

THE SECRET OF HER POWER,

Or, A TRUTH NEVER OLD.

CHAPTER VI.—(Cont'd)

"Didn't I tell you?" whispers the Babe, climbing up behind Blanford.

"Yes, you did," returned Blanford, "and you were quite right; but it is abominably bad manners to whisper, my dear Cecil."

The Babe subsides into silence with hot cheeks; when anybody calls him Cecil he is conscious that he has committed some flagrant offense.

"Those brats are always bothering you, princess," says their father.

"They are very kind to me," replies Xenia Sabaroff in English which has absolutely no foreign accent. "They make me feel at home! What a charming place this is! I like it better than your castle, what is its name, where I had the pleasure to visit you at Easter?"

"Orme. Oh, that's beastly—a regular barn—obliged to go there just for show, you know."

"Orme was built by Inigo Jones and the ingratitude to fortune of its owner is a constant temptation to Providence to deal in thunderbolts or have matches left about by housemaids," says Blanford.

"I think Lord Usk has not a contented mind," says Mme. Sabaroff, amused.

"Contented! By Jove, who should be, when England's going to the dogs as fast as she can?"

"In every period of your history," says the princess, "your country is always described as going headlong to ruin, and yet she has not gone there yet, and she has not done ill."

"Our constitution is established on a mere equipoise, with dark precipices, and deep water all around it." So said Burke," replies Blanford. "At the present moment everybody has forgotten the delicacy of this nice equipoise and one day or other it will see its balance and topple over into the deep waters and be engulfed. Myself, I confess I do not think that time is far distant."

"I hope it is; I am very much attached to England," replies the Princess Xenia, gravely, "and to naughty English boys," she adds, passing her hand over the shining locks of the Babe.

"She must be in love with an Englishman," thinks Blanford, with the one-sided construction which a man is always ready to place on the words of a woman. "Must we go indoors?" he asks, regretfully, as she is moving toward the house. "It is so pleasant in these quaint, green arbors. To be under a roof on such a summer afternoon as this is to fly in the face of a merciful Creator with greater ingratitude than Usk's ingratitude to Inigo Jones."

"But I have scarcely seen my hostess," says Mme. Sabaroff; nevertheless she resigns herself to a seat in the yew-tree cut like a helmet.

"Why do you let those innocents be tortured, George?" asks Blanford.

"Books should, like business entertain the day," replies Usk; "so you said at least just now. Their governesses are of the same opinion."

"That is not the way to make them love books, to shut them up against their wills on a summer afternoon."

"How will you educate your children when you have 'em, then?"

"He always gets out of any impersonal argument by putting some personal question," complains Blanford to Mme. Sabaroff.

"It is a common device, but always an unworthy one. Because a system is very bad it does not follow that I alone of all men must be prepared with a better one. I think if I had children I would not have them taught in that way at all. I should get the wisest old man I could find, a Samuel Johnson touched with a John Ruskin, and should tell him to make learning delightful to them, and associated, as far as our detestable climate would allow, with open-air studies in cowslip meadows and under hawthorn hedges. If I had only read dear Horace at school, should I ever have loved him as I do? No; my old tutor taught me to feel all the delight and the sweet savor of him, roaming in the

oak woods of my own old place."

"I am devoutly thankful," says his host, "that Doroc... among her caprices, had never had the fancy you have, for Dr. Johnson double with a Ruskin, to correct my quotations, abuse my architecture and make prigs of the children."

"Prigs!" exclaims Blanford. "Prigs! When did ever real scholarship and love of nature make anything approaching to a prig! Science and class-rooms make prigs, not Latin verse and cowslip meadows."

"That is true, I think," says the Princess Xenia, with her serious smile.

"If they are beginning to agree with one another I shall be de trop," thinks Usk, who is very good-natured to his guests, and popular enough with women not to be resigned to play what is vulgarly termed "second fiddle" (though why an expression borrowed from the orchestra should be vulgar it were hard to say). So he goes a few paces off to speak to a gardener; and by degrees away toward the house, leaving Blanford and Mme. Sabaroff to themselves in the green yew-helmet arbor.

Blanford is in love with his subject and does not abandon it.

"It is absurd," he continues, "the way in which children are made to loathe all scholarship by its association with their own pains and subjection. A child is made as a punishment to learn by rote fifty lines of Virgil. Good heavens! It ought rather to be as a reward that he should be allowed to open Virgil! To walk in all those delicious paths of thought should be the highest pleasure that he could be brought to know. To listen to the music of the poets should be at once his privilege and his recompense. To be deprived of books should be, on the contrary, his cruelest chastisement!"

"He would be a very exceptional child, surely," says Mme. Sabaroff.

"I was not an exceptional child," he answers, "but that is how I was brought up and how I felt."

"You had an exceptional training then?"

"It ought not to be exceptional; that is just the mischief. Up to the time I was seventeen I was brought up at my own place (by my father's directions, in his will) by a most true and reverent scholar, whom I loved as Burke loved Shackleton. He died, God rest his soul, but the good he left behind him lives after him; whatever grains of sense I have shown, and whatever follies I have avoided both what I am and what I am not, are due to him, and it is to him that I owe the love of study which has been the greatest consolation and the purest pleasure of my life. That is why I pity so profoundly those poor Roshford children, and the tens of thousands like them, who are being educated by the commonplace, flavorless, cramming system which people call education. It may be education; it is not culture. What will the Babe always associate with his Latin themes. Four walls, hated books, inky, aching fingers, and a headache. Whereas I never see a Latin line in a newspaper, be it ever so hackneyed, without pleasure, as at the face of an old friend, and whenever I repeat to myself the words I always smell the cowslips and the lilac and the hawthorn of the spring mornings when I was a boy."

Xenia Sabaroff looked at him with some little wonder and more approval.

"My dear lord," she says, seriously, "I think in your enthusiasm you forget one thing, that there is ground on which good seed falls and brings forth flowers and fruit, and there is other ground on which the same seed, be it strewn ever so thickly, lies always barren. Without underrating the influences of your tutor, I must believe that had you been educated at an English private school, or even in a French lycee, you would still have become a scholar, still have loved your books."

"Alas, Madam!" says Blanford, with a sigh. "Perhaps I have only been what Matthew Arnold calls 'a foiled circuitous wanderer' in the orbit of life!"

"I imagine that you have not

very often been foiled," replies the lady, with a smile, "and wandering has a great deal to be said in its favor, especially for a man. Women are happiest, perhaps, at anchor."

"Women used to be; not our women. I have bored you too much with myself and my opinions."

"No, you interest me," says his companion, with a serious serenity which deprives the words of all sound of flattery or encouragement.

"I have long admired your writings," she adds, and Blanford colors a little with gratification. The same kind of phrase is said to him on an average five hundred times a year, and his usual emotion is either ennui or irritation. The admiration of fools is folly, and humiliates him. But the admiration of as lovely a woman as Xenia Sabaroff would lay a flattering unction to the soul of any man, even if she were absolutely mindless; and she gives him the impression that she has a good deal of mind, and one out of the common order.

"My writings have no other merit," he says, after the expression of the sense of the honor she does him, "than being absolutely the chronicle of what I have seen and what I have thought; and I think they are expressed in tolerably pure English, though that is claiming a great deal in these times, for since John Newman laid down the pen there is scarcely a living Briton who can write his own tongue with eloquence and purity."

"I think it must be very nice to leave off wandering if one has a home," replies Mme. Sabaroff, with a slight sigh, which gave him the impression that, though no doubt she had many houses, she had no home. "Where is your place that you spoke of just now—the place where you learned to love Horace?"

Blanford is always pleased to speak of St. Hubert's Lea. He has a great love for it and for the traditions of his race, which make many people accuse him of great family pride; though, as has been well said apropos of a greater man than Blanford, it is rather than sentiment which the Romans defined as piety. When he talks of his old home he grows eloquent, unreserved, cordial, and he describes with an artist's touch its antiquities, its landscapes, and its old-world and sylvan charms.

"It must be charming to care for any place so much as that," says his companion, after hearing him with interest.

"I think one cares more for places than for people," he replies. "Sometimes one cares for neither," says Xenia Sabaroff, with a tone which in a less lovely woman would have been morose.

"One must suffice very thoroughly to one's self in such a case?"

"Oh, not necessarily."

At that moment there is a little bustle under a very big cedar near at hand; servants are bringing out folding-tables, folding-chairs, a silver camp kettle, cakes, fruit cream, liquors, sandwiches, wines all those items of an afternoon tea on which Blanford has animadverted with so much disgust in the library an hour before. Lady Usk has chosen to take these murderous compounds out of doors in the west garden. She herself comes out of the house with a train of her guests around her.

"Adieu to rational conversation," says Blanford, as he rises with regret from his seat under the evergreen helmet.

Xenia Sabaroff is pleased at the expression. She is too handsome for men often to speak to her rationally; they usually plunge headlong into attempts at homage and flattery, of which she is nauseated.

(To be continued.)

A Hard Moment.
"Well, Jim," said Bingleton, as he proudly showed off his first-born, "what do you think of that for a kid?"
"He's some kid, all right, all right," returned Jim unemotionally.
"Think he looks like me, old man?" persisted Bingleton.
"H-m! Well—er—ah—hum—well, Bill, I—well, old pal, to tell you the truth, I'm afraid he does!" replied the embarrassed Jim.

When the yellow streak begins to work out of some people they have a fit of the blues.

Mrs. Howard—"The walls of your apartment are very thin, aren't they?"
Mrs. Coward—"Oh, very! We could actually hear our neighbors having celery for dinner last night!"

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THREE GREAT MYSTERIES

GREAT CASES COME AGAIN BEFORE THE PUBLIC.

Tichborne Case Revived—Death of Archduke Johann—Dauphin of France.

Three cases of mystery, the accepted solutions of which never satisfied many persons, have been oddly revived at the same time. The famous Tichborne case, which occupied the public mind to an extraordinary degree in the early '70s, has just been recalled by the death of Sir Henry Tichborne; the disappearance of the Austrian Archduke Johann Salvator, otherwise known as "Johann Orth," has received a fresh interest from the application of his nephew, Archduke Joseph Ferdinand, for a confirmation of the death and permission to deal with the estate of his uncle, and the question of the lost Dauphin of France has been revived by the case of the brothers Naundorff or De Bourbon being brought before a commission of the French Senate.

It is a question if the present interest in these cases will lead to the production of any substantial proofs. It is believed that Emperor Francis Joseph has positive proofs of the fate of Archduke Johann Salvator, and it is said that in the archives of the Russian and German courts are all the records relating to the supposed death of the Dauphin.

One of the curious things about the Tichborne case, it has been said, was the readiness with which people who might have been expected to know better supported the claim of Arthur Orton, the impostor. He found believers of his story in some brother officers of Roger Tichborne in Guilford Onslow, who gave the claimant about \$75,000 to "fight for his rights," and above all in the Dowager Lady Tichborne, who accepted him as a son.

THE TICHBORNE CASE

was famous not only on account of the attention that it attracted but also from the fact that it was the longest modern trial before an English court. The claimant was brought from Australia at the expense of Lady Tichborne, who had never believed that her son Roger had perished with the foundering of the sailing ship Belle on which he had taken passage at Valparaiso for England. On the 103rd day of the trial the claimant elected to be non-suited and was committed to jail and sentenced to fourteen years penal servitude.

He was a man of massive proportions and is said to have borne little resemblance to the real Roger Tichborne. His story while in some points convincing was as a whole pretty flimsy. He confessed in 1895, three years before his death, that he was the son of a butcher of Wapping and that his name in reality was Arthur Orton. Yet in spite of all this, said a London newspaper at the time of Sir Henry Tichborne's death, "even to this day one may come across those who still maintain that the Arthur Orton who died in poverty in Marylebone twelve years ago was the real Sir Roger."

JOHANN SALVATOR.

The application filed in the court at Vienna for the registration of the death of the Archduke Johann Salvator is evidently going to cause more trouble to the legal authorities than they had anticipated. The summons to "all persons having knowledge of the Archduke" to inform the court of the facts has brought forth many stories. Many of these are upon such a flimsy foundation that no attention will be paid to them, but there are others which will be thoroughly investigated.

The Archduke, it will be remembered, abandoned the Austrian court—some said because he had a distaste for the world and others because he did not secure political favors that he wished—fell in love with Milli Stubel, the premier danseuse, married her in London and then took her to sea on the steamer Santa Margherita and disappeared. According to the generally

accepted story he was last seen when he set sail from Buenos Ayres for Valparaiso.

While it is evident that the Santa Margherita was lost it is asserted that "Johann Oorth" never sailed on her, or if he did that he was saved from the wreck. An engineer named Ranaux has offered himself as a witness before the court saying that he saw Orth after the time of the alleged wreck and helped him to find an "estancia" in the disputed zone between Chile and Argentina and afterward visited him several times.

LEADS SOLITARY LIFE.

A second will be the Belgian explorer and scientist, M. G. Leconte, who commanded the Belgica in her expedition to the Antarctic in 1899. He says that he met on the slopes of the Andes a man leading a solitary life with his horses, dogs and books. The man was of distinguished bearing, spoke several languages with a German or Austrian accent and bore a striking resemblance to the pictures of the missing Archduke. When shown the recently published portraits of Johann Orth he pronounced them "incontestably those of the man with whom I spent several days in the winter of 1899." That would be nine years after the Santa Margherita was lost at sea.

Other persons living in South America claim also to have seen him and a French writer asserts that he spent several days as his guest on an Argentine farm. It is said that the late Dr. Helfert, the Austrian historian, was in communication with the missing man and the papers that he left will be carefully examined. Others who, it is said, heard from him regularly were Dr. von Harbeler, his attorney, and Baron von Abaco, who retired some years ago to German New Guinea.

These stories and many others of a similar nature will be brought before the Austrian court, but it seems quite safe to say that whatever may be the decision there will always be a large number of persons who will insist that Johann Orth was not wrecked off the South American coast and that he lived for many years after the time of the reported sinking of the Santa Margherita. In cases of death under unusual circumstances there are invariably some people who are willing to believe stories of possible even if improbable, escapes.

OLD AGE TAKES BACK SEAT.

Fifty is Fatter and Paler Than Thirty—No Other Difference.

There is no fact more striking than the way modern life is pushing back the period of old age. Less than a century ago a man was old at 40. You have only to pick up Jane Austen's novels to find gentlemen of 35 described as middle-aged. At 60 they were grabbing in their dotage. And there is Mr. Pickwick—that dear, delightful, benevolent old gentleman of 45.

Fifty years ago when a man reached the age of 45 he grew a beard under his chin, bought himself a pair of drab gaiters and a white neckcloth, and spoke with anxious concern of the rising generation, whose manners were so different from those he had known as a "young man." In our generation 52 is outwardly indistinguishable from 52, save in that the former has a slightly more youthful tint in its cheek and its waistcoat.

As for the fair sex, the genus old lady is all but extinct. The pretty vivacious matron you admire at a garden party may have seen 25 or 30 summers. As Queen Alexandra not long said to Mme. Adeline Patti: "We two are two of the youngest women in England." The illustrious royal example has been so sedulously followed that the ladies—always young, always active—may be said to laugh in the very face of Father Time.

An advertisement in a German newspaper—"Fritz X., an experienced accountant, desires a place as cashier. For the security of patrons he would state that he is afflicted with two wooden legs."

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