

THE MYSTERY CLEARED UP;

OR, THE HERITAGE OF MADAME YALTA.

CHAPTER IX.—(Cont'd)

"It is over," she murmured. "The wretch has poisoned me." And she fell. They all rushed to her relief. Their cares were unavailing. Her beautiful eyes opened no more. She was dead.

A month passed since the catastrophe which closed so gloomily this strange history. Alice and Robert are not yet married. They wear mourning for the noble woman who reunited them. But their marriage is arranged, and is to take place in May.

The death of the countess has never been avenged, and it is probable never will be, for Villagos disappeared the day of the crime, and all trace of him was lost. He had fled to some land frequented by the rascals whose chief he was, —bandits who prepare their crimes in darkness, prothing for concealment by the criminal toleration of governments.

The Nihilists abuse what is most sacred. They dishonor the right of asylum.

It was not Maxime's fault if the infamous doctor was not punished as he deserved. He pursued him without losing a minute, but the cowardly knave had taken his precautions in advance, and was not to be found. It was known that poison had been mixed by him in a glass of water prepared for the countess, who foresaw, doubtless, her approaching end, for the evening before she had written her will. She had forgotten no one who had served her faithfully or who had loved her.

Madame Piriac, Georget, Kardiki, Justine and her husband inher-

ited large sums, to be deducted before the succession of Robert de Carnoel, who was made universal legatee. And Madame Yalta left Maxime Dorgeres a bracelet and a ring, more precious to him than all the riches of the world; it was all that remained to him of a woman slightly known, but passionately loved.

The countess passed into his life like a meteor which blazes for an instant and disappears, leaving a luminous track in the firmament.

The memory of this extinguished star will never be effaced from the heart of Maxime, who is not yet consoled, and who, to recover from so violent a shock, is projecting a voyage round the world.

Perhaps in some far-off country he will meet Jules Vignory, exclaiming, by a life of toil, a moment of shameful weakness.

Robert de Carnoel only accepted the heritage of Madame Yalta to bestow it upon the poor. The Avenue de Friedland house is for sale, and the proceeds of the sale are to be devoted to a hospital for those disabled by accident. The workman mutilated in a factory will owe an asylum to the woman of the severed hand.

The servants and allies of the countess have all left Paris. Justine has gone with her husband to Algeria; Kardiki has taken refuge in Constantinople, and gives fencing lessons to the subjects of the Sultan; Georget has entered a ship-boy's school, and Madame Piriac is established at Brest.

But Galpardin has remained. M. Dorgeres has taken him for cashier and the safe is well guarded.

THE END.

LIFE IN FLOWER-LAND.

(By Mrs. F. L. Ellis.)

Every Briton loves flowers.

No one need be an artist or a poet to understand and admire their infinite beauty, for to babes and sucklings, as well as to the wise and prudent, they unfold their treasures of loveliness.

Thirty miles from the Longships Lighthouse at Land's End are the Scilly Isles, where nothing but flowers grow. Who could be unhappy amid such fragrant surroundings? There are six small islands and about 100 rocky islets in this picturesque and interesting group, and at this season of the year, when Nature everywhere is bursting forth into newness of life, they are gay with beautiful bloom, for the Scilly Isles are the centre of a great and important floricultural industry.

The first consignment of daffodils was sent to Covent Garden Market, London, in a handbox. That was fifty years ago, when daffodils were rare, and it will astonish most of our readers to be told that for that consignment the fortunate and enterprising islanders received no less a sum than £5.

But even those far-seeing people, who were the first to recognize a market value for the now popular yellow bloom, could scarcely have dreamed of the extent to which the cultivation of the daffodil would grow. So enormously has it, in fact, increased that in the height of the season, which would be now, as many as fifty tons of blossoms are sent to the mainland in one cargo. What fifty tons of flowers actually represent we leave it to our readers to imagine.

During the past ten years the export of flowers has more than trebled in quantity and, in all probability, doubled in value, for the increased demand has naturally affected the price. Within the three months of the present year it is estimated that 500 tons of white and yellow narcissi and daffodils have been shipped from St. Mary's, the largest of the islands, from which point all the produce is marketed.

This is a wonderful tribute to the richness and productiveness of the soil, and represents about the limit of the islands' capacity, even when it is remembered that all the land available for the cultivation of flowers is brought into use.

Strange it undoubtedly is, but nevertheless true, that at first the farmers tried to get rid of the bulbs

that grew so plentifully and were thought to hinder the cultivation of other things. Presently six men, from instinct or inspiration, thought it worth while to assist the flowers to grow. They experimented, and met with the success above recorded. So that, unknown to themselves, the people of Scilly, who through failure of the ship-building industry and the kelp trade had been reduced to great poverty, found wealth at their very door. The secret was not long kept, for when the rest of the islanders got to know that bulbs could be had for the mere uprooting, and that a little pains and attention would turn them into profitable material for market, they set to work assiduously and laid the foundation of an industry that has not only contributed plentifully to our national life and happiness, but practically saved the islands from ruin.

It is needless to say that those six pioneers of the business are held in pious memory by the present inhabitants of the islands.

The Scilly Islands, being in the far south of our weather-protected country, are, of course, favorably situated for floriculture; but even that fact does not render them entirely free from bitter blasts and the nip of winter. Means have had to be devised therefore, to protect the flowers from the cold winds that at certain times of the year sweep over the islands, dense, well-trimmed hedges being constructed to break their force and temper their severity.

What is known as the "season" commences as early as January when certain varieties of the flowers burst into bloom. Sometimes when, owing to unpropitious weather, the buds are slow in opening, Nature has to be assisted, so artificial means are employed, so that the waiting markets may be supplied.

The work of "bunching" the flowers is generally done by women and girls. Twelve stems of one variety constitute a "market bunch." Even young children are able to help swell the family income by working amid the blossoms. Their lot is surely one to be envied by the hosts of little children who live in the grime and darkness of slumland!

As would be expected of them, the Scilly Islanders are adepts at packing. Were it otherwise their produce would spoil, and the industry be quickly ruined.

Each box is lined with white paper. The bunches are carefully

laid in, some one way and some another, with a few in the centre, until the stalks are hidden and the whole becomes a pleasing picture of pretty and sweet-smelling blossom. After the flowers have been covered with paper the lids are carefully nailed down, and the flowers are ready to leave St. Mary's by steamer for the principal markets of the United Kingdom.

Thirty-six bunches is the average capacity of each box. Some boxes run to seventy-two bunches. About 160 of these boxes go to make a ton. With a little ready reckoning it can easily be ascertained how many single blooms have to be gathered during the course of a season.

The people whose lives are spent in cultivating these examples of God's handiwork are quiet, God-fearing and prosperous. According to one writer they "were ever remarkable for the innocence of their lives and the purity of their manners."

In the flowers we may find many lessons of spiritual import; the Saviour Himself tells us to "Consider the lilies." To do so as He directs would save His followers many fears and much unnecessary anxiety.

LITTLE FADS OF AUTHORS.

Habits Which Writers Thought Conduced to Best Work.

Mark Twain's habit of writing in bed in the latter years of his life has called attention to some of the peculiarities of composition among earlier authors.

Milton never could write his poems unless his head was thrown as far back as possible and his eyes looked upward. Maturin stuck a wafer between his eyebrows when he was working, not only to show his servants and household that he was engaged in composition, but also to help him to concentrate his faculties.

Glover was best able to compose a ballad while he was walking in the garden of a friend, and destroying her flower-beds with his cane. Although Mezeray worked only in the daytime, he had to have candlelight in the room while he wrote his histories. Rousseau found that his thoughts came most freely when he wandered in the woods and collected botanical specimens.

Descartes lay perfectly still and motionless while engaged in thought. Ampere could work on his problems only while standing up, and thus he anticipated the desk of those modern writers who stand at their work. Ampere was in the habit of writing down his thoughts in enormous letters.

Haydn never set to work on his scores without drawing on the ring given to him by Frederick II. and Paesello was in the habit of covering himself with bedclothes before he thought he was really capable of his best work.

COMFORT IN THE JUNGLE.

Everything From Soup to Nuts on Big Game Trip.

When the Duke of Connaught went hunting big game in East Africa, no unnecessary hardship was permitted to mar the pleasure of the outing. Unusually comfortable tents were taken along—spacious and lofty—with a good bed, furniture and a bath. Even the dishes were not metal, as usual, but crockery and glass. Supplies for the larger were carried on the backs of sixteen pack mules and fifty donkeys. Twenty-five sheep were taken to supply meat for the party, and deer, wild duck and other game afforded variety. Five cows accompanying the caravan supplied fresh milk daily.

Here is a sample menu:
Soup—Buffalo tail.
Fish—Fried barbel.
Entree—Mutton cutlets.
Joint—Roast guinea fowl.
Sweet—Stewed apples.
Cheese. Coffee.

ON A HOT DAY.

Growl and the world growls with you,
Smile and you hear but sighs,
For the crowd will sweat
And the crowd will fret.
When it's 90 and on the rise.

This is thirsty weather. Even the mercury is filling its glasses higher these days.

A woman need not doubt her husband's love if he refuses to allow her to eat her own cooking.

SHREDDED

Builds Strong, Healthy, Sturdy Youngsters.

To serve—heat in oven, pour hot milk over it and salt to taste. Sold by all grocers, 13c. a carton; two for 25c.

WHEAT

JAPAN WILL FIGHT U.S.

A BRITISH NAVAL EXPERT'S OPINION.

The Conflict is Inevitable—Japan's Growing Dislike for Americans.

Writing in the Daily Graphic, Gerald Fiennes, naval expert, considers that war between Japan and the United States is inevitable, and that no European power will take part. The British-Japanese alliance will not be renewed in 1915.

SEES WAR WITH JAPAN.

"Japan will," he asserts, "in the last analysis, fight the United States very much for the reason that prompted Bismarck to fight France."

He admits that if Japan to-day ordered Germany out of Kiao-chau, the Kaiser would have no alternative but to move out, adding, however, that in such an event the old European league would revive, and Germany, France and Russia would overwhelm the Mikado's people.

"But," contends this naval expert, "Europe is not going to life a finger, I imagine, when war breaks out between Japan and the United States, to save to the latter the islands of which they deprived Spain. Europe has a 'Monroe doctrine' of its own; and it includes the determination to leave the United States to stew in their own juice."

THE OPEN DOOR.

"The situation may be quite briefly defined, though I do not pretend that the definition exhausts all the elements. The white nations demand the open door in the realms of the yellow man, while claiming the right to close their own door to him. Japan will accept either alternative, but not both at once. For the present the United States stand for the embodiment of the white man's position."

"Great Britain, bound by the ties of an alliance for the next few years and remote from the dangers which bulk so big in the eyes of Americans, Canadians and Australians, is out of sympathy with, or is at least lukewarm over, the policy of exclusion which her own children in the Pacific consider vital to their national safety and economical development."

"Therefore there exists a certain community of ideas between the over sea nations of the Empire and the United States, which may easily become perilous to the unity of the Empire. In our enthusiasm for common defence we must never forget that common defence postulates common aims and common policy."

"The Japanese alliance expires in 1915; it cannot be renewed. If renewal was possible before, it became impossible when the American fleet visited Australia in 1908 and suggested to the people of the commonwealth that Codlin is their friend, not Short. If no conflict arise between now and then to make the name of the Pacific ocean an irony the British navy, reinforced by, let us hope, a good number of 'fleet units,' contributed not only by Australia and New Zealand, but also by Canada, South Africa and India, will once more earn for itself the blessing bestowed on the peacemakers. The Pacific fleet will live up to its name. It will be expensive, but it will be well worth while."

CAUSE FOR WAR.

"The Americans live in a fool's paradise in this matter. They appear to think that the Japanese are, and must eternally be, grateful to Commodore Perry for having opened their oyster, willy nilly. The Japanese are only grateful in so far as contact with the west has armed their hands against western greed and aggression. Their main desire is to use

the power thus acquired to cry 'Hands off!' to the white man.

"The insistence by the Americans on their right to trade on equal terms with the Japanese in Manchuria and Korea; the treatment of the subjects of the latter Power on the Pacific slope—either of these causes of disappointment will provide Japan with a 'casus belli' at the desired moment, and one which will, in all probability, put her in the right in the eyes of the world. The Japanese know how to apply the art of jiu-jitsu to international politics."

JAPAN DESPISES AMERICANS.

"More dangerous still, the Japanese are full of contempt for American brag and bounce—for lack of national spirit, or even of true nationality, which they discern in the Americans. They have a profound disbelief in the war worthiness of the American navy, and an acute realization of the fact that the strategical situation is overwhelmingly in their favor. It is objected that the Japanese are too poor to fight. When will people recognize the fact which all history teaches—that it is the poor nations, not those who have grown rich and comfortable, which fight? The Prussia of Frederick the Great, the France of Napoleon, were poor."

"It ought to be so obvious as not to need saying that it is the nation which hopes to gain something, not the nation which is preoccupied in holding what it has gained, which is tempted to war. Japan is rich enough to afford war because, directly or indirectly, she will make war pay for itself."

A WOMAN PIRATE.

Captured in Indo-China and Brought to France.

In the steamer Admiral Ponty there arrived at Marseilles recently with a party of Annamite pirates and malefactors a remarkable woman, one of the wives of the redoubtable pirate De Tham, who has given the French so much trouble in Indo-China.

Co-Ba, as the woman pirate is called, exercised a dominating influence over the pirate king and his followers, a power she even preserved throughout the voyage, which the prisoners made in a specially constructed iron cage built amidships. The other prisoners on receiving their rations immediately handed them to Co-Ba for distribution and she laid down iron regulations for the prisoners' life on board. Her word was always scrupulously respected.

Co-Ba, a small hard-faced woman of about thirty, enjoyed the reputation of a witch among the pirates, and she ferociously hated the white men. When the prisoners landed it was she who marched proudly at their head, taking not the slightest notice of the crowds who watched the debarkation of the prisoners on their way to the Ile de Re, in the Bay of Biscay.

PROFIT INSURANCE.

Profit insurance is a comparatively new thing in England. It has only existed for three or four years, and in that time has become extraordinarily successful. As the name indicates, it insures the loss of profits after a business has been stopped by fire or some kind of disaster. It is operated in this manner. The books of the firm applying for the policy are gone over by an accountant, and their average profits for two preceding years ascertained. The firm is then allowed to take out an insurance based on this average profit for three months, six months, or a year. If a fire, an earthquake, a tornado, or any catastrophe destroys their business the insurance company pays them for the time they have been insured the profits agreed upon.