## PHYLLIS.

BY THE DUCHESS.

Author of "bioliy Bawn," "The Baby," "Airy Fairy Lilian," etc., etc.

large arm obsir, in which her small figure is almost lost; she speaks as is behooves a pretty baroness to speak, who now for the first time is made aware of the grosser habits of the lower classes. Her tone is perfect-having just the correct amount of surprise and disapproval-no more. "And yet that woman always used to strike me as being such a very properly conducted sort of person."

"Don't be so hard on her, Harry," say I. "Remember she has known me all my life, and has had the care of me ever since I was an infant. She loves me; do not con-

demn her for that love. "I was wrong, of course," confesses Harriet, remorsefully. "Buch attachment, being rare, should be considered beautiful. I apologize to you, Martha. But I was thinking, not of her, darling, but of you. I did so dread she would excite you over much, and to-morrow will be such a trying day. Now, ite back again, dear, and keep silence while we chat to you."

It is still the morning of my second wedding day, though a few minutes since I heard some clock chime the quarter to exhaustion and excitement, I say, pettwelve. Habited in the darkest gown my wardrobe can produce, I go downstairs stowly, as in a dream, to the drawing-room, where I find them all assembled before me.

They all glance at me as I enter, and seem relieved on perceiving the total lack of nervousness exhibited by my fea-

unimplessed. Marwaduke is looking pale but composed. George Ashurst Laintully anxious; but that is only what might be expected of him. The others are all more or less evidently desirous of getting over it in a hurry, and appearing at their ease, in which they fail. The priest, a stranger to me, seems ourious.

Bebe comes forward, taking my hand, leads me before the impromptu altar. Marmaduke steps to my side, and his old sollege chum commences the service. have obstinately refused to be re-married by the vicar at home. Bebe dexterously draws off the wedding ring-that has never yet left my finger since it was first placed thereand thoughtfully hands it to 'Duke. With a shudder he flings it from him into the glowing fire, where it vanishes forever with a faint tinkling noise.

"Not that," he mutters, in a low tone and brings out a new one from his pocket. In a clear voice, utterly devoid of emotion, I answer all the responses. Marmaduke's voice shakes a good deal, and I turn and look at him surprised. He has had my hand in a warm, close clasp from the moment the prayer-book was opened, and mow, too, I notice how he trembles as for the second time he binds me to him with the

little golden emblem of eternity. Although their voices reach my outward ears, although I myself say what is required of me with perfect calmness, I do not really hear or heed one word of the ceremony. Thoughts, frivolous and unworthy of the solemnity of the occasion, flit through my brain. I cannot fix my attention on any one thing. I feel no desire to

**30 80.** I wonder vaguely whether, were a widow going to be married again, she would feel as indifferent as I do; then I recollect how, in her case, the bridegroom at least would be a new feature, which would, without doubt, add a little zest to the

affair. How pretty Dora is looking in that navy blue silk and cashmere costume—wonder-

fully pretty and timid! but then everything always did become Dora. How nervous that good George appears. and how ridiculously red! Why, he might

almost be painted. Oh! I have ordered no wedding break fast. Only fancy ! a wedding without s wedding breakfast! How could I have

been so remiss? They will all think me terribly stupid. I almost confess aloud this megligence on my part, so little do I heed the sacred words that are falling on the air ; but fortunately some still remaining sense of propriety restrains me. The service is nearly at an end; once

more Marmakuke Carrington and I are man and wife. It only waits for the few last contences to be read.

Looking up, I catch Bebe's eyes. Why are they so wet? And how large they are -how large!-why do they grow, and gleam, and burn into mine, like-like-

wrench my hand from Marmaduke, and, turning towards George Ashurst, fling mp my arms somewhat wildly.

"Bave—save me !" I gasp. In another moment he has caught me, and I am lying senseless on his breast. When I come to myself, I find them all

around me, though most of them stand at a little distance from the sofa. The strange clergyman has vanished-no doubt horrified at such unorthodox behavior. Marmaduke, with folded arms, is sta-

sioned rather apart from the others, biting his lips, and making a violent effort to conceal his fear and emotion. Are you better, darling?" asks Bebe,

whose arm is under my head, while Dors, supplied with a smelling-bottle, leans over me at the other side—the very sweetest picture of misery.

"I am," I return, feebly; "I don't know what made me so foolish. I did not feel mervous; but I was unlike myself all the go from Hazelton I will not." morning.

"Poor child!" says Harriet, and down come Dora's tiny fingers, wet with eau-decologne, upon my forehead. "I shall be all right in a minute or two,"

I go on, smiling as I regain serength. "It was too bad of me to frighten you all so much. In the middle of it, I suddenly recollected I had forgotten to order you any breakfast, and the horror of the thought must have been too much for me. I grow nervous and fanciful in my old age. But I am all right again now."

The day wears on; my wedding guests have had their lunch, and are new in the on. I am not getting on at all. I am me as a cousin, or brother, or father and let drawing-room, bidding me farewell before simply stationary, and am no whit more me take you abroad to some place where you might make thing; more cheerful for you. starting for the train that is to bear them away from the newly married couple. How strange, how difficult to comprehend, it all than a month ago.

Dora kisses me with a good deal more sea. It is a dreary day, raw, chill, unsum- laugh; "just compare yourself with papa; very little of my society, taken singly, appears !

murs a few confused congratulatory words. I feel more than ordinarily depressed "Phyllis," regardless of this taunt, "let poor little Chips, I had long then that he is George kisses me, too, heartily, and mur- heart, how gray art thou! chimes in Dora, from the depths of the apparent how strangely apathetic and indif- breath of wind disturbs the surface of the ferent is the bride.

"The continent is the place for you, open my book and commence to read. Phyllis," he says; "any one can see that But my thoughts will not be controlled. eign towns; and besides, I know all the you there without delay."

I smile faintly, but make no rejoinder. "Good bye darling," whispers my Bebe, stooping over me, and rubbing her cheek stance are everywhere. with a little purring motion to mine. "Be a good child, and let Marmaduke pet you to his heart's content. You want an overdose now, you have been so long alone." At length they are all gone, leaving the

calm. All, that is, except Marmaduke, who lingers purposely.

which we have arranged to live. By degrees it can make itself known." I lie idly thinking, idly putting together Once, looking up, I catch his gaze intently suringly. "Tell me the truth now, to day. reality !-when Billy and I used to go nest. a languid nod; "and go for a smoll; the fixed upon me. Twice, three times, I meet Is it that you hate me?" it, and then, growing irritable through

"Why do you look at me so? I hate being stared at. One would imagine I had

so very grotesque, Marmaduke?' now turned towards the window that overlooks the avenue. It is as though he were expectant of some one's arrival.

"If you are not going until the next train." I remark, snubbily, "you have two full hours to wait; therefore you need premeditation, "you could be induced to hardly calculate minutes so soon. That is the eighth time you have examined your watch within the past ten minutes." Certainly I am not in the most amiable mood. "I am not returning to London to-

night," he says, calmly. "I dare say I can get a bed at that place in the village." "Surely, considering this is your own house, you need not throw yourself on the mercy of the parish for a bed. Martha will tone, flushing.

see about a room for you." "It is your house, not mine. I made you a present of it when-tome time ago. do you look so surprised? I was However," quickly, "if you invite me I

shall gladly put up here." Turning his face to the window, and proposal." away from me, he goes on rapidly :

"To tell you the truth, Phyllis, the chief reason for my staying here now is this I made an appointment with Sir James Smithson to meet me in this house at 4 o'clock, to-to take a look at you, and tell me his opinion—as to your state of health."

"Sir James Smithson!" I cry, angrily. Do you mean to tell me you have brought a doctor to torment me and make me miserable? This is what comes of marrying you. Oh, why was I so weak as to give in to your wishes? I won't see him-you ous in his wish to bestow his name upon a husband. may be sure of that."

humblest entreaty. "It will only be for a few minutes. Directly he sees you, he will place.) Few men would have done it, I know the very thing that will set you up fancy. At all events, it convinced me of again. There is not, there cannot be, anything seriously wrong with you. Good for me." advice is all you require. Why will you inaist on-on-"

"Dging," I put in flippantly. "Why don't you say it? I shan't go to my grave a moment sooner through your mentioning the unpleasant word."

"You will see him, Phyllis?"

"Oh, if he is really coming, I suppose I must. But, I warn you, I shall take no nasty stuffs, politely called tonics, and I w ll not go abroad."

In this amiable frame of mind I prepare myself to receive the great London doctor. As the servant ushers him into my room, I rise to bow, and am much relieved as finding myself in the presence of a small, bomely, jolly lookling little man, with none of the signs of greatness about him.

He examines my chest, and asks a question or two that would certainly suggest themselves to an idiot. He thumps me here and pate me there, hums and haws, and finally says I want "tone."

"And change of air, my dear Mrs. Carrington. A little pleasure trip, now-just a little run through all the old spots we know so well-and then a winter at Pau or even a degree further south, is all that we want, eh?"

"I will take your tonics," I say, giving in so far, "but," determinately, "I will not take change of air. I am happy here;

I will not leave it." "Dear! dear!" ejaculated Sir James, soothingly, giving me another tap; "how people differ! Most young ladies, now, would do almost anything for me, if I would only order them to Pau. Such a lively place, my dear Mrs. Carrington, so invigorating, so gay; just the very thing for a woman so young, and, let me add, so colorless. very charming, as yourself. Now, pray do reconsider it."

I laugh, and glance at myself in an opposite mirror. A white face, lean jaws, large unnatural eyes, and pallid lips meet my view. I am altogether unlovely.

"I shall get well enough here," I say, obstinately. "You may order me every nasty concoction you can think of, and I

"Well, well, we shall see how you get on," replies Sir James, cajolingly, patting my hand. He deals in pats and gentle fear and misery in his face. Don't look so reassuring nods, but he is a dear old man | woebegone." and I feel some faint regret that he should leave thinking me unreasonable. He does leave me, however, presently and seeks my husband, doubtless to pour into his ears all the unpalatable things he is too gallant to you kill yourself? How can I watch you

say to me. have evidently conquered. Marmaduke going mad. Phyllis, dearest," controlling returns to Loudon, taking a run down himself by an effort, and trying to speak every now and then to see how I am getting | more calmly, "why can you not look upon beautiful to behold than when first his can get change of air and scene, and where Just the old lot, you know." astonished eyes fell upon me, now more I may at least be near enough to protect

I have wandered listlessly down by the "My father," return I with an amused

I think at this moment, seeing me so sick nearer to a more congenial day. All around simple as it has shown itself, would hardly strangers to our hearth. and lauguid, and devoid of all the old unre- is mist, and cheerless damp. Gray sky, accept you in that light. You grow strainable joyousness, she, for the first gray earth, gray clouds that cover land and younger every day. It is wonderful how briskly; "I have been wishing of late for time, altogether forgives me my misdoings. sea; and oh! gray shadow lying on my little the agony of your mind preys upon some break in on our monotony. Harriet

Even to his thick brain it has become and weary. The tide is far out; hardly a me take you to the south of France." waters. Seating myself upon a flat rock, I pettishly. "Why am I to be tormented Going, and Sir Mark Gore." These latter

with half an eye. Get Carrington to take Raising my eyes, I look seaward, and wonder at the great pale mist that spreads itself north and south. The horizon sinks into the ocean, and veils of vapory sub-

I sigh, and turning dejectedly from the unvarying scene before me discover Marmaduke coming towards me across she pettishness I should repent and go back of

"What a curious light!" he says, withhouse to fall back into its old silence and out greeting of any kind and sits down upon the pebbles at my feet.

"There is no reason he says, in answer | begin to wonder vaguely what has brought | spot." to my inquiring look, "why all those him to-day from the busy town, and who people should know so soon the terms on has betrayed my favorite hiding place. Presently, unconsciously I sigh again,

and turn my face from his. "What is it?" asks he, kindly, taking my hand-not affectionately, merely reas-

"No, it is not hatred, I think; it is indif- so still. Is it not odd that I should look ference."

We rise, and pace ailently homewards. It is the evening of the same day. My more heads than one. Is my appearance depression of the morning has vanished, leaving a spirit of provocation in its place. "Was I staring?" he asks, absently, and I am in the drawing-room, lounging idly far away now. She had her grievance, too, well." drawing out his watch, examines it anx. in a low cushioned chair, with Fifine, my poor soul !" lously, and then commences a slow pro- pet Skye, in my lap. I amuse myself and that I am the only one present thoroughly menade up and down the room. He gratify the wickedness within me, by pracappears distrait, impatient. His eyes are ticing upon the long-suffering animal such "To-morrow," with decision. torments as disturb without maddening her. sooner the better. It I die on the way." is a fire in the grate, stands with his back and remember you would have it so." to the fireplace, and stares at me.

"I wish," he remarks presently, without long sigh. effect upon your health."

"I have borne the solitude for so many months that I dare say I can bear it again. Though, indeed," mischievously, "I had been married, had I so chosen." "What!" says Marmaduke, in a low them.

"I could have been married, had I so chosen," I repeat, with much gusto. " Why free, was I not? There was no reason, then, why I should not listen to any man's up the stairs and into my own room.

"What do you mean, Phyllis?" sternly. "Just what I say. A friend of ours who is aware of the circumstances of our case, came here one day and made me a handsome offer of his hand and what he is pleased to term his heart."

"Did Gore come down here to see you?" "Not so much for that as to ask me to marry him."

"The sooundrel!" says 'Duke, through his closed teeth. "Why should you call him that? On the contrary, there was something generwoman situated as I was. (No, no, Fifine. but keep your little tongue in its proper an entreaty. the truth and sincerity of his affection

" If you saw so many admirable points in his character, why did you let such a valuable chance of securing them go by ?" he asks, bitterly. He is white with anger by this time. I see his emotion, but, being flendishly inclined at the moment, know

no remorse. "One does do a foolish thing now and again," I reply, calmly, ourling Fifine's silky locks the wrong way, to her infinite disgust. "Afterwards, when it is too late, one

repents." "Am I to understand you repent of net having bound yourself for life to that unmitigated villain?"

I burst out laughing. "Poor Sir Mark!" I ory. "A scoundrel! a villain! What next? He tried to do the best he could for me, and gets only abuse in return. Do I repent not having married him? Well, no. At that time was not particularly in love with matrimony; I had no desire to form new ties. Now, indeed--" I break off in pretended confusion. My head bends itself a little on one side. I gaze down consciously into

Fifine's lustrous eyes. "Phyllis," says my husband, with surprised indignation, "whatever you may really mean by your words, I must beg that for the future I may hear no more of it; I -- " But here the horrible pain in my side comes back to me with its usual acute energy, and mischief fades from me. push Fifine from my lap, and half rise.

" If you are going to be tragical," I say, I hope you will leave me. I care neither for Sir Mark Gore, nor any other man, as you ought to know. Oh, my side!" I gasp, pressing my hand to it, and becoming

My breath and voice fail me. In moment his kind arms are around me. My head falls helpless on his shoulder, as though I were a mere child (and indeed I am uttle more in his strong grasp, now sickness has reduced me). He carries me to a sofa, and does for me all that can be done, until the first unbearable anguish is past. Then, with his arm under my head, will promise to drink and eat them all; but so as to raise me, he sits waiting in silent as he crosses the room do his eyes fall watchfulness until rest and ease return.

"You're not rid of me yet," I whisper, with a faint mocking smile, as I notice the

Suddenly he falls on his knees beside

my couch, though still supporting me. "I can't bear it any longer," he says passionately. "Darling! darling, why will dying by inches? Have pity for me, if you No more is said to me on the subject. I have none for yourself, and save me from you and see that you want for nothing?"

than her usual warmth. For once, her merlike. I shiver vaguely as I go, and think of the inhuman length of his nose. pretty show of sympathy is quite sincere. wish the night would come to bring us am afraid it would not do. The world, him see how giadly I shall welcome

> "Oh, why can't I be let alone?" I cry, every hour of the day? I hate dirty, for-

journeys I could take would do me no good; but if I am to get no peace until I consent to leave the only place that pleases me, I may as well do so at once. I will go she?" back to Strangemore."

"You mean it, darling?" cautiously, and | care," unamiably. without evincing too much joy, lest in my my words.

perpetually told how obstinate and self- a man. Solitude disagrees with you; you willed and sullen I am, I would go to Tim- grow downright rude." "Very," I answer, stupidly, and then buctoo, or Hong Kong, or any other cheerful

first?" with hesitation. "You know Sir and wound up with an elaborate flourish, James spoke of-"

"No. I will go to Strangemore, or the bascony outside. nowhere. I have always had a fancy for it. Even long, long ago-how short a time in you like," he says, over his shoulder with "I hardly know," I return, wearily. sweetest spot on earth. I almost think it with such kindness upon the scene of my as she returns my Ales of welcome. "I greatest trouble?"

"Hush !" with a shudder; "do not let tapping my cheek, "I might have spared

us think of it."

"Next week? Monday?" 'Duke, under the impression that there with cruel gayety, "blame yourself for it, ing been driven over from a country house

take Sir James' advice and seek change of old hall at Strangemore, a great passionate pressed pleasure. It is purely mulfierent. air. This solitary hole must have a bad rush of unrestrainable rapture flows over me. Sudden recollections and emotions threaten to overpower me. I am at home, at rest, at last! With an impulsive movement I put my hand to my heart. Each company at times. I could actually have | well-remembered object sends out to me a thousand welcomes. With silent joy I greet and lawiess tribes in the East."

> Yet, compelled by the strange wilfulness that sorrow and loneliness have bred within me, I conceal all this from Marmaduke, and, returning the servants' salutations with a courtesy kind but subdued, I go slowly

> The doors beyond are flung wide. What was formerly 'Duke's dressing-room is now transformed into a boudoir, while the apartment beyond that again is an exquisitely furnished reception-room.

though we may count ourselves now well | dos, muchievously. into the summer, still the bright flames look warm and homelike, and involuntarily | see what comes of associating with barba-I stretch out my hands to their friendly riams," retores Bebe, with a surug. warmth.

out, "Come in," I go forward, and, open- of constraint between these two. During ing it, find myself face to face with my all the first week, this forced gayety and

I return, ungratefully "I am

too tired. I shall be better alone." His face expresses disappointment. "I am sure you are right," he says, mov

ing away. "Try to rest and forget your here smites me.

" My rooms are so pretty," I say, quickly, tenor of more lives than one. following him a step or two; "they are very lovely. Was it all your own taste?

It was so good of you to do it for me." you would like them changed.'

again, remorsefully. "You think of every- baloony to finish their cigars. thing, and I am always ungrateful." "Nonsense Get back your old spirits, and I shall be richly rewarded." Then with a sudden, unexpected movement,

"You are welcome home, Phyllis," he says, and bending, presses his lips to mine. It is the very first carees he has offered me since our second marriage; and now it is the lightest, fleetest thing conceivable. Confused and puzzled, I turn back into my room, with a sensation that is almost fear at my heart. What a cold, unloving kiss! A mere touching of the lips, without warmth or lingering pressure. What if he has

ceased to love me? We toil ,through pain and wrong. We fight, and fly; We love, we lose, and then, erelong, Stone dead we lie. O life! is all thy song Endure-and die?

The sorrowful, despairing words repeat themselves over and over again in my brain. They fascinate and yet repel me. Why must the wretchedness of this world so heavily overbalance the good?

I fling the small volume from me with some impatience as Marmaduke comes in. He has been studiously cold to me of late; indeed, he has shown an open and marked avoidance of my company. It has at times forced itself upon me that he bitterly repents his hasty persistence at Hazelton, and would now gladly sever

the tie that binds us, were that possible. At this moment he is looking bored and ennuye to the last degree, as he goes to one of the windows, and stands idly gazing out over the park and woodlands. Not once,

And yet surely I am now better worth regarding than in those first days at Hazel ton, when he appeared so anxious to make me his own. It is the latter end of July, warm, sultry, glorious July, and I am once more the Phyllis of old. My cheeks are round and soft and childlike as of yore, my eyes are bright and clear and have lost their unnatural largeness, my figure has regained its original healthy elasticity; yet Marmaduke heeds me not.

Suddenly, with some abruptness, and without turning to look at me, he says: " Dont you think it would be an improvement to ask some people down here, ch? It

So at last he has made an open confession of the dulness that I feel sure has been why, and am certain Marmaduke's eyes are consuming him; he has discovered that a fastened upon me.

I would go a long way.

" I am so glad you mentioned it," I say, will not reture, I think; and Bianche

"Bir Mark Gore is in Norway," replies Duke, stiffly. "Indeed! Then we must put up with.

his loss. But Blanche Going-where is "Probably in Jamaica, for all I know, or.

"What an answer! Poor Bianche! if she could only hear you. You should remember, 'Duke, that flippancy, though "Oh, yes; why not? Rather than be excusable in a woman, is simply brutal in

"It I was rude, I apologize," returns he, carelessly. Then, having whistled straight "You would not try a warmer climate | through his favorite air mest successfully, he walks through the open window on to

"Very good; ask them all as soon as

" I was going to beg an invitation if I did not receive it," says Harriet, a week later, was growing very uneasy about you. But," myself any worry on the subject of your "Why not? I often do. It seems very | nealth, as you are looking provokingly.

Bebe declares I have caused them all "When will you start?" abruptly. more trouble than I am worth, whereupon I take her in oustody and march her "The upstairs and run her into her bedroom.

Just before dinner Changes arrives, havsome miles distant, where he has been "To-morrow, then," says 'Duke with a staying.

Bebe greets him with a light laugh that As I cross the threshold and enter the has nothing in it of nervousness or sup-For the moment I feel puzzied and disappointed.

"Btrangemore seems to be our established meeting-ground after long absences, she says, giving him her hand. "Let me congratulate you on having escaped chiera "I have only been a week in England since my return," replies he, ceremoni-

onsly, "and have been ker t presty ousy all that time, or I would have allowed myself the pleasure of calling upon you and Mrs. Beatoun. I did not know you were again staying with Lady Handoock?" "Ou, Harriet cannot do without me

now," says Bebe, with a little saucy glance at Harry, who smiles and shakes her head. " She flads me invaluacie " "How infinitely obliged your mother

In the boudoir a small fire burns, and | must be to Lady Haudolos !" says Chan-"For taking me off her hands? Ah!

Yet, with all their badiuage and apparent A knock at the door. Instead of calling unconcern, I can perceive an undercurrent determined forgetfulness of the sweet and "You will not come down to dinner?" he | bitter past continues - and then talls away. "My darling, be reasonable," with the you must not lick me. Kiss me if you will, says; but his tone is a question—almost Silence and avoidance take their place, and in Chandos especially I notice a distant avoidance of all converse bordering on

a tete-a-tete. I am beginning to despair of any good result arising from this second bringing together of them in my house, when one evening shortly before the termination of The remnant of conscience I still retain their visit a something, a mere trifle, occurs, that is yet sufficient to alter the

It is the 27th of August. Dinner is at an end, and, tired of strolling the grounds and gardens—so softly persumed by the "You are pleased?" coloring. "I fanoted night flowers - we three women pass into the lighted drawing-room, while Marma-"It was more than good of you," I say duke and Chandos linger outside on the

> I let my fingers wander idly over the piano, and now and again hum softly some old air or ballad. "Bebe, sing something for us to-night," I

say coaxingly, rising from the piaco-stool. She is not fond of let lug us hear her perfeetly beautiful voice. "Anything you like yourself; only sing." "Don't ask me," she of jects, languidly.

"It is so long since I have sung that I

scarcely know any song correctly. Harries will tell you I rarely if ever touch the "But you must," I persist. "Break down if you will, only let me hear your voice. Remember there are no ungener-

pleases me so much as yours." "Do, Miss Beatoun," says some one. It is Chandos. He and Marmaduke have come in through the open window, and are now standing in its embrasure, framed in

ous critics here, and nobody's singing

by the hanging curtains on either side. The tone of his voice strikes me as being odd. He is looking eagerly, fixedly at her; will she refuse this sudden, unexpected request of his? Coming after his late coldness it surprises even me.

Bebe raises to his a face smiling, but "Well, yes, I will sing you something,"

she says, and taking my place, strikes a few lingering chords. "I have no music with me," she continues, with her face turned from us, "so you must be satisfied with whatever comes

first to me." Then she begins: Along the grass sweet airs are blown Our way, this day in spring; Of all the songs that we have known Now which one shall we sing? Not that, my love, ah! no; Not this? my love? why so?

Yet both were ours, yet hours will come and The branches cross above our eyes, The skies are in a net, And what's the thing beneath the skies We two would most forget? Not birth, my love, no, no, Not death, my love, no, no! The love once ours, but ours long hours ago.

As she comes to the last line, a curious, wild sadness, that is almost despair, mingles with the petulant defiance that has hitherto characterized her tone. And the music, where has she got it?-so weird, so pathetic, so full of passionate recklessness.

When she is finished we are silent. I feel horribly inclined to cry, yet scarcely know

(To be continued.)