

THE DEAN AND HIS DAUGHTER

CHAPTER XLV.

That afternoon Ethel started for Paris. She had somehow or other managed to pacify her Alderman, and, in fact, left him on the best possible terms. I accompanied her to the station, and bade her an affectionate farewell.

"We shall soon meet again, darling," were her last words; "I hope to be back within ten days."

I returned to The Uplands with a sense of oppression that I could neither account for, nor yet shake off, and a sort of vague foreboding of evil to come. I suppose, in reality, it was the effect of Prince Balanikoff's strange warning.

Lord Ashwell took me down to dinner that evening, and although, of course, he was kind and courteous, he yet studiously refrained from anything like demonstrative attention, knowing my objection to our names being coupled together for the present, and mindful of his promise to me on the subject.

I was very glad indeed when the time arrived that it was possible for me to retire, for I felt thoroughly worn out with anxiety, doubt, and a sort of dread of the unseen evil with which I was apparently threatened. But when I got to bed no refreshing sleep, nor, indeed, sleep of any kind, came to bring me relief, and I tossed about all night a prey to vague misgivings and unpleasant reflections. I lit my candle and tried to read, but I found it impossible to concentrate my attention for two minutes together, so that I was forced to give up the attempt as hopeless. I got up and paced up and down the room and then went to bed again, but the result was precisely the same. I could not sleep, do what I would, and I was finally compelled to accept the inevitable, and to remain awake the whole night.

"Stop awake all night," you will be told, "why, it's the best fun in the world. Whenever there is anything good to be done in the morning, I always take the most particular care not to go to bed. Once go to bed and you can never trust yourself. You may sleep on like the princess in the wood."

I was in no hurry to figure early that morning. Being no longer a child or even a girl, I knew that in the fresh light of dawn I should appear to disadvantage. "Avoid two things," Ethel used to tell me, "one of these is the lime-light; never let it fall upon you unawares."

In this humor I went down to the grounds. I am not defending my frame of mind. You may call it defiant, you may call it what you please. It seemed to me that I held all the cards in my own hand, and I was still not in the prime of life, but only on the threshold of that delightful period. I consequently was restless, impatient, and in the very last temper calculated to provoke or to encourage reflection.

I wandered about the grounds until the bell in the turret of the tower to the stables rang out the signal for lunch.

I entered the room more or less heedlessly. It had never occurred to me who might be there, or who might not. I had in my own mind reckoned up the company, and was not prepared for any addition to it. I was consequently fairly startled, when, at the other end of the room, I saw—entirely himself, with all his self-possession about him, looking almost twenty years younger than his age, holding forth with the loquacity of a gossip, and the assurance of a professor, and evidently considering himself the heart, centre and focus of the entire company—no less a person than the husband whom I had once most solemnly vowed to love, honor, and obey.

It was a distinctly difficult position. I was looking steadily at Sir Henry when he looked up, and our eyes met. I made him a very formal bow, but it was with an expression in my face which intimated: "Try your worst. You and I know perfectly well that the scabbard is thrown away. I do not expect quarter, and if you mean fighting, I can fight as well as yourself."

CHAPTER XLV.

I remember George Sabine once telling me how he got the best of a very abusive Yankee harbor-master. The Yank talked with every variety of oath, anecdote, abuse, and blasphemy for about an hour. "When," said George, "he had blown his wind and stopped spouting, I asked him whether that was all. He replied that it was. I then told him, not in these exact terms, that I was devotedly grateful to Providence." My look at Sir Henry was of much the same tenor. It meant, and it was intended to mean, "if you have a tongue so large. If you talk, I can talk." And with this expression stereotyped into my features. I looked at him and waited for his look in return.

I have always said I considered him a stupid man, but with a certain amount of pomp and management of detail when he might be fully prepared with all the circumstances. And in this world, stupidity is apt to rank as wisdom purposely hidden under a veil of cunning and caution. Not knowing what to do, Sir Henry did nothing, but he also looked hopeless, helpless, and perfectly bewildered. Now a diplomatist ought to be no one of these things.

Luncheon over, I strolled away by myself down to the river. It would be idle to pretend that I was not restless and uneasy.

As I turned a corner among the infinite windings of the shrubberies there, face to face with me, stood Lord Ashwell.

In one respect, and in one only, I had the advantage of him. I knew the very worst which he could certainly know, nothing beyond what he might have picked up and added to by conjecture. I, in other words, have batteries in reserve; but as

against this must be put the fact that I was now an old strategist, and that it is the old strategists who are always beaten, for the very simple reason that they follow stereotyped rules of the game, and are consequently unequal to a sudden emergency.

The meeting was a little awkward. Of course there was mischief in the air, and I could not possibly tell what cards he might be holding in his hand. But I could see that his manner was embarrassed and uneasy. Therefore I conjectured the worst, and prepared myself to face it. One thing was evident, that he was in a highly excited and irritable mood, as, in fact, his very first words proved.

"It is very unpleasant, Mrs. Gascoigne," he said, "when unpleasant things like this happen. I suppose they must happen sometimes, but for my own part I like to get them over. I have no wish to put any question which may be painful to yourself, or which I have not a perfect right to put. But I believe you know old Sir Henry Craven. He is dead here, and has been saying a good deal about you. I cannot suppose for a moment that he is telling downright lies. There must be something in it. He may have his own view of the matter, and he may be, or he may not be, wrong. I do not think very much of him. But what he has said calls for an answer. In fact it calls for an answer which I can go back and give him. I am very sorry for all this trouble, and I only hope to Heaven that you can help me out of it."

"You mean," I said, "that my right name is not Gascoigne? You mean that I once was Lady Craven. Well, you know my story as many other people know it. I could give you my own version of it, which I do not suppose you would believe for a moment, or allow to effect you in any way. You must take the tale as it has come to you. If you knew the whole truth of it you would be sorry for me. But even the whole truth would not explain away the facts. I quite know that. You know the facts, and you know the worst. The interpretation of them is another matter. I am ready to interpret them, but cannot explain them away."

"Surely," he said, "the matter is easy enough. You were introduced to me as Mrs. Gascoigne, and you came down here as Mrs. Gascoigne. It now turns out that you are not Mrs. Gascoigne at all, but that you are Lady Craven. The explanation of that is for yourself. It is the kind of thing which I do not understand, and to which I am not accustomed."

"I had intended to tell you everything. My life has had a history, and the history of a life cannot always be compressed into a few sentences of space, or a few minutes of time. I did not mean to have any secret from you, and there is nothing whatever which, at this minute, I wish to keep or hide from you. That is all."

"The whole thing," he replied, looking at his boots and not at me, "is very unfortunate, and I must also add—very unsatisfactory. I cannot see any way out of it. You admit that you are not Mrs. Gascoigne. You admit that you are here, to say the least, under a misunderstanding. Misunderstandings are unpleasant things. The difficulty in this case is most certainly not of my making."

"The difficulty need not trouble you," I cried. "In fact, it does not exist. I absolutely decline to be considered as upon my defence. You are dissatisfied with what you have heard of me. Let it be so. You are going from this place, and so am I. Let us part as if we had never met, and let us take very great care never to meet again."

"I am sorry," he replied; "but I am afraid it must be so. I see no other way out of the matter. There are always troubles in this world and we have to face them. You can never tell when your turn may come, and when it does come, the only thing for you to do is to take your chance as best you can."

"You may be right," I said, "and I dare say you are. The matter, however, is not one to be argued out between us. You had better see me as far as the house, and when I am in its shade, we can part. We shall probably never meet again, and we certainly are not likely to break our hearts for each other. The world has room in it for the two of us, and our orbits in all human probability will never again cross."

We walked back to the house side by side without another word. I think if he had said it was a fine day or had asked me what were the chances of skating in the coming winter, and whether I liked skating, it would have driven me mad. But he did nothing of the sort. His silence was plegmatic and English. We marched along so slowly and steadily that I could almost hear each single stone in the gravel crunch under his feet. Then we reached the porch and I said good-bye, and, without waiting or even looking at him, hurried into the house.

Inquiries soon satisfied me that the Lady Aletheia was in the house and able to receive me. I found her, or rather was taken to her, in a little room which I can best describe as half boudoir, half writing room.

In a very few minutes Lady Aletheia entered. Her bearing was not perhaps aggressive, but was unquestionably chilly, and was evidently intended to produce a corresponding impression.

"I have to go," I said, "Lady Aletheia, and I wished before I went to bid you good-bye and to thank you for your hospitality."

"Oh, indeed," she answered, "you are going, Lady Craven? Well! People come and people go. Perhaps it is best that leave-takings should be brief."

I had risen when she came in, and she had not herself taken a seat, so that we were both standing.

"It is perhaps best they should be brief," I replied, "especially when they are final as ours is likely to be."

"I quite agree with you," answered Lady Aletheia, and she turned on her heel, and I heard the rustle of her skirts as she swept along the corridor.

We have, so far as I know, no exact English equivalent for shaking the dust off your feet. My fly came, my boxes were put on to it; my gratuities to the servants were duly made; and I very soon found myself in the train for London, divided between a novel from the bookshelf and a view from the window.

Arrived at the Langham, I telegraphed to Ethel.

"I shall start for Paris by the 9.40 train to-morrow morning. Meet me, as I am tired."

And this misadventure, I proved its sincerity by falling asleep in a chair until the chambermaid roused me between eleven and twelve o'clock, and took my final orders for early departure.

All things have an end—even the journey to Paris. Before starting, I went into a chemist's shop and asked for a sleeping draught, and by way of letting the man see that I knew what I was about, I told him that I was suffering from insomnia. He was a stout, good-natured man with an impenetrably stolid countenance. He asked permission to feel my pulse, and then inquired whether I had ever tasted rum. I replied truthfully that I was only familiar with it by the smell.

"Then, madam," said he, "try a little internally, and as hot as you can take it. It is a powerful soporific, and will send you to sleep at once. And as the aroma lingers in the breath, you had better let me put you up some musk lozenges."

I burst out laughing. What an excellent world it would be if people would only be pleasant and tell the truth! I took up my lozenges, and further discharged my obligations by purchasing a bottle of Eau de Cologne. I need only add that his advice was entirely correct. The President of the Royal College of Physicians himself could not possibly have given me better.

I did not trouble myself with thinking. My mind was absolutely made up. I had closed the book of the past, and was going to begin life over again. Late, no doubt, I was, but as the proverb runs, "better late than never." Gather your roses while you can. Or, as I fancy I remember Horace said, "Carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero."

From the Gare du Nord, where Ethel met me, bubbling over in her usual fashion, but as tender-hearted, sympathetic, and true as ever, we were driven hurriedly to the Rue Royale. By the time we had got there Ethel knew all I could tell her, not only with regard to what had taken place, but also to my plans for the future.

"And you have made up your mind, my dear, to do as he asks?"

"Yes, I have thought it over. I won't say, as the Dean would, that I have prayed over the matter, but I have considered it thoroughly. In the first place I like Balanikoff: in the second place, he is a gentleman; in the third place, I mean to do as I choose. Don't you remember my old yachting story of the boat's crew? 'If any man isn't happy aboard this vessel, why, by the Lord, I'll make him know what for.' That's my frame of mind, my dear. I'm aboard this vessel, and I'm perfectly happy."

"Of course you are," she said; "and so am I. Good people always are."

About two months after these events, I received a very long and very characteristic letter from the Very Reverend the Dean of Southwick. He was in the most terrible distress. Wishing to add to his stipend, he had been induced to invest largely in the Consolidated British and Foreign General Financial Advance and Discount Company, which was to pay a minimum dividend of fifteen per cent. The Company had burst up. In other words, it was in liquidation, and was likely to remain so, as long as there was a scrap of flesh left upon the grizzly bones for accountants, receivers, trustees, and other such unclean vultures to pick at. To avoid disgrace and exposure, he had been compelled to set aside twelve hundred a year out of his fifteen. What he was to do he did not know. It was the divine will and he must bow to it. At the same time, I surely would not refuse out of my abundant income to aid him in this sore trial, and to enable him to have at his disposal, not the luxuries of life, for which he had never cared, but its stern and bare necessities.

It was very wrong of me, but I laughed over the letter, and profanely remarked that Ally Sloper was at it again. Then I wrote my answer.

"Paris, 2,0001 Bis, Champs Elysees. December 28th, 18—"

"My Dear Father,

"I am deeply moved at your sad story. I owe you my life and all the happiness that my life has brought me. I should be worse than inhuman if I were not most deeply grateful to you."

My bankers have instructions to place a hundred pounds at once to your credit at the Old Bank, Southwick, and to make a similar payment on each quarter-day.

"At the same time, it is just as well that you should know where this money comes from. It is a part of the price for which I have sold myself soul and body to Prince Balanikoff. It is now two months since I wholly renounced the allowance I had been receiving from Sir Henry Craven."

"Take the money, my dear father, and be careful over it, and make it go as far as it can. *Non olet*. I dare say that your misfortunes have not made you forget your Latin."

Your Daughter,
MIRIAM.

By return of post I received the following reply:

The Deanery, Southwick, December 29th, 18—

"My Dearest Child,
"First let me thank you with all my heart for your most generous and welcome aid. My days are numbered, and, in all human probability, I shall not tax your bounty long. But I am happy to know that I still retain your affection. The more the years roll by the more closely do you remind me of your sainted mother."

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. I have always seen the full force and singular beauty of that divine command, and have humbly endeavored to mould my life in unison with it."

"Morganatic marriages, such as yours, are, in its wisdom recognized by the Greek Church, a communion with which I have always been in the closest sympathy, looking forward as I do with earnest faith to the ultimate reconciliation of Christendom. The more closely we follow perverted dogma the further we wander from the light, and the life, and truth."

"I am, always, my dearest Daughter, your most devoted and affectionate Father."

"AUGUSTUS VANDELEUR ST. AUBYN."

I really feel that this delightful epistle speaks sufficiently for itself and its writer, and needs no comment of my own.

THE END.

The optimist—"Now as to woman, generally speaking—the disagreeable man—"

"Yes, she's generally speaking."

HEALTH.

Talks by the Doctor.

TYPHOID FEVER.

It has been wisely said "In time of peace prepare for war." So, in time of health prepare for sickness, rather, the better way to prevent it. See that your water supplies are kept pure; that no refuse from stables and out-houses can infect the well or cistern. From impure water come our greatest ills. The cellar should be thoroughly cleaned and white-washed; every nook and corner may hold the germs of death; air it well; take down coals of fire in an old tin pan and burn a handful of sulphur, to fumigate every niche and cranny. This should be done now, when you can remain out of doors an hour or two to let the sulphur do its perfect work from cellar to garret, afterwards open your bedroom doors and windows to let out the fumes. Keep your cabbages out of your cellar; they decay easily, and create sickness by their horrible stench. Indeed, it were far better that you have no vegetables at all under your house. Then will your home be pure and healthy. Put your supplies in the ground or in some place prepared for them. Better incur a little expense to do this than pay the doctor many times more later on.

But when the malady has come it must be disposed of in the best manner possible—the patient should be removed into another house, or at least to a separate room away from all but the nurse. As children cannot be of service they had better not be allowed where the patient is, for mutual protection. The less furniture in the room the better, as carpets, bedding and upholstery are only nests of infection. Aside from the bed and necessary chairs and table little else is essential. The room should be ventilated at all times and kept within comfortable temperature. The disease being self-limited, having its allotted time to run, officious medication is simply hurtful. Hence the treatment is rather to prevent complications which may arise.

The first thing to do is to see that the bowels have been thoroughly evacuated. For this purpose a cathartic—salts are best—should be given. A daily warm sponge bath containing a tablespoonful of soda, just the cooking soda, in a washbowl of water, the surface from head to feet rubbed carefully with a sponge or towel. This should be done each morning and bedtime.

All offensive substances should be at once removed from the room, that the air may be as pure and healthful as possible. Light diet of such foods as the patient most prefers. I advise oatmeal, rice in any form; the yolk (only) of soft boiled eggs, toast bread, or crackers, jellies, a baked apple if desired but fruits are not best—the only exception I suggest is watermelon. Its juice seems very grateful, especially when the fever is high and little else can be relished.

From the fifth to the seventh day the most marked characteristics of typhoid fever will have manifested themselves—the brownish spots, especially distributed over the bowels and pit of the stomach, and the dry, brown coat on the tongue and on the teeth. Not infrequently the tongue is cracked with big fissures, making speaking and swallowing very difficult. A mixture of half honey and half glycerine, frequently applied on the tongue, tends to keep it soft and moist, giving great relief. The teeth should be kept clean by rubbing with a wet sponge.

If the thirst is great, cold weak tea will be found very comforting; a tablespoonful as often as desired. I have used this drink many years and I think it a favorite beverage in this class of cases. One of the most delightful drinks, also, when liked, is nice fresh buttermilk. It is at once a good medicine, food and drink.

The fever is kept within bounds by a solution of chlorate of potash—a level teaspoonful of the powder in two quarts of nice clear spring or well water. (If the water is not very clear you had better boil it.) A teaspoonful given every half hour when awake. The potash acts as a febrifuge to keep the fever down, and the oxygen it contains greatly assists in sustaining the system. By its use sores in the mouth and stomach are usually prevented, and that most serious result of typhoid fever—ulceration of the bowels—is far less likely to occur.

This treatment, and such additional attentions as the careful, wise nurse may see proper to resort to in the course of this fever, will answer all probable needs. If, however, serious complications arise, impossible here to determine, your good physician's services will need be employed. But in a large majority of cases the suggestions outlined will conduce to a safe recovery.

Warding Off Consumption.

The foundation of three-fourths of all cases of consumption is laid before the age of twenty-five years, in women during their teens. It is, therefore, important that growing children should receive great care and attention during the early fall. It is far better to ward off attacks than to cure them and this can hardly be effected by the constant use of medicine, cordials, stimulants, etc., nor by too much codding indoors, for no man or woman can have a hardy chest who does not breathe pure air. Sunshine should be courted by people predisposed to consumption. The exercise should be of a gentle nature and draughts should be carefully avoided. Carriage exercise should not be taken on a day when high winds are blowing. The only bad effects of night air lie in its being colder and damper than that of day. A sudden change from a warm room to a cold one, if one stands about in it, very often gives a disagreeable chill. The morning tub bath is not beneficial to weak-chested people. Rubbing the body every morning with a dry, rough towel promotes circulation and prevents all danger of a sudden chill. The chest should be rubbed with sea salt and well covered with a light chest protector. A small cupful of milk taken in the morning before getting up, will give strength. Plain, easily digested food is the best, the

meat should be tender, fish and game should be eaten in season. Lemonade and lime juice with meals is very refreshing.

Medical Don'ts.

No not forget that the laxative fruits are figs, oranges, nectarines, tamarinds, prunes, plums, mulberries and dates.

Do not forget that the word disinfect means simply "to purify or to cleanse," and that disinfectants can never occupy the place properly filled by fresh air, perfect cleanliness and sunshine; they can only give additional security after every possible care has been taken in all other respects.

Do not forget that straining may burst a blood vessel of the retina—that part of the eye which is connected with the optic nerve—and cause temporary blindness, if obliged to strain under any circumstance close the eye, as this gives a little support or pressure to all the soft tissues of the eye, and will help prevent an unfortunate occurrence.

Do not forget that veal, pork, turkey, goose and duck should be excluded from the children's bill of fare; they decay easily, and create sickness by their horrible stench. Indeed, it were far better that you have no vegetables at all under your house. Then will your home be pure and healthy. Put your supplies in the ground or in some place prepared for them. Better incur a little expense to do this than pay the doctor many times more later on.

TOO FAT TO KEEP AWAKE.

One Product of the British Workhouse That Does It Credit.

The inhabitants of Poplar, who work hard and live frugally in order to pay their taxes honestly, must be highly gratified to learn that they have been wearing their fingers to the bone to assist William Edwards, an inmate of their workhouse, to become so fat that it takes him half an hour to stoop to pick up a pin and another half hour to raise himself to the perpendicular, and after the herculean exertion he becomes so exhausted that he requires to spend the next hour in slumber to recruit his shattered force. He tried to induce the authorities to accept a theory he had worked out, which proved that the trouble of getting out of bed in the morning was so enfeebling that in his case it should be omitted from the day's arrangements and his food be sent up to his bedside.

When the workhouse master declined to acknowledge the correctness of this deduction, Edwards endeavored to carry his pet idea into effect surreptitiously by crawling into a corner to enjoy a nap. Never once was the question asked, "Where's Edwards?" without receiving the response, "Not from the person immediately concerned, and always correct, "Asleep, sir."

This prodigy, who puts all other fat boys in the shade, is only 20 and weighs about 21 stone, and his cheeks are so fat that he has not for years seen his nose. And yet some people say that the poor-law system is a failure. The other day, when it was rather hot, a special staff attempted to keep Edwards awake, and failed, so the sleeper was brought before the Thames magistrate charged with neglecting his work. He then admitted that he felt drowsy after the good dinner with which the ratepayers kindly supplied him, and if he did over sleep himself a little he "axed parding." Mr. Dickinson said the youth was apparently too well nourished, and sent him to jail for seven days as a tonic for an overfed and overslept system.

The Seven Wonders of Corea

Corea, like the world of the ancients, has its "seven wonders." Briefly stated, they are as follows:—First, a hot mineral spring near Kin-Shanton; the healing properties of which are believed by the people to be miraculous. No matter what disease may afflict the patient, a dip in the water proves efficacious. The second wonder is, two springs, situated at a considerable distance from each other; in fact, they have the breadth of the entire peninsula between them. They have two peculiarities—when one is full the other is always empty; and notwithstanding the fact that they are connected by a subterranean passage, one is bitter and the other pure and sweet. The third wonder is a cold wave cave—a cavern from which a wintry wind perpetually blows. The force of the wind from the cave is such that a strong man cannot stand before it. A forest that cannot be eradicated is the fourth wonder. No matter what injury is done to the roots of the trees, which are large pines, they will sprout up again directly, like the phoenix from her ashes. The fifth is the most wonderful of all. It is the famous "floating stone." It stands, or seems to stand, in front of the palace erected in its honor. It is an irregular cube of great bulk. It appears to be resting on the ground, free from supports on all sides; but, strange to say, two men at opposite ends of a rope may pass it under the stone without encountering any obstacle whatever. The sixth wonder is the "hot stone," which, from remote ages, has lain glowing with heat on the top of a large hill. The seventh and last Corean wonder is a drop of the sweat of Buddha. For thirty paces around the temple in which it is enshrined not a blade of grass will grow. There are no trees or flowers inside the sacred square. Even the animals decline to profane a spot so holy.

Making a Rough Guess.

The policeman had arrested a very dignified sort of man for not being able to walk steadily along the street when there were no earthquakes disturbing the earth's surface. Like some men in that condition he retained his faculty of speech.

"Sir," he said pompously, "is there anything in my language to warrant you in arresting me?"

"No," said the policeman briefly.

"Nor in my general appearance?"

"No."

"Well, sir, is there anything in me as a gentleman to warrant this arrest?"

"There is."

"Be kind enough to state it, please," and the gentleman braced against the wall and stuck his chest out like a turkey gobbler.

"I should say," replied the officer carefully, "that it was about six or eight large drinks of liquor."