

RUTHVEN'S WARD

BY FLORENCE MARRYAT.

CHAPTER XIII.—(CONTINUED.)
"Billy little goose. How can they guess unless you tell them with your eyes? Come, take my arm, and let us go in together. But tell me, first, is it to be—or not?"

"Yes," she answered in a very low voice.
He looked at her for a moment in silence: then he said:

"God bless you, Pearl!" and led her toward the house. At the threshold of the library they were met by Carmen.

"Who do you think is here, Margaret? Guess."

"I can't," said Margaret, who had no idea Hamilton Shore had been invited to join them at Abbotsville.

"Mr. Ruthven's nephew—are you not surprised? And here he is!" continued Carmen, triumphantly waving her hand toward the new arrival.
If a thunder-bolt had fallen at his feet, Hamilton Shore could hardly have looked more astonished than he did when he perceived his uncle and Margaret O'Reilly. But he soon recovered himself. With his natural coolness he concluded that, since Ruthven had sanctioned his visit to Abbotsville, he must approve of all he had done before it; so, with a bold air, he proffered his hand to his uncle, who received it very indifferently. To greet Margaret was a more difficult matter, and Sir Frederic was not slow to notice the awkwardness with which it was accomplished.

Carmen, however, took complete possession of her admirer, and saved Margaret much annoyance; but between the two fires of Ruthven's burning glances and Hamilton's half-averted ones, the poor child hardly knew which way to look, and was thankful for the first excuse to run upstairs and hide her blushing cheeks. But she could not go to bed. She listened patiently for upward of an hour to Carmen's eulogiums on Hamilton's appearance, and whispered compliments and protestations, all of which she repeated for her friend's benefit; and not until she had left her had Margaret leisure to think. But how her thoughts came pouring in upon her then! It was all too wonderful to believe—that whilst she had been bemoaning the loss of Hamilton's pink and white face and curly hair, her guardian, whom she had never dared to think of except as a being of superior order to herself, should have loved her and wanted to make her his wife. She Ruthven's wife, the life-companion of one of the cleverest and best-known men in England! The idea was too stupendous for the girlish brain. She fell as if she couldn't comprehend it within the four walls of her bedroom, and a tender romance impelled her to re-visit the bench where Ruthven had confided this marvelous truth to her, and think over and try to realize it there. The night, though dark, was sultry; there was no need to do more than throw a shawl about her head, for Margaret to seek the Monk's Walk with perfect safety.

She found the seat where they had sat together, and threw herself upon it with an air of the most perfect content. How strange and gloomy the walk looked at midnight!

Margaret turned and gazed at the venerable old pile before her. The building had seemed wrapped in darkness as she left it; but now she saw, to her surprise, that part of it—that part which joined the sleeping apartments of Carmen, and which her friend said was occupied by Sir Frederic—was lighted up so brilliantly that the blinds looked like transparencies. What could the baronet be doing at that time of night to render such an illumination necessary? Margaret sat watching the mysterious chamber in fascinated curiosity. Presently a shadow approached the blind upon the opposite side—a shadow clad in a long garment like a dressing-gown. It moved up and down behind the blind for a few minutes, restlessly, then it commenced to move faster; at last, it took hold of its skirts, and, holding them out, danced violently up and down, wagging its head fantastically the while. A second figure—that of a man—approached the first, and laid hands upon it, which it seemed to resent, shaking off the touch impatiently. The second figure, however, continued to persevere until the first became violent, and, turning, grappled with him, and the two danced and leaped and fell upon each other alternately, for some minutes, when, all of a sudden, the light was extinguished, the window was wrapped in darkness, and the figures disappeared.

Margaret, who had watched the scene in breathless fascination, hardly knowing what she believed it to be, became suddenly invested with a sense of horror, and falling out, "The ghost! the ghost!"—although there was none to hear her—ran quickly back to the house and leaped into her bed.

CHAPTER XIV.

MARGARET did not mention what she had seen to any one. It kept her awake for the greater part of the night; but, when the morning dawned, she felt ashamed of the great alarm which she had experienced.
Ruthven had laughed at her when she had alluded to the ghost, and Sir Frederic and Carmen had evidently been annoyed. She would not risk a repetition of the scene that had taken place at the dinner table the night before. Her brain was full of this thought as she descended to the breakfast-room. Hamilton and Carmen were there before her, flirting in an open boy-and-girl manner. Hamilton looked rather shy as Margaret appeared, and he could not help comparing her innocent loveliness with Carmen's flashing charms. But Pearl's attention was all given to her guardian now, and it was comical to note Hamilton Shore's look of dismay as she passed him by with a careless nod, to place her hand with a bright smile in that of Ruthven. The young people were planning a country excursion as she entered, and asked her to accompany them, but she refused. She had not quite arrived at the point of watching her faithless admirer making love to his new flame. She heard Sir Frederic ask Mr. Ruthven to join him in the library after breakfast on business, and she was glad to think they would all be safely disposed of, as she was desirous of carrying out a design of her own which she could not accomplish unless the house were clear.

Carmen had told her that the rooms next her own were occupied by Sir Frederic Flower, but Margaret knew they were not the same into which the baronet had introduced Ruthven and herself. She concluded, therefore, that they were sitting rooms, and she thought that if she could summon up courage to enter them by daylight, and examine them for herself, she would lose the supernatural terror they invested her with now, and be able to realize how foolish her fancy of the night before had been. So that when Hamilton and Carmen had wandered away into the wood together, and Ruthven, with a farewell smile at her, had followed Sir Frederic to the library, Margaret sought her own room, and, waiting until the corridor seemed clear of servants, sallied forth upon her tour of inspection. There were three doors upon the other side of the corridor beyond that which opened into Carmen's room. Pearl timidly tried the handle of one after the other; but they were all locked. At the further end of the long passage, however, was what appeared to be a screen placed across the window. She advanced and peered round it. It concealed nothing more than a balize-door. As she stood there, however, the sound of an approaching footstep made her start, and, in her fear and dismay at being discovered, she opened a door just behind her and darted in. It was a servant's bedroom, but she could see nothing but what occurred in front of her. Some one pushed open the balize-door, and stood with it ajar, while he fumbled with a jangling bunch of keys; a voice behind him said, "Never mind the keys, you won't be long."
"Not five minutes," was the answer; "and you'll be here?"
"Of course I shall," said the other voice, which was evidently that of a woman.

Then the keys were left in the door, and the man came out into the corridor. Pearl recognized him at once as the person whom Carmen had called "Mr. Brown" in the days gone by, but the woman, who was stout and elderly, she had never seen before. She longed to escape from her hiding place, but after the man had walked away the servant kept her position at the balize-door as though she were looking out for a friend to speak to. At last one appeared in the person of Mrs. Webb—who emerged from a sleeping chamber with her arms full of clean linen.

"Good morning, Mrs. Bryant!" she exclaimed. "All quiet to-day?"
"Particularly so," replied the other; "which is a mercy, as we've had a night of it."

"Ah, it must be trying! Have you had your breakfast yet?"
"Not I. I'm only just at liberty. Mr. Brown's gone down to his, and not before he needs it."

"Step over to my room and have a cup of tea; it's all ready."
"Well, I don't know but what I might; I can turn the key on the outside."

"To be sure. All's safe enough. And no one can't expect you to work fasting for hours; besides, it won't take you half a minute."

"All right," replied Mrs. Bryant, as she turned the key in the lock and left it on the outside of the door, preparatory to accepting the offer of her friend. As Pearl watched the two women disappear together at the further end of the corridor, a desperate resolution came into her mind to see for herself what mystery the locked rooms contained. She glanced down the corridor once or twice, to make sure Mrs. Bryant was not yet returning, and then, with a sudden impulse, she left her hiding place, turned the key in the lock of the

opposite door, and entered the mysterious chamber.

Whilst Margaret O'Reilly was thus prying into things which, apparently, did not concern her, Sir Frederic Flower and Mr. Ruthven were closeted in the library together.

"I have something of importance to tell you, Mr. Ruthven," commenced the baronet, "and which you must learn without delay. I should have told it to you before, but that it is a painful subject to enter upon, and I did not expect your nephew to arrive quite so soon from Rouen."

"It concerns Hamilton, then?"
"It greatly concerns Carmen, and no young man shall court her, with my consent, without his being informed of it. There is insanity in her family!"

Ruthven started with surprise.
"Impossible!" he exclaimed; "the name of Flower is too well known—"
"Excuse me, Mr. Ruthven, it has nothing to do with our side of the family. It is through the mother's blood that my poor niece inherits such a fearful taint."

"I am deeply grieved to hear this; but Miss Flower exhibits no sign of such a heritage?"

"She does not. I trust she never may; still the fact remains, and must not be concealed. I told you some little time since that I had lost my dear wife and child under very painful circumstances. They are connected with this subject, and I am about to relate them to you. My younger brother, George, and I were the only children of our father, and when he died, leaving his title to me, he bequeathed his wealth to us in two equal portions; to go to the child or children of each, or in case of either dying without issue, to the child or children of the other. We both married. Lady Flower was a fair English girl; but George, who had been traveling abroad, brought home a Spanish woman as his wife—a proud, haughty and high-tempered creature, whom nobody could get on with but himself, and she made even his life wretched with her mad jealousy and uncontrollable passion. My wife and she could never become friends. Florence was as gentle and timid a girl as ever lived; a harsh word frightened her, and the manners and conversation of her foreign sister-in-law were altogether unbecoming to her nature. So, though we lived close together, we could never be said to be intimate. Well, the Spanish woman had a child—this girl Carmen—who was named after herself.

That was the first triumph for them, for my wife seemed unlikely to bring me a family. Mrs. George Flower knew all the conditions of the will, and triumphed over her rival accordingly. She became twice as offensive after the birth of the child, speaking of it openly as the heiress of Abbotsville, and otherwise behaving herself insolently toward my poor little wife, who drooped under the oppression like a broken blossom. However, our turn came to win.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

SMALLEST VILLAGE.

Fireplace Is Sixty Years Old and Has Only Two Houses.

Out at the east end of Long Island, not far from Montauk Point, where ocean steamers are to land some day, is situated what is said to be the smallest village in the world, according to the New York World. It consists of two stone houses about sixty years old and arrogates to itself the name of Fireplace. One of the old houses has been occupied ever since it was built by two generations of an old Long Island family, who have dwelt there contented with their quiet life, satisfied if they got their mail and groceries from the Point once or twice a week. This little village became known as Fireplace in a curious way. It is now over 200 years since Gardiner's Island was bought from the Indians by the Gardiner family for a ridiculously low price. The buyer and his descendants lived there for many years, coming to the mainland to do their shopping or to attend balls and parties in the near-by villages. When they came over to Long Island to make any stay their servant took the boat back to Gardiner's island until it should be needed.

In the absence of any better means of communication the family when they wished to return home were forced to fall back on the rather primitive custom of lighting a fire to attract the attention of the servants. The place where this fire was always built was directly opposite the homestead on Gardiner's island. It was admirably situated and years afterward became the site of these two old houses. In casting about for a name for their little village the owners of the houses naturally hit upon that of Fireplace.

The Hot-Weather Cure for Paralysis.

The liveliest passenger on board the steamship City of Pekin was Humphrey Kendrick of Los Angeles. He had just returned from Japan, a country that he loves because a few years ago it completely cured him of paralysis.

When Kendrick found that he had lost control of his limbs he determined to spend all the money he had to get relief. It was easy enough to tell what had brought the paralysis upon him, for the first stroke came soon after he had a bad tumble on horseback. The animal fell in such a way as to catch Kendrick squarely beneath it, severely wrenching and spraining his spine.

Kendrick found that he was much better in hot weather and this led him to go to the Hawaiian Islands. He was so much better there when it was hot that he concluded to go to a still warmer place. Somebody told him that the south coast of Japan in summer was the place.

For many months during the hottest of hot summers Kendrick engaged in a most unique attempt to regain his health. For days at a time he would lie positively stripped to the skin in the hot sand.—San Francisco Chronicle.

IN WOMAN'S CORNER.

CURRENT READING FOR DAMES AND DAMSELS.

The Hats Now Seen Show the American Girl True to Nature—Gowns for the Bride's Mother—Lounging Gowns—Fashion's Decrees.



THE American girl was never so true to nature and to her own self as in her hats for this season. The old-fashioned blossoms which her grandmother loved—mignonette, sweet pea, the old-fashioned garden daisy, heliotrope and the June rose—adorn her hats, and are massed upon it in that profusion and conglomeration which we all know so well in the country garden of some dear old lady that the fashionable world has passed by.

What prettier object can one think of than a sprightly American girl, with all the bright ways that make her British cousins so envious, having on her head a hat of green straw, traced about the front with green tulle and almost covered with sprays of mignonette and heliotrope; then turned up in the back to make room for a mass of the same flowers, so realistic that one can almost catch the breath of their perfume? And one really does catch that breath, for the American girl perfumes the blossoms of her hat with the extracts from their live sisters.

In quite different style is a garden party hat, to be worn by a brunette. Of yellow silk mull, it is made over a wire frame. Wings of lace, and a bow of silk mull are used in its adornment, combined with primroses, without foliage, but of a deeper shade of yellow than the mull. It is a charming hat, and will look particularly well worn with a boa of the mull.—The Latest.

For a Wedding.
The gown for the bride's mother should portray dignity and be very elegant. Yet it should be very quiet in

summer underwear is made of that material does not seem sufficient; she must needs have house gowns of it.

If not of dimity, house gowns are made of organdie or batiste. This means that they are very inexpensive and no woman is debarred for economical reasons from being very comfortable in her own room.

It takes about ten yards of material to make a house gown, and very suitable batistes and dimities may be bought for from 10 to 18 cents a yard. Or, if one prefers to buy the garment ready made, she may do so at any price from 35 cents to the double number.

The favorite colors for house gowns are, first sea green, then lavender, then yellow. The gowns are mainly trimmed with soft cream lace; indeed, its use is quite indispensable to the proper, fluffy effect of the garment.

Bishop's sleeves, gathered above the wrist under a small turn-over cuff, or long, flowing sleeves, are best adapted to those gowns, while the collars may be shaped merely of a fall of lace or



may be broad sailors, opening in a decided V in front.—The Latest.

Concealing the Fireplace.
For the lamp shade nothing is better for the purpose, nor more economical, than the charming crinkled paper, but how to fill up in an artistic manner the yawning cavity left by the vanished fire and yet keep the fire ready laid for the chilly days that will inevitably arrive is always a vexatious difficulty. A lovely little screen will solve the difficulty to perfection. It is one that

A TRIO OF FASHIONABLE FAIR ONES.



appearance, a mingling of sorrow because her daughter is leaving and of joy for the happiness of her child. Again we turn to the wedding of the young woman we have in mind. For her mother a very handsome gown is being designed in gray satin, brocaded with purple thistles. The skirt is very full, falling in many godets about the back. It is severely plain, not a single ornament marring its graceful sweep. The bodice is cut somewhat in Louis fashion and is constructed of plain gray satin. Falling in graceful goilets each side the front is a large collar, edged with narrow steel trimming. The basque skirts are slashed and edged with the same steel trimmings and turn in front to form elongated revers. Large steel buttons adorn each side, a long steel fringe falling from the lower ones. A narrow belt fastens the jacket



about the waist. The brocaded satin is introduced to form the sleeves, and purple chiffon the vest and collar. Not the least attractive feature about this costume is the tiny tucks of violets and silver aigrettes, fastened under the chin with purple velvet ribbon. It sits charmingly above the silver hair and blooming cheeks of the well-preserved woman who will don it.—The Latest.

Lounging Gowns.
Woman is learning the beauties of many old-fashioned materials, which explains, perhaps, why dimity has such a hold upon her now. That most of her

A Veritable Mrs. Malaprop.
There is a very charming and a very charitable woman in Washington whom all in society know and respect for her many and practical beneficences. Yet this woman is a veritable Mrs. Malaprop. Only the other day she recalled the visit of a young woman in quest of aims. There had been some question as to the integrity of the young woman's cause. "But," said the good and rich woman, "do you know that she came to me in such a garbage of woe that I could not refuse her."—Exchange.

Low Rate Excursions South.
On the first and third Tuesday of each month till October about half rates for round trip will be made to points in the south by the Louisville & Nashville railroad. Ask your ticket agent about it, and if he cannot sell you excursion tickets write to C. P. Atmore, General Passenger Agent, Louisville, Ky., or J. K. Ridgely, N. W. P. A., Chicago, Ill.

Hard to Satisfy.
Guest (at small hotel)—"Here, you landlord! This towel is filthy. I want a clean one."
Proprietor (with surprise)—"That's strange, sir; nearly a hundred men have used that towel today, and you're the first one to complain."

The Glorious Fourth.
The C. & E. I. R. R. are making elaborate preparations for a grand celebration on the 4th of July at their beautiful picnic grounds, Island Park.
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The best American is he who lives up to the best ideals of a Christian manhood, valuing liberty for his own enjoyment and seeking to give the enjoyment of it to all others who seek it.—Father Conaty.

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