

# THE DEAN AND HIS DAUGHTER.

## CHAPTER XLII.

As soon as I was up and about, I hunted up Ethel, and as she happened to be also hunting up me on her own account, we very soon found ourselves alone together, not in the shrubberies but upon the lawn, where we could at once discontinue our conversation, and plunge boldly into something else, should anyone break in upon us.

"I have news for you, Ethel."  
"And I have news for you."  
"Bless my soul! we are always doing, or thinking, or wanting the same thing, or having the same thing happen to us at the same time, it's marvelous! Well what is it and what is it all about?"

"It's no very great secret dear. It's simply this, that a man, who happens to be eligible and to be also a very good fellow into the bargain, has proposed to me."

"Good heavens, you don't say so! And a man, who happens to be a very nice fellow and to be very eligible into the bargain, has a second time proposed to me. It almost begins to look as if we were bewitched. Tell me now; who is your man?"

"Before I answer that, you must tell me whether you have accepted Lord Ashwell this time or whether you have been insane enough to once again send the poor man off about his business."

"No, Ethel, I have done the right and the merciful thing this time. I have told him that I will do all I can to make him a most amiable and in every way a model wife, and I have sent him off. I really believe, so happy that he hardly seems to know what to do with himself. Now tell me what you have done, or rather tell me first, who your victim is."

"My victim, as you are pleased to term him, Lady Craven, is bearing up wonderfully under all the circumstances. Allow me to inquire after the health of yours."

"Mine is radiant with delight and now that we have each of us hooked and practically landed our fish, suppose we begin to compare notes. Who is your fish, what does he scale, how old is he, and is he in reasonable condition?"

"I will answer categorically. My fish is named Sir Thomas Jackson, and is an Alderman and ex-Lord Mayor, and very presentable in every respect. Of his exact calling I know nothing as yet, except that he is something in the city and must make a fair amount of money by pursuing that occupation, as his private residence and place of residence out of business hours is in Chesham Place. He may be a soap boiler for all that I care so long as he is content to do what is right and handsome in the way of settlements, pocket-money, and other such matters of detail. It is in the matters of detail dear Miriam, that the whole secret of this world really lies. Look to your details, and the larger matters will take care of themselves quite naturally."

"So I am coming to believe. First, however, let me congratulate you with all my heart. We are such very old friends, and good friends, that I need hardly do so in speech, now let me in turn tell you all about my own love affair. I have made my fiancé the happiest of men, and he is, I believe, at this moment either dreaming of me, or else thinking of me over his after breakfast cigar and brandy and sofa. For Heaven's sake, if he should come up, as he may at any moment, don't look full of guilty knowledge. Try and talk as if nothing whatever was passing in your mind. Put on what I have heard you call a casual appearance. It is a very happy phrase, exactly hitting off what it describes."

"I will look, my dear, as casual as I possibly can, and I had better perhaps begin to look so at once, for here comes the young gentleman himself."

The young gentleman himself was bearing down upon us at this juncture and wanting to know whence we came, and whither we were going, and what we thought of the weather, and so on, gave me at last the chance of telling him that I was going up to London on business that very afternoon, having in fact received a letter which made it necessary that I should do so.

Lord Ashwell drove me up to the station, and saw me off. Arrived at Paddington, I procured a hansom, and, in about twenty minutes, found myself once again in the offices of Messrs. Wylie & Wylie.

Mr. George Wylie received me in his usual manner, although with more deference, I fancy, than he would show to ordinary clients. And he then proceeded to extract my business from me so skillfully and rapidly that he really knew all about it before I, for my own part, was aware that I even told him anything.

When he had learnt what he wished to know he congratulated me very gravely and courteously. Lord Ashwell, he said, was a young nobleman, whom everybody liked, and who had never been involved in any scandal, or even difficulty; else he, Mr. Wylie, would most certainly have known all about it. His lordship was in the best set, and belonged to two or three of the very best clubs, the Carlton and White's for instance. He was said and believed, to have very considerable ability, and to be certain one day to make his mark in the Upper House. And then Mr. Wylie abruptly gave the conversation a new departure by asking me whether I had as yet told Lord Ashwell of, what he politely termed, the persecutions to which I had been subjected.

I answered that I had not as yet had time to tell Lord Ashwell anything, and that my real object in coming up to town had been to ask him, Mr. Wylie, what he thought I had better do.

The man of law considered the matter for a moment, not being, according to his usual practice, ready at once with an entire solution of the whole difficulty. Then, having thought the matter out, he replied cheerfully:

"Of course you must let him know, soon-

er or later, and before your engagement gets abroad; or, if you do not, some enemy or other will do the thing for you. It is quite necessary that it should be done, and I advise you to do it at once. The only possible question is, will you do it yourself, or shall somebody do it for you? Now, I would gladly go beyond the routine of professional duty, only that I think you had better tell Lord Ashwell yourself. Then comes the point whether you shall write to him, or whether you shall tell him, and if I were you I should most certainly tell him. He is a young man of strong common sense. He is sure to know this story already. In all human probability he has heard the case discussed several times, and from every possible point of view. If so, he will have formed his own opinion, and I have very little doubt myself as to what that opinion will be."

"But the papers were so down on me," I said.  
"Leading articles in newspapers," he replied, "always accept the fait accompli, always say that they had foreseen it all along; always make it out worse than it is; and always moralize about it in a manner which is often sublimely impertinent and sickeningly hypocritical. No man with any confidence in his own opinion is ever influenced by the papers. Lord Ashwell, whatever he may have read at the time, will have formed his own judgment upon your history, and I should say that his judgment would be a sound one."

"And all these things being so, I cannot help thinking that your best course is to tell him yourself who you really are, and then to suggest that he should come and see me, as I had Mr. Sabine's confidence entirely, and can thoroughly satisfy Lord Ashwell upon any point he may wish to be informed about."

This was evidently meant to be final, so I wished Mr. Wylie good day; was escorted by him in person to my cab, and, as I had determined to stay in town for the night, was driven at once to my old quarters at the Langham.

On this occasion, instead of going to the play, I dined rather late, with the allowance of a pint of champagne. A man after this would, of course have smoked. I, on the contrary, sat before the fire (for it was rather chilly) with some tea and a small glass of fine champagne, and then wrote a letter, which, as I knew, would, if despatched by hand to the station-box at Paddington, reach The Uplands in the morning mail bag.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

My letter was short enough, but I knew that Lord Ashwell would be delighted to hear from me. I told him that I had taken me up to town entirely to my satisfaction, and that I intended to return by an early train the next morning, which would land me at the station at about eleven, and that I should then drive straight to the house. I pleaded the necessity for catching the post as an excuse for the shortness of the letter, and having made certain that it would be sent off safely, went to bed earlier than my usual hour.

My lover met me at the station. He had sent down from London a small stanhope, and a couple of fast-trotting cobs, which he said he wished me to try. I need not remind my reader that my little experience of driving had been acquired very late in life. But I had a natural aptitude for it, and I could feel as I took the reins that the horses knew their mistress, and that Lord Ashwell could see as much.

When we reached The Uplands I promised that I would join him at the rustic house by the camphead as soon as I had changed my traveling dress. This operation I performed with great care, trying to make myself look at my very best, and I really think succeeding tolerably well. Then I made my way down to the water's edge, and there found Lord Ashwell throwing pebbles more or less aimlessly into the water, and evidently in an extremely restless frame of mind.

He began at once about myself, and about our marriage. How soon was it to be? and when and where was it to take place? and how soon might he tell all his friends about it? At present he had thought it best to keep strictly to the very letter of our understanding, and to tell no one. But, of course, the thing must be known sooner or later, he did not really see any reason why it should not just as well be made public at once. Why should we not tell the Fox's who were kind people, and would be sure to be pleased, and have the whole thing put in the Post in the shape of the customary announcement? There was not the least occasion for any mystery, and for his own part he wanted the news to be made public property as soon as possible.

He was evidently in earnest, and not at all in a humor to be put off. All that I could do was to beg him for a few days to let matters rest as they were.

"I have no doubt," I said, "you will think me fanciful, so perhaps I am. In fact, I think that all women are fanciful more or less. I can only ask you for just this once to bear patiently with me, and to honor my fancy. A day or two, or even a couple of weeks (for which I do not ask, and have no intention of asking), is a very little matter after all, where two lives are concerned. As for our marriage itself, I have no wish to postpone that indefinitely, or, in fact, at all. I only want a few days more."

"Well, my darling," he answered, "it is idle to pretend that I am not disappointed, for I am, and I think I have a little reason to be. I always hated mystery, and I wanted to have had the whole thing out at once. It must be, however, as you please. For the present I will say no more about it, but we cannot, of course, prolong our stay here indefinitely. The best of the people have gone already, and the rest will soon be going. For my part, I think the sooner we let the thing be known, and without giving people any unnecessary time to think about it and chatter about it, get married up in London and are off to the Continent, the better it will be. Cannot you give me any idea?"

Upon what slight circumstances our whole life often lingers. I felt strongly—almost irresistibly—tempted then and there to tell him everything; but my evil destiny prompted me to put off doing so. I was tired with my journey, with late hours,

and with the excitement of my triumph, and perhaps also I was vain enough to believe that a little something like coquetry might not be altogether without avail. So I put the matter lightly by, telling him that I should very probably make up my mind that night, and that I would certainly let him know before dinner the next day.

Then we made our way up through the reddening plantations to the house, for, early as it was, the mists were already beginning to lie heavily on the meadows, and among the reeds and sedge.

We parted in the hall, and I made my way to my own room. I had looked to one or two little things, and was beginning to think of going downstairs to luncheon, when Ethel burst into the room.

"I have to be off at once to Paris, my dear," she began. "I won't bother you with my affairs. You have quite enough of your own to occupy all your attention; but go I must, or I most certainly would not be leaving you at this particular crisis. I have looked at the Bradshaw, and all the other authorities, and I find that if I leave here at five sharp, I can just manage to do matters comfortably. All my packing is completed, my formal adieux have been made, and there is nothing left for me but to be ready for the carriage when it comes round to the door. Meantime I have a letter for you which has been forwarded from Paris, where it was addressed care of myself. It is idle to pretend that I do not know the writing, for it happens to be that of Prince Balanikoff. Open it at once, my child, and let me know what that most estimable of Russians, and least bearish, has to say for himself."

I complied, more or less mechanically, and with a certain amount of uneasiness. I was passing through a very severe and sharp crisis, and my nerves were strung to the most extreme point of tension.

The letter itself did not take by any means long to read, or to master its purport. It was not brief, but it was trenchantly to the point.

"Jockey Club, Paris,  
October 24th, 18—.

MY DEAR LADY CRAVEN,  
"It is just possible that it may be some time before this letter will reach you. I do not know where you are, and I am aware that in England, at this time of the year, your movements are very likely to be erratic."

"Why am I writing to you? Of course I have not forgotten the stern interdiction under which you have virtually placed me. Of course I am wrong in breaking it. Mais, que voulez-vous? News, sometimes, come to me in odd ways, and I have heard news of yourself, and, to tell you the truth, of Lord Ashwell. I hope what I hear may be untrue, as his Lordship is a most estimable specimen of a young English country gentleman, and would, no doubt, make a model and extremely affectionate husband. Of that I have no manner of doubt. But it is only my duty to let you know, as soon as I possibly can, that you are threatened with danger. The exact story of your life is likely at any moment, and when you least expect it, to be sprung upon you. You will then find that you have plenty of fighting to do, if you are even to hold your own, so you consequently cannot be too thoroughly forearmed."

"Meantime, my own love for you remains unaltered, I told you truthfully that it was, and had been, the only passion of my life, and it remains so now. At any time, and under any circumstances, my old proposal to you, and the promises attached to that proposal, hold good. I will leave Russia forever, and let you choose for yourself our place of abode."

"If you want me, as I am almost certain you will, and much sooner than you think, telegraph to me here, or come to me here, which ever you prefer. I have a sort of fancy that you will come, and so shall not leave until I hear from you."

"I could write pages; but I have said all that is necessary, and will now wait until our next meeting."

"Yours till death,  
"BALANIKOFF."

I handed the letter to Ethel, and said: "Read it for yourself, my dear, and tell me what it means. Your brains are sharper than my own by far. For myself, I confess, that it fairly puzzles me."

Ethel read the letter over, not once, but two or three times, until I felt certain that she had thoroughly mastered it. Then she handed it back to me with an enigmatical expression of countenance. She was evidently at once amused and bewildered, and yet not at all anxious or disquieted.

"He is a funny fellow, dear Miriam," she said, "very persistent, and very terribly in earnest. But I always told you that he meant well. As for reading between the lines of his epistle, the task is an easy one—far easier than the small pea under one of the three little thimbles. He is making a last desperate effort to get you to accept his proposition, and is trying to frighten you. What, however, you have to be frightened about, I fail to see. If I were you, I should certainly not answer the letter; but I should none the less keep it as a curiosity, which, indeed, it most unquestionably is. And whatever you do, mind as soon as you are married, and have got Ashwell to yourself, that you make a clean breast of everything to him, and leave him nothing to find out. There will be a scene, no doubt, at the first, but through that you must struggle, and you will end by being firmer lovers than ever, and, better than lovers, friends. For friendship is better than love in proportion as it has confidence in it, while love is always passion, and consequently more or less irrational, capricious, and uncertain, if not, indeed, at times entirely treacherous. Marry him at once, my dear Miriam, and then the very day afterwards have the whole thing over."

"But you do not seem to understand, Ethel. I mean to tell Lord Ashwell everything before I marry him. In fact I must tell him before. You forget I have seen Mr. Wylie, whose advice entirely chimes in with my own previous determination. Besides, as Mr. Wylie told me, if I married in my name but my own, the marriage would be an idle ceremony entirely null and void, and then all sorts of complications would follow."

"Well, darling," said Ethel, "there is only one thing certain at cards, and that is that the cards cannot always be against you. Of that I am quite confident. Your bad luck up to now has been persistent, cruel, and almost malicious. It is high time that the tide began to turn. I for my own part feel pretty certain that it has turned already, and I consequently vote

that we keep our own counsel and for the present say no more about the matter. There is the luncheon bell, and I have my old Alderman to pacify. He will be furious at my having to go over to Paris, and I do not mind telling you that he is the kind of animal who wants a good deal of smoothing down. I shrewdly suspect that he has ruined his digestion with thick turtle soup and Mansion House punch, and that his digestion has ruined his temper. Nous verrons. When I am Lady Jackson, I will put a ring in his nose and pipe to him; and my bear shall dance to my own tune or I will know why. You shall see my dear. You shall see. And we went down to lunch.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## A SIGNPOST.

Which Marks Where Europe And Asia Join.

About 165 miles from Perm, in dense fir forests, the line reaches "Europe," and soon after passing a signpost like a little Eiffel Tower with Europe inscribed on one side and Asia on the other, the train comes to "Asia." "Europe" and "Asia" are two smart little stations surrounded by firs and birches, but standing each in a little green field full of buttercups. The firs and pines grow chiefly in zones in the extensive forests through which the line passes, and here and there the dark masses are relieved by groups of light green birches.

Nijni Taghil is the centre of the mines of the Demidoff family, and is famous for its magnetic iron ore and for its malachite. Thence the line runs alongside a lake, till the campaniles and towers of Ekaterinburg appear to make the site of the pleasant mining capital of a district famous not only for iron, copper and gold, but for opals, beryls, jacinth, chrysoite, rhodonite and many other precious substances, of which superb specimens can be seen in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg.

Either from Ekaterinburg or from Kamyshloff, 90 miles beyond it, a branch will be constructed to connect the Aral with the Great Siberian Railway at Cheliabinsk or at some point a little further east. The latter line will run to Omsk on the Irtysh, on either side of which work is already in progress. At Tara, lower down that river, a great sawmill has been constructed in order that the vast forests between the Obi and the Irtysh may be utilized for sleepers, while at Koliban, on the former river, large numbers of workmen are already collected. Steamers have been purchased to bring rails down the Yenisee, past Krasnoyarsk, upon which river the line will run on to Irkutsk on Lake Baikal.

## AN HONORABLE THIEF.

He Felt That He Was Being Fooled but He Kept His Word.

"I once had an experience that proved to me that there is honor among thieves," said W. J. Burgess, a Montreal drummer. It happened several years ago in a little town up in Manitoba. I retired to bed in the hotel at the usual time, and placed my watch and pocket-book under the pillow. After having been asleep for some time I was awakened by hearing a strange noise in the room.

"You can imagine I was considerably startled at beholding a man with a handkerchief tied over his face standing by my bedside. In his hand was a dark lantern, which shone full on my face. He did not give me much time to think, but in a gruff voice demanded my watch and money. I don't know whatever put the idea into my head, but, endeavoring to be as calm as possible, I said:

"If I tell you exactly where they are will you promise not to molest me and leave me to finish my sleep?"

"Well, you are a cool one, I must say," he replied, "but you must tell me where your valuables are, and I will promise not to harm you, and leave you in peace."

"I will take you at your word," said I; "my watch is at the jeweler's being repaired, and every cent I have is locked up in the safe downstairs."

He stared at me a minute or two, as though trying to tell by my face if I had spoken the truth. It must have convinced him, for, muttering something I did not catch, he turned on his heel and walked out of the room without a word.

## To His Best Knowledge.

A lawyer was cross-questioning a negro witness in one of the justice courts the other day and was getting along fairly well until he asked the witness what his occupation was.

"Ise er carpenter, sir."

"What kind of a carpenter?"

"They call me a jack-leg carpenter, sah."

"What is a jack-leg carpenter?"

"He is a carpenter who is not a first-class carpenter, sah."

"Well, explain more fully what you understand a jack-legged carpenter to be," insisted the lawyer.

"Boss, I declar' I dunno how ter 'splain any mo' 'except to say hit am jes de same diffrence between you an' er fust-class lawyer."

The negro was one of the old-fashioned kind, and did not mean to be insolent or impudent, but had just decided in his own mind that the lawyer asking the question was not a first-class lawyer.

It is needless to say the questions ceased at once.

## The Peer's Bore.

By the death of old Lord Denman the British House of Peers loses one of its greatest cranks. Whenever Lord Salisbury would get upon his legs to make a speech, Lord Denman would at once rise to address the House, with the deliberate object of talking down the Marquis, says the San Francisco Argonaut. As he was stone deaf, he would pay no heed to expostulations on the part of his brother peers or of the Lord Chancellor as presiding officer, and was to be stopped from further utterances only by being dragged down into his seat by his long coat-tails.

# RIVALS ALL GOLD FINDS.

## SIR M. FRASER TALKS OF THE RECENT AUSTRALIAN DISCOVERY.

Says That the Coolgardie Territory Extends Over 1,200 Miles. Nearly All of Which is Auriferous Earth, and That Reports so Far Received, With the Lessons Taught in Other Fields, Point to a Future of Immense Production for the Recently Discovered Gold Fields.

The recent rich discovery of gold at Coolgardie, which has been cabled from Australia, promises to be one of the most important ever made in that colony. Sir Malcolm Fraser, agent general for Western Australia in England, in discussing the strike the other day said the present generation need not trouble about the permanency of the gold mining in that colony. He believed we were only standing upon the threshold and that greater things are yet to come. In July, 1889, some energetic gentlemen, led by W. Anstey, went on a prospecting tour to a position about 300 miles eastward of Perth, when almost a legendary report had arisen that gold could be found in a district since named Yilgarn. These gentlemen found that the report was not a myth, as a gold centre named Southern Cross was discovered, in and around which good paying reefs were found. In the same district, some miles north of Coolgardie, a discovery had been made which would seem to eclipse anything ever discovered in the world's history. A hole 5 feet 4 inches wide and 3 feet deep had yielded £10,000 first, and then enough gold was left to scale 200 weight. This reef was outcropped for a distance of half a mile, and it was believed to be a deep one.

"The auriferous belts of western Australia," said Sir M. Fraser, "extend from the Dundas hills in the south to the Ord river in the north, a distance of over 1,200 miles. Of course it does not follow that every mile of this ground is auriferous, but when you think of the wonderful discoveries already made it is not too much to expect that the greater portion of this land will be found to be gold-bearing. The utmost energy has been brought to bear upon the construction of railways. The line to Coolgardie has been completed to Southern Cross, a distance of 300 miles, leaving over 120 miles to construct, which is to be proceeded with at once, and the line to Upper Murchison, a distance of 300 miles, is being rapidly completed.

"This will connect the fields with a good seaport, and thus give the necessary impetus to the rapid development of the district. It is in contemplation to construct other lines to the more northern parts of the colony to bring these districts into line.

"The water supply of the western side of Australia 200 miles from the coast is spasmodic in character, drenching rain, quite tropical, accompanied by the most violent thunder-storms, is precipitated on the thirsty soil. The average yearly rainfall at Coolgardie has been estimated at twelve inches in showers, or, rather, deluges, of short duration. It only remains for the ingenuity of man to catch and preserve this beneficial and ample rainfall to provide for every one of a very large colony of miners. Apart from this, salt water can be readily obtained in most parts by deep sinking, and this has been found to be most useful in the extraction of gold, although not so good as fresh water. Of course it can be condensed and then it is ready for consumption.

"The premier of the colony stated the other day that a condenser capable of heating 3,000 gallons of salt water can be procured for £150. Thirty thousand pounds has been already expended by the government in water conservation, so that after the next rain Coolgardie will be provided with an ample supply of water. The government have been doing what is necessary to keep the miners provided and communication open; of course, private companies must look after themselves. The climate is magnificent and most healthy. The government have given their consideration to the question of a mint to be erected, so you see they have an idea that there will be plenty of gold. Towns are springing up right and left. Undoubtedly, what was yesterday a desert will to-morrow be a large town."

As to the tenure upon which the land is held the agent general added: "The government have, perhaps, been too liberal in this respect. Before they found they had so much hidden treasure they made contracts with certain syndicates, the Hampden Plains Estate Company, for instance, which owns a very large and important area of mining and pastoral land. Miners who discovered a gold area were rewarded with a picked claim. It is only right that the men who first light the torch of progress should have some benefit from its rays. The gold discovery in western Australia is neither a secret nor a trick. Every day will show the world that it is one of the most wonderful realities of the century."

## The Fires Will Make Work for Many.

"What is the probable loss from the fire on pine stumps throughout the West?" was asked of a leading lumberman the other day.

"The loss is in one sense nominal," replied he. "You understand fire does not burn the body of a pine tree; it only burns off the bark and foliage. The trunk of the burned tree is as good as ever it was, with this exception. The tree, after it is burned, must be cut the succeeding winter, else it will become worm eaten and worthless."

"This fire is a blessing in disguise to labor. Every owner of burned pine stumps must go to work this coming winter and cut every foot of it, and many of these owners are forced to cut perhaps hundreds of millions of feet of stumpage they would not otherwise have cut for years to come. They are, you see, forced to employ immense crews of men they would not otherwise have had use for."