

SIR GUY'S WARD.

A THRILLING STORY OF LOVE AND ADVENTURE.

CHAPTER XXXI.

So Lady Chetwoode goes down to the Cottage in her carriage, and insists upon carrying Cecilia back with her,—to which, after a slight demur, Cecilia gladly assents.

"But how to get Cyril?" says practical Lillian, who is with them.

"He is in Amsterdam," answers Cecilia, with some hesitation. "Colonel Trant told me so in his letter."

"Colonel Trant is the most wonderful man I know," says Lillian; "but Amsterdam of all places! What on earth can any one want in Amsterdam?"

At this they all laugh, partly because they are still somewhat nervously inclined, and partly because (though why, I cannot explain) they seem to find something amusing in the mere thought of Amsterdam.

"I hope he won't bring back with him a fat vrouw," says Miss Chesney. And then she runs up-stairs to tell Kate to get ready to accompany her mistress.

Turning rather timidly toward Lady Chetwoode, Cecilia says,—

"When Cyril returns, then,—you will not—do you not—"

"When he returns, my dear, you must marry him at once, if only to make amends for all the misery the poor boy has been enduring. But"—kindly—"you must study economy, child; remember you are not marrying a rich man."

"He is rich enough for me," smiling; "though indeed it need not signify, as I have money enough for both. I never spoke of it until now, because I wished to keep it as a little surprise for him on—on our wedding-day, but at Mr. Arlington's death I inherited all his fortune. He never altered the will made before our marriage, and it is nearly four thousand a year, I think," simply: "Colonel Trant knows the exact amount, because he is a trustee."

Lady Chetwoode colors deeply. This woman, whom she has termed an "adventuress," is in reality possessed of a far larger fortune than the son she would have guarded from her at all hazards; proves to be an heiress, still further enriched by the priceless gifts of grace and beauty.

To say the very least of it, Lady Chetwoode feels small. But, pride coming to her rescue, she says, somewhat stiffly, while the pleasant smile of a moment since dies from her face,—

"I had no idea you were so—so—in fact, I believed you almost portionless. I was led—how I know not—but I certainly was led to think so. What you say is a surprise. With so much money you should hesitate before taking any final step. The world is before you,—you are young, and very charming. I will ask you to forgive an old woman's bluntness; but remember, there is always something desirable in a title. I would have you therefore consider. My son is no match for you where money is concerned." This last emphatically and very proudly.

Cecilia flushes, and grows distressed. "Dear Lady Chetwoode," she says, taking her hands forcibly, "I entreat you not to speak to me so. Do not make me again unhappy. This money, which up to the present I have scarcely touched, so hateful has it been to me, has of late become almost precious in my sight. I please myself with the thought that the giving of it—to Cyril—may be some small return to him for all the tenderness he has lavished upon me. Do not be angry with me that I cherish, and find such intense gratification in, this idea. It is so sweet to give to those we love!"

"You have a generous heart," Lady Chetwoode answers, moved by her earnest manner, and pleased too, for money, like music, "hath charms." "If I have seemed ungracious, forget it. Extreme wonder makes us at times careless of courtesy, and we did not suspect one who could choose to live in such a quiet spot as this of being an heiress."

"You will still keep my secret?" anxious.

"I promise. You shall be the first to tell it to your husband upon your wedding-day. I think," says the elder lady, gracefully, "he is too blessed. Surely you possess'd treasure enough in your own person!"

So Cecilia goes to Chetwoode, and shortly afterwards Lady Chetwoode conceives a little plot that pleases her intensely, and which she relates with such evident gusto that Lillian tells her she is an intrigante of the deepest dye, and that positively for the future she shall feel quite afraid of her.

"I never heard anything so awful," says Taffy, who has with much perseverance wormed himself into their confidence. In fact, after administering various rebuffs, they all lose heart, and confess to him the whole truth out of utter desperation. "Down-right awful!" repeats Mr. Mu grave, severely. "I shouldn't have believed you capable of it."

But Cecilia says it is a charming scheme, and sighs for its accomplishment. Whereupon a telegram is written and sent to Cyril. It is carefully worded, and though strictly truthful in letter, rather suggests the idea that his instant return to Chetwoode will be the only means of saving his entire family from asphyxiation. It is a thrilling telegram, almost bound to bring him back without delay, had he but one grain of humanity left in his composition.

It evokes an answer that tells them he has started on receipt of their message, and names the day and hour they may expect him, wind and weather permitting.

It is night,—a rather damp, decidedly unlovely night. The little station at Trunton is almost deserted: only the station-master and two melancholy porters represent life in its most dejected aspect. Outside the railings stands the Chetwoode carriage, the horses foaming and champing their bits in eager impatience to return again to their comfortable stables.

Guy, with a cigar between his lips, is pacing up and down, indifferent alike to the weather or the delay. One of the melancholy porters, who is evidently in the final stage of depression, tells him the train was due five minutes ago, and hopes dimly there is no accident higher up on the line. Guy, who is lost in thought, hopes so too, and instantly offers the man a cigar, through force of habit, which the moody one takes sadly, and deposits in a half-

hearted fashion in one of his numerous rambling pockets to show to his children when he gets home.

"If ever I do get home," he says to himself, hopelessly, taking out and lighting an honest clay that has seen considerable service.

Then a shrill whistle rings mistily through the air, the train steams lazily into the station, and Guy, casting a hasty glance at the closed blinds of the carriage outside, hastens forward to meet Cyril, who is the only passenger for Trunton to-night.

"Has anything happened?" he asks, anxiously, advancing to greet Sir Guy.

"Yes, but nothing to make you uneasy. Do not ask me any questions now: you will hear all when you get home."

"Our mother is well?"

"Quite well. Are you ready? What a beastly objectionable night it is! Have you seen to everything, Buckley? Get in Cyril. I am going outside to finish my cigar."

When Guy chooses, he is energetic. Cyril is not, and allows himself to be pushed unresistingly in the direction of the carriage.

"Hurry, man: the night is freezing," says Guy, giving him a final touch. "Home, Buckley."

Guy springs up in front. Cyril finds himself in the brougham, and in another instant they are beyond the station railings, rolling along the road leading to Chetwoode.

As Cyril closes the door and turns round, the light of the lamps outside reveals to him the outline of a dark figure seated beside him.

"Is it you, Lillian?" he asks surprised; and then the dark figure leans forward, throws back a furred hood, and Cecilia's face, pale, but full of a glad triumph, smiles upon him.

"You!" exclaims he, unsteadily, unable through utter amazement to say anything more, while with his eyes he gathers in hungrily each delicate beauty in that "sweetest face to him in all the world."

Whereupon Cecilia nods almost sardonically, though the tears are thick within her lovely eyes, and answers him,—

"Yes, it is even I. Are you glad or sorry, that you stare so rudely at me! and never a word of greeting! Shame then! Have you left all your manners behind you in Amsterdam? I have come all this way, this cold night, to bid you welcome and bring you home to Chetwoode, and yet—Oh, Cyril!" suddenly flinging herself into his long arms, "it is all right at last, my dear—fear—dear, and you may love me again as much as ever you like!"

When explanations have come to an end, and they are somewhat calmer, Cyril says,—

"But how is it that you are here with Guy, and going to Chetwoode?"

"I am staying at Chetwoode. Your mother came herself, and brought me back with her. How kind she is, how sweet! Even had I never known you, I should have loved her dearly."

This last assurance from the lips of his beloved makes up the sum of Cyril's content.

"Tell me more, sweetheart," he says, contented only to listen. With his arms round her, with her face so close to his, with both their hearts beating in happy unison, he hardly cares to question, but is well pleased to keep silence, and listen to the soft, lovely babble that issues from her lips. Her very words seem to him, who has so long yearned for them, set to tenderest music. "Like flakes of feathered snow, they melted as they fell."

"I have so much to tell, I scarcely know where to begin. Do you know you are to escort me to a ball at Mrs. Steyne's next week? No? why, you know nothing? so much for sojourning in Amsterdam. Then I suppose you are ignorant of the fact that I have ordered the most delicious dress you ever beheld to grace the occasion and save myself from disgracing you. And you are to be very proud of me, and to admire me immensely, or I shall never forgive you."

"I am pretty certain not to deserve condign punishment on that score," fondly.

"Darling, can it be really true that we are together again, that all the late horrible hopelessness is at an end? Cecilia, if this should prove a dream, and I awoke now, it would kill me."

"Nay, it is no dream," softly. Turning up her perfect face, until the lips are close to his, she whispers, "Kiss me and be convinced."

CHAPTER XXXII.

"Sir Guy," says Miss Chesney, two days later, bursting into his private sanctum as "the eve is deciding," in a rather stormy fashion. "I must ask you to speak to your groom Buckley: he has been exceedingly rude to me."

"Rude? Buckley?" exclaims Sir Guy, with a frown, throwing down the paper he has been trying to read in the fast growing gloom. It is dusk, but the red light of the fire flickers full upon his face, betraying the anger that is gathering there. A looker-on would have readily understood by it that Buckley's hours for grooming at Chetwoode are few.

"Yes, I told him to have Saracen saddled for me to-morrow morning, as the meet is at Royston, and I expect a good run, and he said he should not do it without your permission, or orders, or something equally impudent."

"Saracen!" returns Chetwoode, aghast, losing sight of Buckley's miserable behavior or rather condoning it on the spot; "you don't mean to tell me that for one moment you dreamed of riding Saracen?"

"Certainly I did. And why not?" preparing for battle.

"Because the idea is simply absurd. You could not possibly ride him. He is not half trained."

"Archibald rode him last week, and says he is perfect, and quite safe. I have decided on trying him to-morrow."

"I wish Chesney would not put such thoughts into your head. He is not safe, and he has never been ridden by a woman."

"That is just why I fancy him: I have often before now ridden horses that had never had a lady on their backs until I rode them. And to-morrow I feel sure will be a good day, besides being probably my last meet for the season."

"My dear child, I think it would indeed be your last meet were you to ride that brute: his temper is thoroughly uncertain."

"You told me a few days ago my hand could make any horse's mouth, and now—"

"I told you then what I tell you again now, that you are one of the best women riders I ever saw. But for all that you would find it impossible to manage Saracen."

"You refuse him to me, then?" with an ominous gleam in her eyes.

"I wish you would not look at it in that light: I merely cannot consent to let you break your neck. If your own mare does not please you, you can take my mount, or any other in the entire stables."

"No, thank you, I only want that one."

"But, my dear Lillian, pray be reasonable! I entreat Chesney, warmly, and just a trifle impatiently: "do you think I would be doing my duty by you if I sanctioned such a rash proceeding?"

"Your duty!" unpleasantly, and with a certain scornful uplifting of her small Grecian nose.

"Just so," coldly, "I am your guardian, remember."

"Oh, pray do not perpetually seek to remind me of that detestable fact," says Miss Chesney, vindictively; whereupon Sir Guy freezes, and subsides into dead and angry silence. Lillian, as sweeping over the darkening window, commences upon the pane a most disheartening tattoo, that makes the listener long for death. When Chetwoode can stand it no longer, he breaks the oppressive stillness.

"Perhaps you are not aware," he says, angrily, "that a noise of that description is intensely irritating."

"No, I like it," retorts Miss Chesney, tattooing louder than ever.

"If you go on much longer, you will drive me out of my mind," remarks Guy, distractedly.

"Oh, don't let it come to that," calmly; "let me drive you out of the room first."

"As to my guardianship," says Chetwoode, in a chilling tone, "console yourself with the reflection that it cannot last forever. Time is never at a stand-still. And your twenty-first birthday will restore you to freedom. You can then ride as many wild animals and kill yourself as quickly as you please, without asking any one's consent."

"I can do that now too, and probably shall. I have quite made up my mind to ride Saracen to-morrow!"

"Then the sooner you unmake that mind the better."

"Well,"—turning upon him as though fully prepared to crush him with her coming speech,— "if I don't ride him I shall stay at home altogether: there!"

"I think that will be by far the wiser plan of the two," returns he, coolly.

"What! and lose all my day!" cries Lillian, overwhelmed by the atrocity of this remark, "while you and all the others go and enjoy yourselves! How hatefully selfish you can be! But I won't be tyrannized over in this fashion. I shall go, and on Saracen, too."

"You shall not," firmly.

Miss Chesney has come close up to where he is standing on the hearth-rug. The fire-light dances and crackles merrily, casting its rays now yellow, now deep crimson, over their angry faces, as though drawing keen enjoyment from the deadly duel going on so near to it. One pale gleam lingers lovingly upon Lillian's sunny head, throwing over it yet another shade, if possible richer and more golden than its fellows; another lights up her white hands, rather defiantly clinched, one small foot in its high-heeled shoe that has advanced beyond her gown, and two blue eyes large with indignant astonishment.

Guy is returning her gaze with almost equal indignation, being angrily reminded of certain looks and scenes that of late have passed between them.

"You defy me!" says Lillian, slowly.

"I do."

"You refuse me?" as though not quite believing the evidence of her senses.

"I do. I forbid you to ride that one horse."

"Forbid me!" exclaims she, passionately, tears starting to her eyes. "You are fond of forbidding, as it seems to me. Recollect sir, that, though unhappily your ward, I am neither your child nor your wife."

"I assure you I had never the presumption to imagine you in the latter character," he answers, haughtily, turning very pale, but speaking steadily and in a tone eminently uncomplimentary.

"Your voice says more than your words," exclaims Lillian, too angry to weigh consequences. "Am I to understand"—with an unlovely laugh—"you think me unworthy to fill so exalted a position?"

"As you press me for the truth," says Chetwoode, who has lost his temper completely, "I confess I should hardly care to live out my life with such a—"

"Yes, go on; with such a—" shrew is it? or perhaps virago?"

"As you wish it," with a contemptuous shrug; "either will suit, but I was going to say 'flirt.'"

"Were you?" cries she, tears of mortification and rage dimming her eyes, all the spoiled child within her rising in arms. "Flirt, am I? and shrew? Well, I will not have the name of it without the gain of it. I hate you, hate you, hate you!"

With the last word she raises her hand suddenly and administers to him a sound and wholesome box upon the ear.

The effect is electric. Sir Guy starts back as though stunned. Never in all his life has he been so utterly taken aback, routed with such deadly slaughter. The dark, hot color flames into his cheeks, Shaune for her—a sort of horror that she should have been guilty of such an act—overpowers him. Involuntarily he puts one hand up to the cheek her slender fingers, now hanging so listlessly at her side, have wounded, while regarding her with silent amazement largely mixed with reproach.

As for Lillian, the deed once done, she would have given worlds to recall it,—that is, secretly,—but in this life, unfortunately, facts accomplished cannot be undone. Outwardly she is as defiant as ever, and, though extremely white, steadily and unflinchingly returns his gaze.

Yet after a little, a very little while, her eyes fall before his, her pretty, proud head droops somewhat, a small remnant of grace springs up in the very middle of all her passion and disdain. She is frightened, nervous, contrite.

When the silence has become absolutely unbearable, Guy says, in a low tone that betrays not the faintest feeling,—

"I am afraid I must have said something to annoy you terribly. I confess I lost my temper, and otherwise behaved as a gentleman should not. I beg your pardon."

His voice is that of a stranger; it is so altered she scarcely knows it. Never in their worst disputes has he so spoken to her. With a little sickening feeling of despair and terror at her heart, she turns away and moves towards the door.

"Are you going? Pray take care. The room is very dark where the firelight does not penetrate," says Guy, still in the same curiously changed voice, so full of quiet indifference, so replete with the cold courtesy we accord to those who are outside and beyond our affections.

He opens the door for her, and bows very slightly as she passes through, and then closes it again calmly, while she, with weary, listless footsteps drags herself up-stairs and throws herself upon her bed.

Lying there with dry and open eyes, not daring to think, she hardly cares to analyze her own feelings. She knows she is miserable, and obstinately tries to persuade herself it is because she has been thwarted in her desire to ride Saracen, but in vain. After a struggle with her better thoughts, she gives in, and acknowledges her soreness of heart arises from the conviction that she has forever disgraced herself in her guardian's eyes. She will never be able to look at him again, though in truth that need scarcely signify, as surely in the future he will not care to see where she may be looking. It is all over. He is done with her. Instinctively she understands from his altered manner how he has made up his mind never again to concern himself about either her weal or her woe. She is too wretched to cry, and lies prostrate, her pulses throbbing, her brain on fire.

"What is it, my bird?" asks nurse, entering, and bending solicitously over her. "Are you not well? Does your head ache?"

"It is not my head," plaintively.

"Your side, my lamb?"

"Yes, it is my side," says Lillian laying her hand pathetically upon her heart; and then overcome by the weight of her own sorrow, she buries her head in her pillows and bursts into tears.

"Eh, hussy don't cry," says nurse, fondly, we must all have pains there at times, and we must try to learn to bear them as best we may. Come, look up, my bairn I will put on a good mustard blister to-night, and to-morrow I tell you they won't magnify at all," winds up nurse, fluently, who rather prides herself upon her management of the Queen's English, and would scorn at the misplacement of a word here and there; and indeed, after all, when one comes to think of it, it does not "magnify" very much.

But Lillian sobs on disconsolately. And next morning she has fresh cause to bewail her evil conduct. For the day breaks and continues through all its short life so wet, so wild, so stormy, that neither Saracen nor any other horse can leave the stables. Hunting is out of the question, and with a fresh pang, that through its severity was punishment enough for her fault, she knows all her temper of the night before was displayed for naught.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Summer Suggestions.

Bathe daily.

Save your steps.

Drink milk slowly.

Eat your meals slowly.

Sponge your babies with cold water at bedtime.

For insomnia in summer-time take a cold bath at bedtime.

Have your house-gowns made with open necks and elbow sleeves.

Have mercy on your cook in your arrangement of meals for hot days.

Allow double the amount of time in catching boats and trains that you do in winter.

Press towels, folded as usual, through your clothes-wringer and save your laundress.

In washing summer frocks, if the colors run put half a cupful of salt in the last rinsing water.

Give your children water to drink during the hot weather. They need this to make up for the loss from perspiration.

Place a large dish of water in a room where the heat is very oppressive. Change once or twice and the temperature will be perceptibly lowered.

Do not make too many visits, and where you go be sure that your visit is a convenient one. Do not entertain too generously; summer should be a time of rest, and it is difficult to rest with a house full of guests.

Before going for a midday sail rub your face, neck and hands with simple cream, and powder gently with cornstarch. Wipe the powder off, and on returning wash the complexion well in warm water and with castile soap. Camphor-ice and buttermilk both give relief from sunburn.

To wash summer silks remove all grease or other spots with soap and water before proceeding. Make a solution of a teaspoonful of ammonia and a little soap in a pail of water, and in this dip the silk again and again until the dirt is removed. Do not wring out, but press between the hands. Rinse in water from which the chill is gone, and hang in a shady place until partly dry, when lay between two cloths, and press with a hot iron.—[Ada Chester Bond in the June Ladies' Home Journal.]

Some Safe Disinfectants.

There are many good disinfectants, writes Elizabeth Robinson Scovill in the third article of her series "Life in the Invalid's Room" in the June Ladies' Home Journal. Each physician has his favorites. Different kinds are required for different purposes. Some will stain clothing, while others are harsh and disagreeable for personal use.

Cheap and efficacious ones are:

Copperas, one and a half pounds to a gallon of water.

Sulphate of zinc, two ounces, and the same quantity of common salt, to a gallon of water.

Sulphur. Boracic acid, two ounces to a gallon of water.

The copperas solution should be put into vessels before they are used by the sick person, the discharges covered with it before they are emptied, and a pailful thrown down the water-closet two or three times a day. If an earth-closet is used it should be plentifully sprinkled with dry copperas.

Europe produces almost as much tobacco as does the United States, Austria supplying about one-third of the European crop.

THE AMATEUR FRANKY.

Having read somewhere that the best schooling one could have who aspired to literary fame, was the writing of descriptive matter, I have undertaken to give as nearly exact an account as I can of a young girl's debut as a piano soloist.

"Are you aware you have to play to-morrow at the recital?" was the question asked of me by my teacher on Friday as I finished my lesson. "To-morrow—!" I exclaimed. "Why! had you forgotten?"

Miss C— asked this with a smile, and in the coolest manner possible; just as if I hadn't broken out into a cold perspiration at the very thought of playing at a recital without having practised the piece at least twenty-five times per day for a week before, (Sundays excepted of course) and consequently inspiring the neighborhood with the firm belief that I was capable of playing only one piece, and played it at every opportunity offered.

However, I made up for lost time the following morning. I plunged into that piece of music with an earnestness and diligence which would have caused an ant to stop its industrious pursuits to nod approval.

Precisely at three o'clock I started out, my music rolled up and tucked under my arm, trying to persuade myself that I could go through that piece before a howling mob with perfect composure, in fact, that I had nerve enough to face the Queen. But, strange to relate, my hands showed a decided inclination to grow cold and clammy, while my heart would every now and then palpitate at a most terrific rate without the least apparent cause. All this disturbance, however, I put down to natural excitement, for "Who could play in public without a certain amount of excitement," I reasoned.

I opened the door of the hall and marched boldly up the aisle, taking a seat quite near the front, thinking compassionately of a young lady who had squeezed herself into a seat at the very back of the room, and was sitting there with a roll of music, her face wearing an expression of anguish quite startling to behold. Agony was depicted on every feature. (My hands were growing colder.)

"What if I should be first on the programme?" but no, someone else is already seated at the piano. She is followed by another and that one is followed by a young lady who gives a recitation.

I try to interest myself in what she is saying, but just as I begin to have some coherent idea of what she is about, my eyes fall by accident on the piano, and that sweet-toned, inoffensive instrument straightway drives every other thought out of my head. I have a wild desire to jump up and rush home, but, just at this crisis the crowd laughs, and mechanically I join in and laugh too, although I haven't the remotest idea what it is. The laugh saves me, and I think scornfully of my passing weakness and feel like placing myself on a level with the squeezed girl with the agonized face.

Just then my heart gives a great bump against my ribs and I listen breathlessly for the name being announced. No, not mine but that of the agonized faced girl. She rises and I watch her with a superior pitying air; her face has a more despairing look than ever, for, in her attempt to appear cool she has parted her lips in a ghastly grin while her eyes still maintain a stony stare.

She walks forward and you labour under grave apprehensions as to whether she may not stumble over something, as she never looks where she is going, but walks along in a reckless manner gazing into empty space. She is now seated at the piano and has got through the first page, presently there is a break, more facial contortions. Again she goes bravely on.

Meanwhile my heart is going at the rate of a steam engine. Now she is through and I listen while nearly suffocated with internal disturbance. "Not your turn yet! Will your turn never come?" I ask myself. Another one is called up, I begin to grow angry. Why should I be left last on the programme? The more angry I become the cooler I grow, and then, it suddenly occurs to my cooled judgment, that the very best thing I can do under existing circumstances is to cultivate these angry passions, and to fight with bend all my energies to get "madder very galloping" but no sooner have I reached this conclusion than my anger melts away like ice in August.

At last my turn comes, and I walk forward in a dazed way, but, notwithstanding, my knees are knocking together, and the music in my hand is shaking as though there were a blizzard in its near vicinity. I find myself vaguely wondering if the spare will open in my skirt when I sit down on the piano stool, then I am besieged with a haunting fear that the pin I fastened my dress with is showing, and then wonder if my hair is coming down.

Of course the possible adverse criticism of the audience did not enter as a factor into the state of my feelings, oh, no.

I at last find myself seated before the piano. The music is upon the rack all right, but whether I or my teacher placed it there I have no distinct recollection. I commence playing, but find all my superiority to the squeezed-in girl oozing out at the ends of my toes instead of at my finger ends as I intended.

Well I managed to get through the ordeal some way, and with a relieved sigh I walk back to my seat.

A benign old lady sitting in front of me seems to see my dilapidated state of mind, for, as we are preparing to take our departure, thinking, no doubt, I need some encouragement, she holds out her hand and informs me that "You did beautifully. Ah! no doubt," as I sputter out that I was very nervous, a statement which was quite unnecessary for me to make. (I am quite certain she had no doubt.)

However, I am straightway seized with a very exalted opinion of that old lady. I consider her a woman of clear judgment. A wild desire takes possession of me to find out more about her, but fortunately for me concerning the public belief in my sanity the old lady has disappeared.

And now it is over and I look back through a mist and see it all as it were in a dream, and—I am still living.

A. T. A.

Mrs. Meadow (at city hotel)—"Ooo! There's a fly in this soup." Mr. Meadow (who has traveled some)—"Hush, Miranda, don't speak so loud. No use exposing our ignorance. This bill of fare is in French, and mebbe we ordered fly soup."