial French breakfast or English lunch. Then I had round the victoria, and went for a pleasant sunny drive among the breezy uplands, rich with the strong, aromatic odor of Norwegian pines. Then I spent the rest of the day quietly at home over a novel, and, when the moon rose, felt so fresh and invigorated that I believe if I had had a maid as escort I should have been tempted into a ramble on the cliffs.

I purposely sat up late, not meaning to rise too early, and dressed myself the next morning with more than usual care. My gown was a pretty French Surah. It was of a delicate shade, adding to my apparent height, and fitted me perfectly. I wore nothing in the way of jewelry but a plain brooch and solitaire. A broad belt round my waist completed the toilette, and my hair was dressed as plainly as might be. Then I filled the room with flowers, and sat in my easy-chair with a volume of Tennyson.

The officers of Her Majesty's service regard Tennyson much as clergymen regard Milton. They are aware he ought to be read; they are all ready at any moment to declare most solemnly that they read him daily, but they have a certain wholesome terror of people who actually do read him. For themselves, they would be about as likely to read Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy" or Longfellow's "Evangeline."

But I am not among those who are indignant at these conventional and harmless little frauds. It would be a terrible world if we all told the exact truth, almost as bad a world as if all of us in it were to lie consistently through thick and thin, like the Very Reverend the Dean of Southwick.

When Captain Maltby arrived bringing with him a Mr. Dalton, a brother officer, to act as a sort of aide-de-camp, I was quite ready to receive them. They stopped for the conventional half-hour, and partook of the conventional glass of sherry.

I need not dwell upon our conversation. I set the ball rolling myself, kept it rolling, and took very special care that it should roll everywhere in general, and nowhere in particular. When they left, Captain Maltby half asked permission to call again, and half expressed his intention of doing so. Not bad diplomacy for a young officer in the Heavies!

I, who had studied diplomacy in its most Haute Ecole, and sat at the feet of its most accomplished master, replied, in my pleasantest manner, that Eastampton was a small place, and that I should be very pleased if we met again.

That we should meet again, and before long, I intended to take very particular care.

And now that I have brought matters to this stage, I must condense my narrative a little. Of course I met Captain Maltby several times. Occasionally he would pass me with his regiment. He was always well mounted, and it did me good to look at him. It is mere affectation for any woman to pretend that she does not take pleasure in the sight of a handsome man. And Captain Maltby, who had a good seat, and rode a splendid charger, was as smart an officer as ever led a troop.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Before a month had passed, Captain Maltby was a regular visitor. An officer of his age and in a crack regiment is a better man of the world than any ecclesiastic or diplomatist. He was making love to me as if he knew that I knew it. He had also the sense to be aware that he could not continue this pastime indefinitely; and without pretending to exactly read his thoughts at any given date, I am sure he very soon came to the conclusion that he would either have to marry me or else to give me up altogether. One morning he called armed with a book

which I had expressed a wish to read, and which was not within the resources of either Mudie or Smith. I forget now what it was, but can just remember that it was a volume of travel in Central Africa, somewhat out of date, and of scientific rather than of general interest.

I thanked him for the trouble he had taken in a manner which invited him to stop; and he took the hint, while he also declined my permission to smoke a cigarette if he cared to do so.

"The fact is, Mrs. Gascoigne," he said, "I came to talk for a few minutes, if you do not mind, and not to smoke or to indulge in your marvelous sherry. I want to ask you to keep a secret of mine, if you will."

"Secrets are dangerous things," I answered seriously and seeing that he was in earnest. No one knows that fact better than myself. If you choose to tell me your secret it will be safe with me as with your man of business; but I shall decline to give you my advice over it."

"It is not exactly your advice I wanted," he replied, "although I wish I owned that I am in a difficulty and want you to help me out of it. In one sense I am a little hampered by the fact that, what you call your own secret, I happen to know already. But it's for that very reason that I am anxious to tell you mine. The one thing which stands in my way and makes me feel awkward is that I know from what I have heard that you are very well off. Now for myself I am cadet of a poor house with just enough beyond my pay to enable me to get on, while even that is not certain—my father might stop my allowance at any moment."

I had felt certain from the first that he was a gentleman and utterly incapable of anything mean or dishonorable; and yet I began to wonder uneasily whether he might not have been losing at play or have found his way into the money-lender's hands, and be under the idea that I could possibly help him. So I answered cautiously:

"Perhaps I am not so well off as you suppose. A woman by herself can live very economically, in fact for next to nothing, and (I said this with a laugh) I have no expensive tastes. But do not let anything that you may fancy you know about me hinder what you have to say. I am curious to hear it, and pleased to be taken into your confidence."

His face was scoured with the sun that I could only guess how the blood flushed to his cheeks by seeing the skin round the roots of his hair turn a vivid crimson.

"We are at cross purposes, I fancy," he said, "and if we talk much longer I shall get bewildered and perhaps make a fool of myself. What I want to ask you, Mrs. Gascoigne, is for something which I want very much more than money. A reasonable check of mine, I am glad to say, is good at any time in Craig's Court; and unless I want to run into figures which I have not yet touched, Cox's would see me through. I want you to do something else for me—something quite different. In fact, what I want is to ask you if you will marry me, and so make me the happiest and proudest man, not in the Queen's Musketeers, but in the whole service."

It was my time now to turn red; and I think, if I can judge by the flush which I felt rushing to my face, that my own performance in this respect fairly eclipsed his and was fully as sincere and genuine.

"You cannot possibly know all about me," I said, "or else you would never have asked me what you have."

"But you're wrong," he answered. "I do know, and so for the matter of that do our chief, and so do all of us. And we are all of one opinion about the matter; and the chief, who gets very violent when he is angry, swears that old Sir Henry ought to be made to run the gauntlet. And I'll tell you another thing, Lady Craven. The chief's wife sides with the chief; she is Madame la Colonelle, and no mistake! She is a power, let me tell you; and the subalterns are far more afraid of her than of the Colonel himself. Her own expression is that the whole thing was a burning shame; and we all agree with her, only that we use shorter language. Now look here, if you think I am exaggerating in the least, I'll back if I tell her what's happened she'll come and call on you to-morrow afternoon, and then you see there can't possibly be any mistakes, can there?"

For the life of me I could not help laughing. I wonder why it is that all men who are worth their salt are, when you once move them, as simple and as blunt as schoolboys.

I began to think, in a strange whirl of ideas, of the great Duke of Wellington and of his memorable utterance about Napoleon's bones, which, by some whimsical association of ideas, were suggested to me by the skeleton in my own cupboard, and I fairly burst out again into a hearty peal of merriment in which my guest and suitor joined.

"Well," I answered, "let us wait and see if she calls, and—let me see—you may come again this day week if you like, only you must distinctly understand that I do not promise to be in, and cannot indeed promise that I shall be in town at all. I am, as you seem to know, my own mistress; and for that very reason my movements are uncertain, or, as unkind people would say, capricious."

He rose to his feet as I rose to mine. I held out my hand, but he did not take it. "I think," he said, "it would be only kind of you to say something or other to me to-day; to give me some sort of an idea. You can't tell—I am sure you can't tell—how much I love you, and how deeply my heart is set on this. I'll sell out if you like, or exchange for India, or do anything. In fact I ought to have told you before this that I would sell out at once if you didn't think of it. I somehow let it go without saying. It was very stupid of me."

"It was not at all stupid," I answered, "and I quite believe all you have told me; and now, you know, I really think that I must be going for my afternoon drive."

"But you will surely give me some sort of answer before I go. I think I have a right to ask that at least."

"But I can't give you an answer," I replied; "at least not the answer which I suppose you want me to give. I like you very much, but I am also determined that you shall not leave the regiment on my account. If I am to marry you at all it must not involve your leaving the regiment. On that point my mind is made up; and as we quite understand one another it is no good discussing the matter further."

"But I don't want to discuss the matter," he urged. "It doesn't need discussing. I only want you to say yes. Surely you can say that at once as well as the day after to-morrow."

"I can't say it at all until this day week, and then, if I intend to say it, I shall be here to do so. All I can say at present is, that I hope with all my heart I shall be here."

After this there was clearly nothing left for him, but to go; so he took my hand. "I have all the faith in the world in you," he said, "and I am quite sure of Mrs. Martyn, and I shall leave you with an easy heart, although the hours will be horrible long."

Now Mrs. Martyn was the Colonel's wife, of whom we had already been speaking under her more formal designation, and I had made up my mind very fully that, if she did in fact call upon me, and, after hearing what I had to tell her, on assuring me that she knew it already, left me upon cordial terms, I would marry Captain Maltby as soon as he pleased; and if she did not, I was equally determined that Maltby should not have, as I knew must inevitably be the case, to leave the regiment on my account. So that once again matters simplified themselves for me in what my father would have termed a distinctly providential manner and indeed I began to feel that at last in my life the chances of the game were settling in my favor.

So long as I could marry Captain Maltby without driving him from the regiment, I wanted, and in fact most sincerely wished, to do so; but I was equally determined that no power on earth should induce me to in any way cross or even alter the course of his life. I had had one unhappy marriage, and I was determined that under no circumstances would I allow myself to be led into a second.

For however much a man may love his wife, he cannot possibly love her as either he or she would wish if she has in any way crossed his career instead of having aided it and accelerated its success.

Marriage is a partnership in many more senses than one; and I was most distinctly and resolutely determined that about my second partnership there should be no mistake whatever at the outset. Everything must be entirely understood and arranged, or else I should remain Lady Craven, however much I might desire to be rid of the hateful name.

So, without another word as to the future, I again wished Captain Maltby good-bye, and paid him the compliment of watching him down the stairs. Then I sat down for a while and thought matters over, or, to be more precise, reviewed them, for they now lay entirely beyond my own control, and upon the knees of the Fates.

The result of the review was upon the whole reassuring. Captain Maltby was no boy. He was an officer of some standing, close upon his majority, and a man of the world. It was out of the question to suppose that he had been intentionally misleading me, and it was almost equally out of the question to suppose that he was under any delusion on his own account.

The marvelous thing to my mind was how they could have found out about me; but I think that even here I hit upon the right solution.

In referring to the clergy List I found that the rectory of the parish in which the barracks were situated, and in the parish church of which the troops attended service, was one of considerable value, and oddly enough, or rather not at all oddly, if my conjecture was right, was in the gift of the Dean and Chapter of Salchester, who, on the occasion of the last vacancy which had happened just before my arrival in Eastampton, had appointed to it one of their Minor Canons, a worthy middle-aged gentleman with a fussy, mischief-making wife.

I felt that I might be doing this good lady a very great injustice; but I at once jumped to the conclusion that she had heard all about my history from her husband and had repeated it, with comments and additions of her own, to the wives of every married officer in the regiments, including of course Mrs. Martyn herself.

But the matter was too trifling for me to trouble myself with it. I knew my father to be sufficiently spiteful and vindictive to do me any injury that lay in his power, even in the most roundabout way; and towards the mischief-making gossip herself, my feeling was one of contempt, rather than of irritation, and certainly had in it not a trace of anything so serious as a desire for revenge.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Next day Mrs. Martyn called at an orthodox hour, and in orthodox state. She was very chatty, and with a strong masculine element in her which is almost invariably to be found in the wives of officers who accompany their husbands on service, and is, to my thinking, extremely pleasant.

Except that she was educated and of a good county family, she somewhat reminded one of Thackeray's Mrs. O'Dowd, with all her frankness, bonhomie, and entire imperturbability.

Before she had been in the room three or four minutes, I was entirely at my ease. I can only give the general impression which what she had to say left upon my mind. As she chattered away, doing nearly all the talk herself, she gave me to understand that the ladies of the garrison, and more especially of the regiment, had taken to me as kindly as had the men, and that I was generally a persona grata.

"You see, Lady Craven—or must I say Mrs. Gascoigne—when the men are on parade, or on field duty, or at mess, we have nothing to do amongst ourselves but to chatter—the Colonel calls it cackling—so of course we chattered about you. First we began about your jewels, and I needn't tell you we envied them. Now that the dear old days of loot are over, you don't see jewels, like yours at a garrison ball. They are superb, fine enough for a Begum. And then you know we began to talk about all kinds of things, and it was settled at last that I should come here to-day as a sort of deputation, or as what you may call the oldest inhabitant."

I thanked her very cordially.

"You will have us all here before long, and you will find that there are quite enough of us to keep you lively, if not indeed a round dozen too many. And do what you like with them, but don't play poker at afternoon tea; take that hint from a friend. It's a bad habit, and it grows upon you. One of our young fellows actually had to leave because his wife would play poker."

She ruined him in about six months after she took to it."

I replied that I did not know how to play poker, and had no intention of learning.

"Well," she said, "if you keep clear of cards, you won't do much harm among us, or come to much either. We are not a mischief-making set like the old women of both sexes in a Cathedral town, and we can enjoy ourselves in our own way. Now there is one of us, she'll tell you all about it herself, regularly rides her husband's second charger with the garrison drag, and makes him come with her. I believe she'd ride in our regimental steeplechases if the committee would allow her to enter; and yet, bar her passion for horses, or rather for riding, for she knows no more of horse-flesh than the man in the moon, she's as quiet a little soul as ever lived, and I'm sure you'll like her."

I told her that I could ride a little along a good turnpike road, or over level turf, but that I was not at all likely to be seen anywhere near the tails of the drag hounds.

"Ah, well! I didn't know; and yet you ought to ride too. You'd look well on a horse. One or two of our fellows have said so, Maltby more particularly."

I felt the color rising to my face, and she could not have helped noticing it.

"He's a capital fellow, Maltby; one of the best in the regiment; popular with the Colonel and with everybody else. Only, unluckily for him, he hasn't much money, and not much chance of any that I can see. His father is a judge who married a woman with a lot of money. The money, however, is all tied up, and will go to the elder son, who made a try as a barrister, but somehow failed. They tell me he has less brains in his whole head than our man has in the tip of his little finger."

"And so Maltby only has what his father allows him. It is not much, but the old man could cut it off at any time, and then, I am sure I don't know what Maltby would do. I suppose he'd have to exchange and go to India, but that is not so easy as it used to be; besides, he'd lose all his promotion. Nowadays, all the fellows are red hot to go to India, and shake the rupee tree. I don't know what the regiment would do without him, I'm sure. He's not exactly what you call the life and soul of it, for he's the quietest fellow going. But he's one of the best liked men in it anyhow; and we shouldn't be ourselves without him."

I said, in judiciously general terms, that Captain Maltby was a sort of man whom it was impossible to help liking, and that I could perfectly understand his popularity; and I said something also about a regiment being very much like a public school, a place in which every man was taken for what he was worth, so that popularity was one of the very best testimonials, if not quite the best that a man could have.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

IT ALL DEPENDS.

Much of Our Happiness Depends on How We Take Life.

It is not a very pleasant matter to contemplate, but it is a truth that has to be faced that failure, disappointment and defeat constitute a considerable part of human life and that much of our happiness depends upon the way in which we accept them and the lessons we draw from them. While it may be better not to contemplate them much in regard to projects that require all the zeal, courage and endurance we can get together, it may not be amiss to reflect calmly, at times, upon the particular characteristics which are needed to meet them manfully and secure from them whatever benefits they are capable of imparting. These are very different from, and far more meritorious than the qualities which enable a man to ride triumphantly on the bounding tide of popular success. The courage of high endeavor is not the courage of endurance; the enthusiasm that laughs at obstacles is very different from the experience that realizes them; the self confidence which takes no note of limitations is quite unlike the humility which has found and accepted them. In the same way, it may be contented that the hopefulness that has never been crushed scarcely resembles the modest hope which may spring up after failure, content to strive for small things when great ones are impossible.

The proper way to judge of men and their motives is to consider their aims in life. We can by no means extend to the selfish man the affectionate respect which is due to the philanthropist. The triumph of one may be paltry and of little account, that of the other may be noble and heroic. Yet in seasons of failure, when efforts have been defeated, when labor has been in vain, when cherished purposes have been frustrated, and struggles have been vain and fruitless, both may be equally unprepared to meet the shock. Both may succumb to the disappointment; lose heart and courage and make shipwreck of their lives. Many a man has set out with hope and enthusiasm to engage in some noble cause or to carry out some cherished plan for the good of society. For a time success seems to crown his efforts and his labors are redoubled. Presently, however, he loses ground, he realizes difficulties that seem insuperable, he does not meet with the response he had counted on. Flaws in his plans are detected and perhaps his whole scheme proves in its present condition to be impossible. Disappointed and discouraged he throws it up and abandons the whole field. Because he has failed in this effort he will make no other and becomes a disgruntled and dissatisfied man for the rest of his life.

However excellent his aim, however zealous his efforts, he has not yet learnt the lessons which failure has in store. If he were to review the past in the light of its experience he might discover the causes of his failure; he might find that while his intentions were good, his judgment was at fault and his knowledge of human nature deficient. With more modesty and equal earnestness he might set himself to do what he can, perchance in a smaller and humbler way but with far better promise of real success.

Berry stains on hands and clothing may be removed by the smoke of a burning sulphur match. Moisten the stained surface and expose it fully to the smoke, which will take effect at once.

ROYALTY IN SUMMER.

Hot Weather Retreats of the Kings and Queens of Europe.

The venerable Queen Victoria, for more than twenty years, has usually divided the summer and autumn months between Osborne and Balmoral castles.

Often when the weather is pleasant she remains out of doors all day, reading or writing, in the shade of some fine old tree. In this fashion also she frequently discusses her breakfast and afternoon tea.

The life led by the Prince of Wales during the summer months is a much busier and more varied one than that of his august mother. He usually makes the round of the great country houses of England, where his coming is always eagerly watched for; spends a few weeks at Hamburg, and in September takes part in the family reunion of King Christian at Fredenborg. However, the Prince is happiest when for a few weeks he can bid farewell to the world of form and fashion, and spend a brief season in his country home at Sandringham, a typical country house, pleasantly situated in a typical English county.

Emperor William is an enthusiastic hunter. His hunting estate in East Prussia is a great forest covering some 75 square miles of rough and rocky territory, and abounds in the finest deer that run on the Continent.

Here the Emperor loves to follow the chase in the manner of the ancient founders of his house. For the mock hunt's so popular at Potsdam he has no patience. He is a splendid horseman and an almost unerring marksman, and cares only for the chase requiring the highest qualities of horsemanship and marksmanship. He devotes at least a fortnight every autumn to the pleasures of the chase.

The Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria has a comfortable but modest villa at Ischl, where he usually passes his summer vacation. His habits are simple and severe, and hunting is the one pastime of which he is passionately fond. There are ample opportunities for the huntsman at Ischl, which lies between Salzburg and Gmunden. The adjacent mountains are steep, thickly wooded, and over-running with game.

When staying at Ischl Francis Joseph often arises before sunrise to take part in the chase. His Ministers visit Ischl only at rare intervals, but the Empress, who is an almost constant traveller, always joins her husband some time in August in order to be with him on his birthday.

Alfonso, the boy king of Spain, spends the summer at San Sebastian, closely guarded by his mother the Queen-Regent. The little King is now eight years old, and has quite a numerous court attached to his person, including two or three stately majordomos, and any number of pages and domestics. The royal nurse, Raymunda, who nursed him in his infancy, is still his faithful guardian, and sleeps beside his bed at night. As soon as he is washed and dressed in the morning, he is turned over to Raymunda who conducts him to the Queen.

The castle of Monza, in Lombardy, is the home of King Humbert of Italy during the early summer months. Here he and his Queen live with as little pomp and ceremony as possible. In September they go for a short stay in the Alps, the King to hunt and the Queen to enjoy her chalet of Gressoney, the long mountain excursions of which she is so fond. At Gressoney Humbert adopts the costume of the Tyrolean mountaineer, and leads a life as simple and hardy as their own. The Italian Crown Prince spends a greater part of the summer at Capo di Monte, the Versailles of Naples, where he holds his court. His mother goes every October to Capo di Monte to aid in entertaining his numerous guests, and when later the King joins them a grand bear hunt is one of the unfulfilling features of the merrymaking.

King Christian of Denmark loves to romp with his grandchildren, and at Fredenborg is often seen seated in a very diminutive pony carriage, trusting himself to the care of a very youthful coachman. Sometimes he acts as the willing horse for a still younger driver. Every afternoon he invites his grandchildren to perform gymnastics, and himself enters enthusiastically into their exercises. Queen Louise always takes advantage of having her daughters with her at these family reunions to perform music in common, and often they play eight hands on two pianos the Queen and Duchess of Cumberland at one, the Empress of Russia and the Princess of Wales at the other.

LONG LIFE IN RUSSIA.

Abnormal Longevity More Common in Russia Than in Any Other European Nation.

It has long been a well-established fact that abnormal longevity is more common among the Russians than among any other of the European nations. From an official report collated from well authenticated local registers, it now appears that the Government of Kieff takes the first place of all Russian provinces in this respect. During last year, it is officially stated, there were 14 centenarian deaths registered in that Government. In the city of Kieff one man died aged 100 years, whilst within the suburban circle two women died aged respectively 102 and 104 years. In Berditcheff two men reached the respective ages of 101 and 114 years. In Vassikoff, another patriarch there died in his 115th year. In the same district there died a Jew aged 105; in Sevenigorodka, a man of 110 years; in Tarascha, another of 105; in Uman, two men aged respectively 106 and 102 years; in Kadomytzel, a Jew aged 107 and a Christian aged 103; and lastly, a man of 105 years died at Tcherkassy. Here are 14 persons, dying within the same year and within the limits of one district, whose united ages amount to 1,482 years. According to the Saratoff journals there is still living in that Government an ancient veteran of the First Napoleon's army, formerly Lieut. Savin, and since 1812 known as Nicolai Alexandrovitch Savin, who has celebrated 126 birthdays.