KERSHAM MANOR.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SEBASTIAN'S WIFE.

The autumn had been unusually bleak and chill. The leaves had already fallen from the trees in Kensington Gardens, and the flower-beds were bare of blossom although October was not yet past. Esther had come from a northern city, but she shivered through her wraps as she turned one afternoon down a little side-street in Kensington and knocked at the door of the ninth house on the righthand side.

The house at which Esther stopped was not by any means the smartest in Delamere Terrace. There were no flowers in the windows; the curtains were soiled, and the paint was peeling in large flakes from the door. The "Furnished Apartments" card looked as if it had been hung up many years ago. Esther rang the bell with a faint sinking of heart, and was ushered by a untidy maid into the drawing-room.

Nina kept her waiting ten minutes, and then came in languidly, with no appearance of pleasure, although she had responded rather warmly to Esther's note asking permission to call. Esther was always punctilious in her dealings with Nina. It hurt her that Nina should seem so cold, but she thought it best to talk on quietly in the usual manner. And presently Nina thawed.

"So you have written a book, Esther?"

Yes, Esther had written a book. It had been out three months.

"I've not read it," said Nina. "I don't read many novels; I have so little time for reading that I like really serious improving books when I do read. Sebastian has read it, and likes it very much."

"Is he writing now?" said Esther.

"I don't think so. I'm sure I don't know what he does with himself," Nina answered with a touch of distaste. "He shuts himself up, or goes down to the Club, or takes the children for a walk—I suppose he can't settle to anything, as we leave England so soon."

Esther turned on her with a quick movement of surprise. "Leave England? Where are you going?"

Nina's eyes dwelt on her for a moment. There was an expression of bitter satisfaction on her face. "We are going to South America—somewhere near Valparaiso," she said. "Sebastian has accepted a consulship."

"Oh, Nina, what a long way off!"

"Yes, of course it's a long way off. It is better than being in England. He has no chance of anything better now. . . ." She paused, and then put her handkerchief to her face. "Why couldn't you leave us alone?" she said in a tearful voice. "Why must you interefere with our affairs? If you had not told Sebastian about these Wyatt people, we need not have gone to South America."

Esther felt as though her heart were pierced. The pain caught her breath. "Nina, what do you mean?" she faltered.

"It's quite true," said Nina, "Of course you could not help it—in a way; but still—you did tell Sebastian about them, you know."

"He said that he was glad—glad to do justice!"

"Oh yes, that's the way he talks. I have no patience with such nonsense. The fact of the case is that old Sir Roland left him a private letter, telling him to give a third of his money to this Henry Wyatt if he could be found. Well, he was not found for all these years, and Sebastian and the lawyer and everybody said that he must be dead. So there was no harm in touching that sum, you know—"

"And Mr. Malet used it?" said Esther breathlessly.

"Not exactly. But he used his own more carelessly than he need have done, and he gave permission to Mr. Colburn to invest some of it in a mine which has come to grief—I don't know how exactly. At any rate, when the Wyatts turned up Sebastian insisted on paying over to them what he says Sir Roland meant them to have, and to do that he had to sell out some of his own stocks and shares, because part of the original sum was sunk in this mine. I dare say I'm not telling you rightly, for I never can understand these business matters, but the long and short of it is that it has made us a good deal poorer than we were before, and Sebastian must take whatever he can get in the way of an appointment."

Esther breathed a word of sorrow. She looked pale.

"It is so unjust!" said Nina resentfully. "So unjust to me and the children. When Sir Roland died, of course he thought that Sebastian would have the Kersham estate, and that his money would make very little difference. As I tell Sebastian, he would never have wanted him to divide it with those horrid Wyatts if he had known how we were circumstanced. And Sebastian threw up his Algerian appointment before he heard of these wretched people, thinking that he could afford to do without it, or that he could get a post at home, for he was quite tired of the Consular Service. And now, I assure you, Esther, we have less than five hundred a year to live upon."

"That would be wealth to some people," said Esther, trying to smile.

But I was not brought up among such people. I don't know how they live. Now look at this tea-gown that I am wearing. It was a great bargain—I got it for ten guineas at Liberty's—reduced of course; and actually Sebastian was angry about it, and said that I must not spend so much. I'm sure if you look at it you will say that it was cheap at the money."

Esther did look. It was certainly a very pretty garment, made of the softest silk, delicate in color, elaborately simple in cut, but quite unsuited to Mrs. Malet's present circumstances.

"Why don't you keep it for your new home?" she said hesitatingly. "Why wear it—here—in London?"

"I must have something pretty about me," Nina answered fretfully. "I'm sure it is dreadful enough to live in these horrid lodgings; but Sebastian would not let me take more expensive ones. My father and mother are abroad, you know; and we have to get our outfit, so we were obliged to come up to London. I wanted to stay at a good hotel; it would have been so much more comfortable."

"But very expensive."

"You are as bad as Sebastian; always talking about expense! As I tell him, whose fault is it that we have not enough to live upon? Not mine, although he does say I am so extravagant. I never heard of such folly in all my life—giving away ten thousand pounds, and expecting me to live on four or five hundred a year. It's not fair to the children; it's not fair to me. Mamma says that Sebastian must be mad!"

"You will be better off in South America," said Esther in a low voice.

"Yes, we shall. But think how far away it is!" said Nina, weeping. "And no advantages for the children, no society, no amusement, and a very trying climate—so they say—it is horrible to think of! I cried for three days straight off when Sebastian told me about it. As I said to him, I never would have married him if I had known what he would bring me to! But I made him so miserable by saying so that I don't mean to repeat it—although it is true. You see he was always so devoted, so absolutely devoted to me."

She wiped her eyes and looked slightly complacent. A little smile stole to the corners of her mouth as she sat, evidently recalling to her mind instances of Sebastian's devotion. There was a thrill of impatience in Esther's voice as she asked, rather suddenly, if she might see the children.

"Roland is out with his father. Muriel is in the nursery with baby; I will ring for them. Muriel is growing rather pretty."

"She is like you, is she not?" Esther asked, with a smile.

"Some people say so. But I am not pretty now."

"You will never be anything else ina."

"And these people, the Wyatts, Esther. Of course you did not know anything about Uncle Roland's wishes, and it was not your fault for mentioning them, I know. Aren't they very common? What are they like?"

"Phillis is a great friend of mine."

"Then I must not expect to hear her described? You really like her?"

"I love her dearly. And this money enables her to marry the man she loves."

Nina shrugged her shoulders. "Is that such a benefit?—Ah, here comes Muriel and baby."

Esther had not seen the baby, who was barely a year old. She took her leave before Sebastian's return, but promised, at Nina's invitation, to come next day. "As Esther was in town," Nina said, with the unconscious selfishness which she showed in every relation of life, "she might as well be made use of." And Mrs. Malet devised schemes for inducing Esther to do the more interesting kinds of shopping for her, and to help in the packing.

The excitement of an impending change, the bustle of preparation, kept up Nina's spirits for some time to an unusually high pitch. It was not until nearly the last day of their stay in London that she broke down. She had been hoping up to the end that Colonel and Mrs. La Touche would return from Germany in time to see her before she left England. Esther was with her when she received a letter from her mother.

"My sorrow at this untoward circumstance," she wrote, "is mitigated by envy of your delightful fate. To travel in foreign lands, to see Europe and Africa and America in company with a man of your dear husband's intellect and attainments, is indeed, dear Nina, a privilege which few women can enjoy. Such experience is an education in itself!"

Nina threw down the letter very angrily. "What does mamma mean by talking in that ridiculous manner about education and my husband's attainments! One would think she believed that we liked the idea of going to South America!"

"Perhaps she wanted to persuade you to like it," said Sebastian, with a quiet smile.

"She should not be so silly. She knows that I hate it, and that I always shall."

"We may perhaps find it pleasant enough. I met a man to-day who told me that life was very bearable out there."

"For a man I dare say it may be. You men make yourselves comfortable wherever you are, and care for nothing else. But for me—for me to talk of life being just 'bearable'—"

Sebastian put his hand caressingly on her shoulder. "It is not even bearable to all people, Nina," he said, half playfully, half sorrowfully. "Be thankful at least that it is no worse."

"She flung away from him. "I've nothing to be thankful for. I am very miserable," she cried. "If mamma had been at the Dower House still I would have stayed with her. I wish I were a girl at home—I wish I had never married at all!"

She had forgotten Esther's presence, or did not regard it as important. Esther saw Sebastian bite his lip. He walked two or three steps away from his wife and did not speak.

"If I had known," said Nina, sobbing hysterically, "what marriage would mean for me, I never would have married. I never thought that you would bring me to—poverty—and disgrace—and ruin!"

"Poverty, perhaps, but neither disgrace nor ruin," said her husband's grave, controlled voice.

"Poverty is disgrace," Nina answered him. "And you are under a cloud in the Service too, and that is disgrace. You know Lord Kersham warned you that you were ruining yourself by your changes, your unsettled ways. They have given you this appointment for Sir Roland's sake, but it is sending you into banishment after all. A paltry consulship in South America! I call that ruin and disgrace, after the posts that you have held!"

Sebastian turned round. "Remember, Nina, why I gave up the other appointments," he said.

"Of course, it is all my fault," said Nina, throwing herself back on the sofa, and still sobbing passionately. "He always turns on me in that cruel way, as if I were the thorn in his side, the clog on his feet. I am sure I never wanted him to leave Vienna! If only I had known what would happen! I never thought that I should be poor and despised and neglected! I am the most miserable woman in the world, and you, Esther, you don't pity me one bit!"

She looked at Esther from behind her wet handkerchief, quite expecting to be caressed and consoled next moment, and to luxuriate in Esther's love and sympathy. But there was silence.

"I do not pity you. If I were you, I should feel afraid of what I had said. I should fear lest real sorrow should come upon me; lest some day I should be a miserable woman. I have said so to you before."

"What do you mean?" cried Nina, throwing wide her arms, with handkerchief doubled into a ball in her hand, and the tears still wet upon her cheeks. Her eyes dilated with a sudden terror.

It is terrible to me," said Esther, now facing her, but still standing at some distance, with her hands clasped and her figure tense with repressed agitation, "to hear you speak so lightly of the greatest good that the world contains. It is as though you wastefully flung away bread when people were starving at your doors. When you call yourself a miserable woman because you are—not even poor, but poorer than you expected to be, not able to buy so many beautiful things, or dress your children as daintily as you wish, I ask myself what you would do if you had neither father nor mother, sister, husband, child; if all of these were taken from you, what would become of you then? Then you would have the right to call yourself a miserable woman. Now you are a happy woman, and it is base to feel no gratitude for the gifts that have been yours your whole life long. It may be superstitious dread that comes across me; but I should fear—I should fear—to lose these good things that were mine."

"How could I lose them all!" she exclaimed, half in fear, half in petulance. "You talk quite foolishly Esther; I could not lose all my relations at once!"

"We can not tell what life is bringing to us; we can not tell how Death may come or to whom," said Esther sadly, but with deepening earnestness. "The one thing that can not fail us is love; not the love of others to us, but our love for them. It is in love for them you should be rich. That can never be taken away from you; whatever life or death may do, you can still love on. You have many to love; you hardly know that you are blessed in having them. Your true happiness is in your own hands, and you are throwing it away."

"You talk as if I did not love my husband and my children!" said Nina resentfully.

"No, only that you do not find your happiness in loving them. You think that a higher position in society, greater wealth, and undoubted success would make you happier. Dear, you would be just as discontented, just as miserable, if you had all that your heart desires, as you are now. All that can make you happy is yours already."

She came swiftly to the couch where Nina was reclining, and put her arms around the slender figure.

"I tried once to make you happier," she said, "by telling you that Sebastian loved you. I was right in saying so, wrong in thinking that your happiness lay in that knowledge. It is in your love for him—that you must be happy. Don't think about yourself, about what is due to you, what your life might have been in different circumstances. Think of these others, whom you love. When you have forgotten yourself and lost yourself in the love of them, you will find happiness. It is always quite true that the kingdom of heaven is within us, Nina; we can not hope to find it in the world. We carry it about with us, our heaven or our hell. . . . It is as much our duty to be happy as to be good."

Nina let her head be drawn down upon Esther's shoulder. She spoke in a complaining tone.

"It is easy for you to talk so; you have no anxieties, no cares."

"And fewer dear ones to love," said Esther in a low voice. "You are happy in having the right to love—the right to be more than any one else in the world to them. Is that nothing? Love them more, Nina; love them till you forget to love anything else, and you will be happy in spite of poverty and care."

But Nina had ears that would not hear.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

TALMAGE'S RESIGNATION.

The Brooklyn Divine Thinks Twenty-five Years is Long Enough for One Pastorate

A Brooklyn special says:—This coming spring I will have been pastor of this church twenty-five years, and a quarter of a century is long enough for any minister to preach in one place. At that anniversary I will resign this pulpit, and it will be occupied by such persons as you may select."

This was the startling announcement which Rev. Dr. Talmage made to his congregation in Brooklyn tabernacle, after having preached a sermon of unusual eloquence, but through which ran a sorrowful vein. No previous intimation of the rev. gentleman's intention had been given, and therefore the whole congregation were dumbfounded. A probable reason for resignation is that after this last year, when a whole-souled response to a call for help was imperative, and when the strain was more pressing by an immediate demand for some of its indebtedness, the congregation was weighed and found wanting. The present church was finished over a year ago, and the congregation started out with the enormous debt of $400,000 staring it in the face. The obligations were reduced to about $169,000, which the congregation were struggling to meet when Mr. Russell Sage sent in a demand, which was considered imperative, for payment of the interest on a mortgage amounting to $125-000. Rev. Dr. Talmage has arranged for a two months' lecture tour through Australia.

DISABLED BY A TIDAL WAVE.

Unusual Accident to the Atlantic Liner Normannia.

A New York special says.—The Normannia, which has returned to this port disabled, was struck at sea by a tidal wave, which swept away some of the deck roofs and part of the promenade deck and injured seven men, including the second officer, who will die. All the injured are Germans. The wave sprung the hurricane deck, completely wrecked the ladies' parlor, the music room, the main saloons, both upper and lower, and flooded the steerage. The 120 first-class and the 145 steerage passengers were thrown into a panic when the immense wave boarded the ship.

Utilizing Scrap Steel.

A process has been discovered by which scrap steel can be heated and rolled into shape. The secret of the invention is a mineral composition, which, blended with certain chemicals and mixed with the scrap, enables the mass to be heated, rolled and welded without melting. Cross pieces of scrap are placed in layers over a bottom piece, and the composition is applied. Finally a top piece is laid on, and the whole is strapped together with iron, making a bundle 2½ inches thick, which is heated and rolled into any shape required.

NUGGETS OF GOLD.

The culminating power of administration is to well know how much power, great or small, we ought to use in all circumstances.

Repartee is the highest order of wit, as it bespeaks the coolest yet quickest exercise of genius at a moment when the passions are roused.

Our sweet illusions only die, fulfilling love's sure prophecy; and every wish for better things an undreamed beauty nearer brings.

A helping word to one in trouble often like a switch on a rail road track—a inch between wreck and smooth-rolling prosperity.

Remorse is a man's dread prerogative. Remorse, if we exclude the notion of responsibility, is an enigma in human nature never to be explained.

The drafts which true genius draw upon posterity, although they may not always be honored as soon as they are due, are sure to be paid with compound interest in the end.

The greatest comfort of my old age, and that which gives me the highest satisfaction is the pleasing remembrance of the many benefits and friendly offices I have done to others.

Wisdom, valor, justice, and learning, can not keep a man in countenance that is possessed with these excellencies, if he wants that inferior art of life and behavior, called good breeding.

In all disputes, so much as there is of passion, so much there is of nothing to the purpose; for then reason, like a bad hound, spends upon a false scent, and forsakes the question first started.

The talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can do well, and doing well whatever you do without a thought of fame. If it comes at all it will come because it is deserved, not because it is sought after.

It is by little things that we know ourselves: a soul would very probably mistake itself for another, when once disembodied, were it not for individual experiences which differ from those of others only in details seemingly trifling.

Vice is the bane of a republic, and saps the foundations of liberty. If our industry, economy, temperance, justice and public faith are once extinguished by the opposite vices, our boasted Constitution, which is built on the pillars of virtue, must necessarily fall.

Like snow that falls on water seem the years, the inappreciable years that melt away into time's welter—yet, unseen, the tide is swelled thereby, and happily some good ship floated across the sand bars into port that means smooth haven and a sight of home.

As a principle, pride is the parent of almost every virtue and every vice—everything that pleases and displeases in mankind; and as the effects are so very different, nothing is more easy than to discover, even to ourselves, whether the pride that produces them is virtuous or vicious.

What if you fail in business? You still have life and health. Don't sit down and cry about mishaps, for that will never get you out of debt nor buy your children frocks. Go to work at something, eat sparingly, dress moderately, drink nothing exciting, and, above all, keep a merry heart, and you'll be up in the world.

AN ISSUE OF BONDS.

Secretary Carlisle Sends Out a Circular Inviting Subscriptions.

Secretary Carlisle lately issued a circular offering for public subscription an issue of bonds of the United States to the amount of $50,000,000, in either registered or coupon form, in denominations of $50 and upwards, redeemable in coin at the pleasure of the Government after 10 years from date of issue and bearing interest payable quarterly in coin at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum. No proposal at a lower price than 117,223, which is the equivalent of a 3 per cent. bond at par will be considered. Bonds will be dated February 1.

The action of Secretary Carlisle in announcing a bond issue was not generally known even in the Treasury circles when the department closed. Among officials who were cognizant of his intention the opinion was expressed that he acted none too soon. Treasury gold is rapidly on the decline. The loss to date was $862,000 and since the first of the month the gold balance has declined from $80,891,000 to $70,634,915 with the present indications that it will fall below $70,000,000 to-morrow. The bonds are, of course, to be purchased for gold only, and the treasury gold will be built up to the extent of the bond issue. This, however, it is anticipated, may only give temporary relief. Gold may be paid into the treasury for bonds one day and the very next day the same gold may be withdrawn by presenting legal tender notes or coin certificates for redemption. The effect of the bond issue, however, will be to give the treasury more money, whether gold or currency is immaterial, and ease up the Government finances at least for the present.

Which Fish Can Swim at the Greatest Speed?

The shark is the fastest swimmer of the fish tribe over long distances, and finds no difficulty in keeping up with the swiftest vessels, swimming and playing round them, and ever on the look-out for morsels, small or large. To fall overboard in shark infested waters is almost certain death, this voracious monster making very few bites of any human being within reach of its jaws. The salmon, in case of short distances, takes the lead, managing to swim with great ease at a speed of twenty-five miles an hour. The dolphin and Spanish mackerel are also very fast swimmers, the latter cutting through the water like a yacht, with its cone-shaped body as smooth as burnished metal. Any one can see at a glance whether a fish is shaped for speed or not. A fast fish looks trim and pointed, its head conical in shape, and its fins fitting close to the body like a knife-blade into its handle; while a fish with large head and short stubby fins is one of the slow species.

Bridget—"Please ma'am, the market man has brought in a meat bill." Mrs. Nuwife—"How stupid; it was fish I ordered, I'm sure."

ABOUT WOMEN SOLDIERS.

Interesting Stories of Military Heroines.

Female Warriors Who Won Fame by Their Bravery.

If we go back to the time of the Crusades, we find frequent references made to the parts women played in these holy wars. Heroines often appeared in the melee, and disputed the prize of strength and courage with the bravest of Saracens.

Omad of Ispahan speaks of the Christian heroines who mingled in the fight. He adds that the young women fought, and the old women animated them by their cries. Of really British origin, we have not a great many Amazons. True, we had our Boadicea, whose courage in leading the Iceni against the legions of Suetonius deserved better fortune. We had Alfred's daughter, Athelfleda, who directed the slaughter of the Danes in the streets of Derby, and even Queen Elizabeth herself whose Amazonian tendencies were prodigious. In her reign the bellicose barons were almost constantly at war, and they used to leave their liege ladies at home to fight any enemies who might choose this time to make a raid upon the castle. The Dudleys of Northampton are said to owe their crest, a helmeted female with bare bosom and dishevelled hair, to an Amazon named Agnes Hotot, who fought a neighbor

ON BEHALF OF HER SICK FATHER

about some disputed land, and the neighbor, it appears, got the worst of it. Then there is Mary Ambree, or English Moll, who distinguished herself in the attempt to recover Ghent from the Prince of Parma in 1584. She was at the head of 1000 men, and sustained an equal combat with 3000 Spaniards for seven hours. When compelled to leave off she went into a castle and defied the enemy challenging any three Spaniards to try their prowness against her single arm, and when summoned to surrender she said "No."

"No knight, sir, of England or captain, you see,
But a poor simple lass called Mary Ambree.

Another noble example is Hannah Snell, or James Gray, the Worcester hosier's daughter, who had such an extraordinary career; first enlisting in Captain Miller's company of Guise's regiment at Coventry, and finally becoming the possessor of a public-house at Wapping. Christian Kavanah or Welsh fought in the war of the Spanish Succession, and

RECEIVED INNUMERABLE WOUNDS

and a pension from Queen Anne. She married a soldier named Davis at Chelsea, and at her death she was buried with full military honors in the burial-ground of the soldiers' hospital. Mrs. Christian Davis, the trooper of the Scots Greys, commonly called "Mother Ross," was a hardy Irish Amazon who led a strange and decidedly, romantic career, and was wounded at Ramilies at which battle the Greys took sixteen or seventeen colors and standards. These are only a few examples of female military courage picked out at random, but there are hundreds of instances which might, if space permitted, be cited. There were also naval Amazons who did good service as able seawomen, such as Ann Mills, who served as a seaman, on the Maidstone frigate, and on board the "Queen Charlotte" an African woman served for eleven years, receiving frequent commendation

FOR HER EXCELLENT WORK.

Then there was Rebecca Anna Johnstone, who fought and died on board one of Nelson's ships. Women played no inconsiderable part in the American Revolution. They helped to write some of the truly animating, patriotic songs which served to cheer and encourage the soldiers of both armies; they housed and sheltered those who were in danger; they carried despatches which, entrusted to other hands, would never have reached their destination, and some few of them fought themselves. Of these few perhaps the best known were Katherine Steel, or "Katey of the Tosh," as she was wont to be called, Jane Gaston, Mr. Pickens, the general's wife, Mary Gould, Mrs. Wright, brave Deborah Samson, who served in the army as Robert Shirtliffe, and was at the storming of York Town, Nancy Hart, "the honey of a patriot, the devil of a wife," who never by any chance looked in a mirror, so ugly was she with her cross eyes and her broad angular month. There are others

WHOSE NAMES ARE REVERED

in many parts of the States, as brave, fearless mothers, wives and sisters, who forgot everything but their family and their country's honor in these terrible days when the States were deluged with blood, when homes were confiscated, and broken hearts and limbs the most common of possessions. In speaking of famous military women we naturally turn to France, which has given birth to more courageous swords-women than any other country. From the time of the invasion of Gaul by Julius Cæsars, to the days of the first Empire, and even later, France can reckon to herself a whole series of heroines gathered from all ranks, from the throne to the most obscure women of the country. Lamartine says of these Amazons that all nations have somewhere in their annals

A FEW MIRACLES OF PATRIOTISM,

of which a woman is the instrument in the hands of God. When all is lost and seemingly hopeless in a national cause, still one must not give up hope if there remains one corner of resistance in a woman's heart. The subject of military women is one which has been deemed worthy of all honor in France, and in addition to the many mentions of such heroines in the works of some of the greatest authors and poets, there is a delightful volume on "Les Femmes Militaires de la France," by Alfred Traucleau and Jules Ladimir, which gives details of the life and work of every heroine who has won fame and glory amongst the ranks of the French Army.

The first we learn of the military heroines of France is of Saint Genevieve (451) Fredegonde, Hermangarde, Emma and those remarkable women of the second crusade, known as "Les Dames aux Bottes d'or et ses compagnes," Blanche of Castile, Jeanne de Montifort, Jeanne de Blois, and the beautiful Jeanne de Belleville, whose husband's death was due to the treachery of the Lord Salisbury of the day (1343). In the next epoch we have the women of Orleans, and amongst them the military gem of many stars of female military glory, the intrepid Joan of Arc.