

# A WOMAN'S LOVE

## OR, A BROTHER'S PROMISE

### CHAPTER IV.

Thomas Smith, of Liverpool, is a big man. He controls three lines of ocean-going steamers; he owns two cotton factories; he has refused a peerage; he manages a colliery; he has founded a Seamen's Hospital, and keeps it going out of his own pocket; he is half proprietor of a slate quarry; he has stations in all the world's great ports where a ship may buy anything from a basket of cabbages to a water condenser; he grows ten square miles of oranges in Palmetto; and he lives on twelve shillings a day, including cab fares. So you see, he is a big man.

The first principle of his business creed is to see every caller at Orange House, Duke Street, Liverpool. You may be a railway porter or you may be a prince—it is all the same. Wait your turn and you are ushered into the great man's presence, if he is not in Belfast, arranging for new boats to be built; in Hamburg, negotiating with other merchant princes for the starting of a new line to China; in London, piloting a Bill through Committee; in Paris, stirring up the very still waters of French marine insurance. If a clerk tells you that Mr. Smith is not in, you may feel assured you are hearing the truth. If you are asked to call again to-morrow at 11.15, you may sleep soundly in the surety that at 11.15 to-morrow you shall certainly see Thomas Smith, if you have not gone blind in the meantime. Thomas Smith sees everybody, from A to Z, because he never knows when or where he may want a friend, or at least a useful acquaintance. He is especially courteous to the gentlemen of the press; that was why, when Hector Grant's card was taken in at ten minutes to eleven, that fair morning in August, a clerk came out to Hector and said:

"Are you the gentleman who interviewed Mr. Smith last year about the orange trade with Palmetto?"

"I am. I didn't think Mr. Smith would have remembered me," said Hector.

"As a matter of fact," said the clerk, with a smile, "Mr. Smith doesn't know you are here. I have been looking up the index of visitors for your name. I have to tell Mr. Smith all about visitors before he sees them."

And he left Hector wondering over this little bit of the system that helped Thomas Smith to be the powerful man he was and is. Then he wondered if he should be thrown into the street for his pains, so mad, so unboundedly audacious seemed to him at that moment the proposal he had come to make to the Orange King. In effect, what was it? Simply to ask a man who had plenty of uses for his money to back with half a million sterling an enterprise that was, on the face of it—

"Will you follow me please?"

Hector followed the clerk into the great man's presence, exactly as he had done a year before. Thomas Smith was dictating to a shorthand writer.

"In conclusion, and for the last time," he was saying, "I must decline to entertain the proposal of amalgamation. I can run my boats to Valparaiso cheaper and quicker than you can yours, and I can make them pay. The trade can be made worth £70,000 a year, so I prefer to get the business into my own hands. Believe me, etc. etc. a."

Then he turned to Grant.

"Good-morning. That was a very excellent article you did about the orange trade with Palmetto. You forgot to mention that the boxes in which the fruit is shipped are made in Palmetto, the prepared boards only being sent out in bundles from Liverpool. They haven't cheap enough wood in Palmetto, I can give you seven minutes, What can I do for you?"

"What would you be prepared to pay for a ninety-nine years' monopoly of the orange trade of Palmetto?"

"You mean to do as I liked with it—grow, carry and sell—and no one else to have a finger in it?"

"That's what I mean."

Thomas Smith made a rough calculation on the corner of a blotting-pad. He pulled a long face, tugged his moustache, and laughed.

"I don't see why I should work out simple multiplication sums for you, young man, but I'd pay three hundred thousand for it now. I'd give double if it were possible to guarantee that the Hispaniolan officials wouldn't want palm oil every quarter—paid in English gold, too. Double, and that's a fact."

"Well," said Hector, "supposing I guarantee that Hispaniolan officials—"

"Look here, who sent you here, Mr. Grant—Grant is your name, isn't it?"

"Nobody sent me here," said Hector. "I'm here on my own initiative. If you take my proposal in a business spirit I will sell you, under certain conditions."

"What have you got to do with Palmetto?"

"You will regard what I tell you as being absolutely private?"

"I'll do no such thing; if I think worth my while to make use of

it I'll make use of it, either publicly or privately." This was certainly frank.

"Well," said Hector, "I'll trust to your honor, and I think your sense of business will make you come in with us."

"Go ahead. Three of your seven minutes are gone."

"I'll tell you in two. The Palmettos are going to rise against Hispaniola. They want to set their rightful Queen on the throne—the last of the Ribeiros—and to free themselves from Hispaniolan tyranny and extortion. Everything is cut and dried; success is to be had for the taking."

"I have heard rumours of this sort of thing before. Why do you come to me?"

"For money. We have to get arms and ammunition for we have none, or next to none. I want a couple of ships, too—one to carry the arms, the other to convey the Queen to the Isle of Palms."

"You have the cheek of the devil!"

"In return, I, acting for the Queen, guarantee to place in your hands a charter granting you the orange monopoly for ninety-nine years."

"You're either attempting to work your first confidence game or you're a very special specimen of the new Empire builder. You haven't been in the revolution business before?"

Hector smiled. "No."

"You've got no papers with you, I suppose, to show me that this is a bona-fide proposal?"

"No, but I can get them in a few days."

"Um—You're stopping here?"

"Yes, if it seems likely that you will take this thing up. I may as well be frank with you. You are my trump card, my only card in fact."

"That's enough. Your time's up. I have to go to Aberdeen to-night. Come with me?"

"Right."

"Meet me at the Exchange Station at 11.25. A carriage will be reserved. We can talk. Good-morning."

And before he knew it Hector Grant was on the pavement of Duke Street, full of the desire to break into a Highland fling, for he felt convinced that Thomas Smith was going to take a hand in this game.

Hector felt himself a new man; emancipation from the Ixion-wheel of journalism began the change, and the thrill caused by new excitement completed it. His step was buoyant, his eye was bright, and his heart leaped within him. The old fighting spirit was roused, and he knew himself strong enough to overcome a thousand obstacles. His interest in Palmetto, its unhappy folk, and its forlorn Queen, was certainly not waning; yet he knew, as he walked towards the docks, that there was growing in him the mere desire of fighting, that mad lust which has sent so many gallant Scots to bleed and die on foreign fields, soldiers of fortune, paid pawns in the sport of kings.

Well, after all he was going to have his fun. He had no wife nor chick, father, mother, sister, nor brother; so if he had to pay heavily for his amusement, there would be himself only to be considered, and a debt to oneself is already cancelled. He had few friends, and those he valued most—there were but two—would understand him. Dr. Henry Balfour, under his cloak of flippancy and slap-dash cynicism, hid a heart of rare worth much feeling, and great understanding. And the second, honest Alasdair Macquarrie, Hector's foster-brother—a Highlander, blessed with all the Celtic reticence and cursed with all the Celtic imagination—would have but one regret: that he could not share Hector's perils and adventures if this thing came to anything. Yet why should not Alasdair have a share of the fun? He too was lonely, and he would follow Hector to the world's end. He was to have been a fighter, had not the medical authorities of the British army decided that a man blind of one eye was of no use to her Majesty.

At twenty-five minutes past eleven Mr. Thomas Smith joined Hector, who, with a sleepy hotel porter at his heels, was impatiently pacing up and down the platform. The great man carried his own hand-bag.

"Our carriage is 349, the compartment nearest the engine," said Mr. Smith.

Hector took his portmanteau (four times the size of the Orange King's), gave the man a shilling, and followed towards carriage 349. As soon as they were seated Mr. Smith opened his hand-bag, took out a scribbling-pad, and with a fountain pen began to cover the paper at a great rate with almost infinitesimal writing. As the clock showed twenty-nine minutes past eleven, a clerk hurried up to the door; and standing on the step passed a handful of telegrams and cables through the window. Mr. Smith tore off the sheet he had been writing and gave it to the clerk, saying, "See to these in the morning."

Then he took the telegrams, opened and glanced at them, tossed two on to the floor, rest of them passed them

to the clerk, saying, "Yes" to the first two; "No" to the other three," opened the last as the train began to move, read it, laughed, waved a hand to the clerk, and said "Don't wait, Gray," and as the clerk called "Good-night, sir," turned to reread the message. After a time he folded it up and placed it in his pocket-book.

"Well, young man" (Mr. Smith himself was not yet fifty), "what do you think of your chances of success in this thing?"

"Everything seems against us, but that looks a good augury for success."

"You've discovered one of the golden rules, though rules are of no great good in business. I take it, you mean to run this revolution on business lines."

"As far as I am concerned, yes."

"Good. Now, I shall want some evidence in writing of your bonafides, and that of your confederates, before I stir land or foot."

"Confederates is not the word to use," said Hector, "but let that pass. As regards documents, not a single scrap of writing shall you have until—"

"Why?"

"One line may hang a man, two lines certainly will."

"If you won't write how am I to be made sure of you?"

"I'll tell you all you can now possibly want to know, and what I can't tell you I'll tell you later, my dear Sir, I shall take you to your house, and my word will be guarantee for your safety."

"You would consent to put the agreement about the monopoly in writing?"

"Certainly."

"Who would sign it?"

"Queen Maddalena, of course."

"Her signature is not worth the paper it's written on."

"It will be when what we aim at is accomplished."

"I've had a dozen fellows like you come to me before with wildcat schemes."

"About Palmetto?"

"No, other places. I've put money into two affairs—one in Guatemala, one in Morocco, and they came to nothing. I can't afford to set up as Grand Money-bag-in-ordinary to revolution promoters. The game's a good game, I admit; but, after all, it's not worth the candle."

"You don't know how the Palmetto people are simply dying to fight for their Queen."

"Will they win for her? That's the point."

"I say yes. Don't forget, too, the scores they have against Hispaniola—every one with a long bill of interest. All they want is arms. They are organized into regiments."

"Do you tell me the Hispaniolan officers know nothing about that?"

"You've been in Palmetto and you tell me you don't know how the Hispaniolan officers spend their time. They get up in time for breakfast at eleven, they lounge about the patio until two, they sleep until six, they dine, they go to the Alameda to hear the band, and they play cards until four in the morning. How can they know? They leave drill and regimental duty and everything they ought to do to their sergeants, and the sergeants, for a few centesimos a day, forget to trouble the men. And the civil servants are too busy backshooting to know anything."

"But if it came to a fight what could peasantry—even organized peasantry—do against soldiery?"

"Organized peasantry, with your help in the way of arms and ammunition, and with the wildest shooting could mow them down like grass. The Hispaniolans in the island haven't enough ammunition to get ordinary target practice—their officers have stolen it and sold it to pay their card debts. You forget, too, how people fight for their freedom."

"No, I don't forget it, but I put no reliance on it. I've heard that before, and it was a fizzle. Can you give me proof of your organization?"

"It isn't mine. But come with me to Palmetto, and see for yourself. We can easily see. The Hispaniolans don't suspect anything. The only thing they guard against is the landing on the island of the Queen Maddalena. They have a holy horror of that. Will you come to Palmetto?"

"Tell you to-morrow—You want two ships? One for arms, one for the Queen?"

"Yes."

"But there is only one good landing-place on Palmetto, and the Hispaniolans are all about it."

"I'll find another."

head and an untroubled mind to keep level with these Aberdonians. If half a dozen of them were in Liverpool I should have to shift: there wouldn't be a living in it."

"We Scots," said Hector, laughing, "have a saying that an Aberdonian would rake a certain unmentionable place for a ha'penny."

"He'd certainly form a company to supply granite pavement in place of the present unsatisfactory material. The Aberdonian has only two points in his creed: the first is money, and the second is granite. But to our own matter. You've been very straight with me. I'll be as straight with you. I'll come to London to-morrow night and see the Queen. If everything seems satisfactory, I'll go with you to Palmetto some time this month. And if things are all right there, I'll put a hundred thousand down the moment the monopoly is signed. When I have assurances that the Powers won't interfere, you shall have the remaining four hundred thousand."

"I don't think the Powers will interfere, for in less than two days Hispaniola will be at war with the Free States of South America. She'll get beaten. How do I know? I got a cable from Rio last night as we were leaving: the President was writing the ultimatum when it was sent. Hispaniola won't give in: the Powers have urged her to until they are tired: now she can take her own way—and her beating."

"She will be beaten. I know that more than half her fleet is rotten. Her show-ship, the Ruy Blas, hasn't got her condensers in yet, and her below-water armour-plate was sold by the captain at Saralona last month for scrap, twopence a pound. More than half the shells in her arsenals are dummies, most of her gunpowder is sawdust, and her officers—well, brave enough individually, but no good in modern naval warfare. How can she help being beaten?"

"The Powers will stand off and watch. The Free States will take their pound of flesh—and so may any one strong enough to grab. All this augurs well for your scheme."

"May I not say our scheme, Mr. Smith?"

"Not yet."

"But you are hopeful?"

"I am ever hopeful until a thing is finished. But," he added reflectively, "I don't see why this affair shouldn't be finished. Waiter—a cab. Good-morning, Mr. Grant. See you in London on Friday, Constitutional Club, half-past ten—ask for me."

Hector patted himself on the shoulder. "Good boy!" he said. "Put your faith in the Orange King, and he will pull you through!" He lit a cigarette and went out into the sunshine.

(To be Continued.)

## MICROSCOPE OUIDONE.

### Science Learns a Lesson From Sunbeams.

The sunbeam's visible dust particles have taught a lesson to scientists, and the result is an instrument far beyond the microscope in power. What this will mean in the study of germs of diseases and as an aid to the medical world can hardly be calculated.

Prof. Siedentopf and Zsigmondy of Jena university are the discoverers of the new method of microscope observation whereby ultramicroscopic particles are not only made visible but can also be studied with a view of determining their size. A full description is published in the German scientific journal, Annalen der Physik.

The method consists mainly in a powerful artificial illumination of the particles to be observed. These particles, because of their minuteness, exert no material influence upon the vibratory period of the light waves, and hence appear to the observer as self-illuminating, or luminous objects, by virtue of their reflected light. Since, however, the reflected light is weaker than the original illuminating beam, it is necessary, in order to secure the advantages of an intensified illumination of the particles, to employ the principle of dark field illumination.

The principle involved in this new method is well illustrated by the common phenomena of the "visible sunbeam" in a darkened room which is penetrated by a ray of light. Dust particles in the path of the ray, hitherto invisible, become visible when the eye of the observer is at right angles to the direction of the penetrating ray.

Helmholtz, the greatest physicist living at the time the microscope now in use was perfected, declared the limit of microscopic perception to be 1-25,000 of an inch. This new instrument will make possible the study of bodies seven to ten times smaller.

## JUDICIOUS FLATTERY.

"Prisoner, have you anything to say on your own behalf?"

"Only this, my lord. It comforts me to know that one wise man on the bench can undo much of the mischief wrought by twelve idiots in the jury-box."

Whereupon the judge gave him a light sentence.

Mrs. Goodhair: "One question before I give you this money—do you drink beer?" Blumsey Mullins: "Do I drink it? Why, lady, you certainly don't s'pose I squirt it into me arm wid a s'ring? Dere's no order way but to drink it."

## HERE AND THERE.

### Facts of Interest About Countries All Over the World.

Sandwich Islanders knock out their front teeth as a sign of mourning.

On payment of \$300 a young man is excused from military service in Spain.

In the public schools of Germany, the bright pupils are separated from the stupid ones. Medical men are sorting.

Among the tribes of the interior of Sumatra there is a cruel custom of piously and ceremoniously killing and eating aged parents.

In Lapland, the crime which is punished most severely, next to murder, is the marrying of a girl against the express wish of her parents.

Denmark has reason to be proud of her system of education. The number of people who cannot read or write is less than one per cent.

In Armenia children are not allowed to play with dolls. It is feared that if this were permitted the little ones would learn to worship them as idols.

Many old houses in Holland have a special door, which is never opened save on two occasions—when there is a marriage or a death in the family.

In Chill the female tram conductor is being slowly abolished, owing to the danger of dresses catching in passing objects while passing along the outside of the cars collecting fares.

A Cuban baby is baptized when it is two weeks and a day old at the very latest. A Cuban baptismal party would not think of walking to church, even though the building be next door.

One of the curious social laws of Peru forbids women to attend funerals, and they do not appear at weddings (except as one of the principals), unless they are very intimate friends of the contracting parties.

Samoa is not one island, as is frequently imagined, but a group of small islands in the Southern Pacific. There are nine islands in all. One of the largest is Upolu, which was the home of Robert Louis Stevenson.

The best cod liver oil is made in Norway. For three months, beginning in January, the fish come in from the Arctic Ocean to the Norwegian fjords, or bays, to spawn, and sometimes so many as sixty million fish are caught in a single season.

Russian peasantry are tempted to settle along the new Government railroad in Siberia. One inducement is the marvellous cheapness of travelling. The fares range from \$1.50 for 1,200 miles, to \$3.75 for a 4,000 mile trip.

Japan has 200,000 registered cases of leprosy. There is no pity or compassion for the lepers. Man or woman, young or old, they are turned adrift on the highways, homeless wanderers, dependent for subsistence upon casual doles of food thrown to them from afar.

The making of shoes for dogs has now developed into quite a big industry, and is especially flourishing in Labrador. The dogs attached to sledges travel at great speed over the rough ice, and some protector for the feet is necessary. The shoes are made of sealskin.

Palestine is a land of flowers. Botanists tell us that there are 2,500 different kinds. The Eastern sun gives the colors a brightness they seldom have in our hazy clime. The wild flowers are somehow localized, so that acres, and, indeed, miles take their hue from a single flower.

Each member of the Chinese cavalry receives about \$4.00 a month and out of this he is required to furnish fodder for his horse. In case of the death or disability of the animal he must supply a new one at his own expense. The Chinese cavalryman is, therefore, very careful of his gee-gee.

In Turkey, a Moslem grave where once it has been filled in is never reopened on any account. With a view to remove the faintest chance of a grave being thus defiled, the Moslems plant a cypress tree on every grave, immediately after the burial—thus making their cemeteries resemble forests.

Only the most patient, hardened, and impecunious of emigrants can stand orange-growing in Florida. Competition is keen and profits small and all the time the newcomers are suffering from fevers and attacks of mosquitoes, realizing only too well that there are disappointments in this land of sunshine as well as elsewhere.

## TYPHOID DEFIES ACID.

At the last meeting of the American Health association held at Washington, D.C., Dr. William G. Bissell reported the results of an investigation which he had made to determine the antiseptic power of lemonade on the germs of typhoid fever. He denies the truth of the statement which was made during the summer season of last year by some investigators, that the addition of lemon juice to polluted drinking water will destroy any typhoid fever microbes which have gained access to the water supply. The doctor concludes lemonade cannot be safely employed to purify the water, and urges the medical profession to discourage this method of sterilization.