MRS. LAMSHED'S WILL.

CHAPTER II.—(Continued.)

Mr. Dottleson considered the case in all its bearings, and made up his mind that for the present his safest policy would be one of complete neutrality, while he watched for a suitable opportunity to join in the game himself. He had been a little at a loss to know how he had best receive the application Dr. Lakeworth was sure to make for the pictorial "mark of esteem," which he had treated so negligently, and was almost relieved when a week passed and he heard nothing about it. The young man had called the day after he dined at Blakewood Square to recover possession of the photograph; but learnt with some dismay that no one had seen it. He was a modest unassuming individual himself, and whilst quite aware that his neglect could hardly be gratifying to Mr. Dottleson, he did not anticipate that it would give such offence as Kate appeared to think was inevitable.

"Papa will never forgive you for that," she said, "But perhaps he doesn't know you left it here. He would have been sure to mention it had he found it, and he hasn't said a word to me."

Consultation with Mrs. Lamshed determined them to let the matter drop; and Mr. Dottleson was thus allowed to suppose that his guest had utterly forgotten the distinction he had received. It was a trifle in itself, but it gave Kate's father the feeling that his authority was being left on one side, and himself ignored. It was dangerous for any one who desired Mr. Dottleson's friendship to tamper with his self-love.

It was not long before he saw a chance of making the first move towards ousting Dr. Lakeworth, and he did not fail to take advantage of it. Almost for the first time in her life, Mrs. Lamshed was attacked by a violent cold which settled upon her chest and defied all efforts to dislodge it. Charles Lakeworth came in every day, and no doubt did his best for her, but, as doctors frequently find, he had to contend with the patient as well as the malady.

"I never have been ill," said the obstinate old lady irrationally, "and I'm not going to begin at my time of life. No; I won't go to bed, Lakeworth. This drawing-room is warmer than my room, and I'm going to stay here."

So Mrs. Lamshed remained in the drawing-room, shivering and coughing, whilst Kate and her maid added their entreaties to those of the doctor; but they made no impression upon her; and at last Mr. Dottleson was appealed to, to use his influence. When he understood the condition of affairs, he looked grave, and going down-stairs, shut himself up in the library, where he worked out his project before the mirror to his own satisfaction. "Now, it's your obvious duty," said he to himself, "to put Mr. Lamshed's case in the hands of some one you can trust. You can't honestly say you trust young Lakeworth, for she won't obey him; so you must summon a medical man in whom you have perfect reliance. Now, Dottleson, it won't do to send round the corner of Penkwiss or Musper; you must study the old lady's peculiarities and trade upon them. If she's got a weakness it's the Peerage; and if you mean to undermine young Lakeworth's position, you must shut your eyes to the expense' (Mr. Dottleson gulped down his feelings at this point), "and get some swell physician, Sir Alfred Blodget is your man; he has his finger on the pulses of half the nobility; and if he will come here and talk to her about his illustrious patients and compare her case with theirs, she will take kindly to him. And once I get young Lakeworth away from her bedside, I'll make short work of his philandering with Kate."

Thus Mr. Dottleson reasoned and resolved. It was a costly experiment; but the danger of letting Mrs. Lamshed think he wanted to get rid of Dr. Lakeworth must be avoided, if possible. She could not but be flattered by a visit from such a man as Sir Alfred Blodget, and her son-in-law was right in believing that her weakness for the Peerage would predispose her to receive him favourably.

"The bill will be something awful," sighed Mr. Dottleson as he closed his letter to the great man; but I look upon it as a premium of insurance for the preservation of her will—I mean her life," he hastily amended.

Mrs. Lamshed frowned darkly when he told her what he had done; and it required all his powers of diplomacy to avert a storm. "I don't want to see another doctor, Montague," she said pettishly. "I've told you times without number that Lakewood is good enough for me."

"My dear madam, I don't mean to asperse Dr. Lakeworth's professional abilities; in proof of this I have not sent for an ordinary practitioner."

"Who is it then?"

"My anxiety has been so great during the past few days, that I am going to ask you to allow Sir Alfred Blodget to see you when he calls; just to relieve my mind."

Mrs. Lamshed's wrinkled countenance grew calmer at the name of the new doctor, and the sagacious Dottleson followed up his advantage at once.

"He will be in to-morrow. I have no doubt that he will take your case on his way from Marlborough house, where I understand he is now in daily attendance."

The vision conjured up this adroit remark had an immediate effect upon Mrs. Lamshed. She soared lightly to the social altitude of Sir Alfred's august clientele, and expressed a hope that there was nothing infectious at Marlborough House.

"Nothing at all—nothing at all," responded Mr. Dottleson easily. "The—ah, the Princess has been confined to her room with a severe cough or something: I observed it in the Post this morning."

Mrs. Lamshed lay back upon the sofa cushions, and the ghost of a smile flitted across her face. There was something very soothing in the thought that the same doctor was to prescribe for the same malady both for the Princess and herself. A little fellow-feeling with Royalty made the old lady wondrous kind, and Mr. Dottleson saw that his point was gained. He did not make any attempt to further his plans just now.

"Slowly, and surely, Montague, my boy," he said pleasantly to himself as he went down-stairs, "You've got in the thin end of the wedge, and you must drive it home gently, now you have made such a capital beginning."

Perhaps, if Mr. Dottleson could have heard what passed between his mother-in-law and daughter, five minutes after he had left them, he would not have looked quite so complacently on his beginning.

"It's really very kind and thoughtful of your father, Kate," said Mrs. Lamshed. "Such a splendid opportunity as it will be for Charley!"

"Yes, granny. Why, if it becomes known that he has been in consultation with one of the Court physicians, his fortune will be made; he will be sent for by everybody after that." Kate was rather sanguine, but then she was in love, and that quite accounted for it.

It is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Dottleson had not been influenced by any desire to give Dr. Lakeworth such an auspicious opening; the view his mother-in-law took with Kate had never presented itself to him, or the thirty-guinea visit he had requested Sir Alfred Blodget to pay would have seemed an extravagance worse than unnecessary. In fact it was dawning upon him that he had hooked a fish which might prove unmanageable and be more costly than he calculated on. Suppose Mrs. Lamshed made the inconvenient discovery that this new attendant understood her constitution, and encouraged regular visits at the rate of, say, ten guineas for each! She would pay for all subsequent attention as a matter of course; but the expense would indirectly fall upon him. However, it was no use being frightened by shadows, and he consoled himself with the thought that he had taken the first step towards ridding the house of Charles Lakeworth, happily oblivious of the schemes which the ladies were planning up-stairs.

Sir Alfred Blodget, who had once been aptly described by an incipient page to his mistress as "a short thick person with a square head," came to see Mrs. Lamshed the next day, and commenced his reign by sending his patient to bed, with injunctions to remain there until he called at noon the day afterwards. The old lady submitted meekly; and her first act, when the doctor's directions had been complied with, was to dictate a letter to Charles Lakeworth enjoining him to be present to-morrow that he might meet the great man "in consultation." Unfortunately, the servant who was entrusted with the note met Mr. Dottleson just outside the hall door, and had to disclose to him the nature of her errand.

"Were you told to take this by hand, instead of posting it in the ordinary way?" he asked as he took the letter and glanced at the address.

"Yes, sir. Mrs. Lamshed particularly said I was to take it myself,'" replied the maid.

"Mrs. Lamshed said so?"

"Yes, sir. Miss Dottleson wrote it for her."

"You may tell your mistress that I undertook to leave the note at Dr. Lakeworth's."

The woman surrendered the letter, and returned to the house.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Dottleson,, who had just come back from the City, walked away to the park, and sought a secluded bench, whereon he seated himself, and drew out the letter he had taken possession of. What did his mother-in-law want with this young doctor now? And why did she send her letters by hand instead of putting them in the postbag? He had a right to know what it meant, and he intended to find out. The envelope was carelessly gummed and came open without difficulty. He unfolded the enclosure and bit his lips with chagrin as he read it:

My Dear Doctor,—Come and meet Sir Alfred Blodget here in consultation at noon to-morrow; he is coming to see me.—Yours sincerely,

Maria Lamshed.

Mr. Dottleson stared at it, and a few emphatic words escaped him. What could his mother-in-law be thinking of? To ask a young man who was little more than a medical student to come and "consult" with the first authority of the day! It was ridiculous; it made a farce of Sir Alfred's visit. What an outrageous thing it was for the woman to do!

"Of course, it can't be allowed," he said to himself; "and I'll just take the responsibility of posting this letter in time to be too late for him to keep the appointment."

He replaced it in his pocket, and returned home, deeply vexed at what he looked upon as a mean attempt to take advantage of his generosity. His thoughts flew back to the conversation he had had with Mrs. Lamshed the day before; how he had urged his dutiful anxiety for her health as the reason for calling in Sir Alfred Blodget; and then, in spite of himself, he recalled how he had carefully arranged this to supplant Dr. Lakeworth; and now, instead of doing anything in that direction, his scheme was made use of to benefit the man. Oh, it was very disheartening, and enough to aggravate any one. No wonder that Mr. Dottleson entered his house in a frame of mind which caused Kate to avoid him, and made the servants quake in their shoes as they waited upon him at dinner. Everything had gone wrong, as things have a way of doing when our little tempers get the better of us: the soup was smoked, the fish done to rags, and the joint as tough as leather. Kate, who was skilled in reading the paternal barometer, took little time to discover that the hand was set at "Stormy," and knew better than to deliver herself of her grandmother's message, asking if Mr. Dottleson was quite sure he had left the note for Charles Lakeworth at the right house; indeed, she had a faint suspicion that the said note might have caused the present disturbance in the domestic atmosphere, and judiciously abstained from referring to it. So her father, shielded by his smouldering passion was allowed to keep it in his breast-pocket undisturbed, and the untruth he had ready remained unspoken.

He started for the City earlier than usual next morning; he wanted to evade being questioned about the letter until he had dispatched it, but he was careful not to commit it to the post until nearly eleven o'clock. Then he felt easier; he had foiled the first attempt to make capital out of his liberality, and had gained time to remonstrate mildly with Mrs. Lamshed upon the absurdity of her ideas. It occurred to him more than once during the day that detaining the letter was not quite the best way of beginning operations; but if that cropped up, as it was tolerably sure to do, he must plead failure of memory or make some excuse of that kind. He walked home to Blakewood Square that afternoon, wondering much what the result of his manoeuvre had been, and warning himself that he must be prepared for an outburst of wrath heretofore unheard of on the part of his mother-in-law. The nearer home he came the more awkward he felt his own attitude in the matter to be and had he found it necessary to confront Mrs. Lamshed at once he would have made out a poor case for himself.

It chanced, however, that she was indulging in her customary afternoon siesta when he came in, and he was fully posted by his daughter in the events of the day before the old lady awoke. It seemed that punctually at twelve o'clock Sir Alfred Blodget had called; but there was no Dr. Lakeworth to meet him. At Mrs. Lamshed's earnest request, he had consented to waste five minutes of his valuable time in waiting to be introduced to "her doctor." At a quarter past twelve, just as Kate entered the room, he drew out his watch and rose to go; she dashed recklessly into the breach and succeeded in detaining him until nearly twenty-five minutes past the hour, but still no Charles Lakeworth appeared. Then the great physician had lookerd annoyed, and picking up his hat, made caustic remarks about the independent manners adopted by struggling practitioners. When Mr. Dottleson heard this he felt that he had at all events sown the seeds of a good misunderstanding between Sir Alfred and Dr. Lakeworth and that his task with Mrs. Lamshed would be easier; but he had not heard all that Kate had to tell him. Three o'clock brought Charles Lakeworth to the house in a flutter of disappointment; he had with him the note which had been written yesterday, but which the City post-mark proved to have been despatched to-day. Grandmamma had been exceedingly angry, and told Dr. Lakeworth that she would sift the matter to the bottom as soon as Mr. Dottleson came home, and further promised to make another opportunity of introducing him to Sir Alfred Blodget.

Mr. Dottleson did not feel quite so well after hearing that; but as he received a summons from his mother-in-law almost immediately after Kate had finished her story, he had no time to prepare a brief for his defence.

Mrs. Lamshed was lying amongst her pillows panting for the fray; she waved her son-in-law to a seat at the bedside and attacked him at once. "It was a great pity you forgot that note, after taking it from Sarah, Montague; the contents were most important—most important."

"So Kate has been telling me," said Mr. Dottleson,; "and so I imagined from the fact of your sending it by hand."

"It was worth anything to Charley Lakeworth to meet Sir Alfred professionally. Considering how the boy stands towards Kate, you ought to regret having deprived him of the chance he had to-day."

Mr. Dottleson was very far from regretting it, but did not think it advisable to say so; on the contrary, he hastened to expound his own views. "You could not have weighed the matter with your usual good sense, when you asked that young fellow, who is scarcely more than a student, to meet such a man as Sir Alfred in consultation. Sir Alfred would, I am sure, have felt grossly insulted had he seen the person you wanted to introduce to him in such a manner."

It was an unhappily worded sentence; the back-handed allusion to her "good sense," the suggestion that Sir Alfred would have been grossly insulted through her instrumentality, and finally the careless reference to the "person," stung the old lady to the quick. She turned upon him sharply and spoke with rising temper.

"You're jealously careful of Sir Alfred's sensibilities, Montague. You don't see the advantage of extending a helping hand to a deserving man who wants it, do you?'"

"I have no wish whatever to impede his progress"——

"Or to help it either, no doubt; you seem to forget that he is engaged to Kate."

"He isn't engaged to Kate, and won't be, till he can satisfy my requirements." Mr. Dottleson was a passionate man, and was letting his feelings get the mastery of him. It irritated him sorely to be taken to task like this by Mrs. Lamshed, and he lost sight of his own interests in the anger of the moment. Mrs. Lamshed paused for a few seconds, and then produced the card she always had in her sleeve, when she wanted to crush her son-in-law; but this time it failed utterly. "Must I remind you again that there's still plenty of time for me to alter my will, Montague?"

"I have no control over your intentions, madam; you are quite aware that my daughter Kate is dependent upon me, and will ultimately inherit all I possess."

It was a very gentle hint that if he were cut out of her will in favour of Dr. Lakeworth, Kate would be the real sufferer; but it had its effects upon Mrs. Lamshed.

"I don't think Kate would lose much, those two will be faithful to each other, however long you may keep them apart, in your greed."

"I will never raise a finger to thwart Kate's happiness if she marries a man of whom I can approve."

"Then you don't approve of Charles Lakeworth?"

"No, Mrs. Lamshed; I do not. As things stand now, I most emphatically disapprove of him; and there's an end of it."

There was a dead silence for five minutes; until Mrs. Lamshed spoke again calmly and quietly: "Please ring the the bell, Montague."

(To be Continued).

A TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE.

PLUNGING DOWN A MOUNTAIN SIDE ON A LOG.

Thrilling Journey of John Sweetwood in the Alleghany Mountains—Miraculous Escape From Death.

A Bellefontaine correspondent of the Philadelphia Times says: In these days of modern appliances an d perfected means of travel by steam and electricity, mutilating distance at the rate of a mile a minute, or even more, is considered nothing so startling, but the rapid transit and the modus operandi thereof participated in by John Sweetwood, a lumberman in the wilds of the Alleghany Mountains, one day recently, corners the market on fast travelling.

Sweetwood is a young man about 22 years of age. He is the son of a farmer from one of the most rural districts of this country, big, rawboned, and fearless of anything on top of earth. As with all farmers, so with this one; work during the winter season is slack, and John, thinking to earn an extra penny for himself, determined late in the autumn of 1896, and with the opening of the lumbering season, to go into the woods and spend the winter "logging." In lumbering, as in every other kind of employment, experience counts for a great deal, and the inexperienced, or "greenies" as they are termed in the lumbermen's camp, are not deemed capable of performing the work of an old hand at the business, and so are generally put at work on something more simple.

Fifteen and twenty years ago lumbering was vastly indifferent in the Alleghanies from what it is to-day. Then

VIRGIN FORESTS

covered the entire range of mountains and the lumbermen had only to select the timber nearest to some stream, and the work of getting the logs to water to float down to market was a question of minor improtance. Now, owing to the fact that all the timber along the large streams has been cut, the getting of the logs to water is one of the gravest questions confronting the lumberman. Where practicable, what are termed "log drives" are erected for this purpose. A "log drive" is simply constructed by laying two hewed logs alongside each other in a trail out from the camp to the nearest stream, sometimes five, eight or ten miles away. These drives are usually prepared early in the autumn and when the first fall of snow comes they are put in condition for use by hauling a drag along between them, which packs down the snow. On this water is poured and allowed to freeze, the result being a rude trough of ice, over which the logs glide down grade with startling swiftness. But these drives are not all down grade. Perhaps half the distance will be up grade, and to get the logs up the mountain teams of horses are used. After the logs are rolled into the drive a team is hitched to a log with perhaps 100 ahead of it, according to the steepness of the incline and in this way the whole string is pushed to the top. It was while working in one of these drives that Sweetwood met with the following thrilling experience:

With a canthook he was to follow the first log as a sort of steerer, whose duty it was to see that all was well. If the log caught fast on any protruding ice, snow or wood, with his hook he would loosen it, so that the trail would come on. When the drive is in a bad condition the steerer always finds plenty to do to keep him busy, but if there is lots of snow and cold weather the slide is usually all that can be desired, and the steerer invariably has only the monotony of

TRAMPING ALONGSIDE.

and watching the logs glide along. This was the case during the late cold weather, and Sweetwoods evidently tired with so much tramping, determined to use the logs as a means of more easily getting up the mountain. With the driver of the team away back out of sight, Sweetwood climbed on the foremost log and congratualted himself how much nicer it was than trudging along in the snow.

In this pleasant mood he either forgot that when the logs reached the top of the incline and began to descend the grade their transit suddenly increased, or else he was so absorbed in the pleasure of his ride that he forgot where he was. Be that as it may, however, when the first log went over the incline and began going down Sweetwood was still on it, and before he could dismount the log was going at such a speed that to even try to get off meant death.

In this dilemma all that could be done was to hold on like grim death and await the worst, which to all intemts seemed death in some form or other, and most likely a most horrible death. Talk of express trains, electricity or rapid transit in any of its various forms, they are not in it with the way that log trail went down the mountain side. From the summit to the west branch of the Susquehanna, where the drive ended, and was at least six miles, and in most places the drive was quite steep. Gathering momentum with every foot of its descent, the log with Sweetwood on it sped as if

SHOT FROM A GUN.

Trees and rocks were passed with such starting rapidly that they seemed as one solid blurred wall; the snow was only a glare of white, the log drive itself seemed only a diminutive line only faintly discernible, winding in and out like a huge snake. Sweetwood early in his ride lost his hat, and his hair streamed out behind him like the tail of a bob-tail horse; the wind sang deafening tunes in his ears and almost blinding him with its velocity, while the frost in the air seemed like hail pellets striking him in the face. There was little time for thought, but even in the few seconds there was, Sweetwood wondered what the end would be.

Fortunately for Sweetwood and the only reason that he is alive to relate his experience, the log in which he was perched, was a large, smooth one, and glided along comparatively easy, with little turning, and never once snagging on any protruding substance. Down, down went log and rider, and in less time than it takes to tell it the glimmering expanse of the Susquehanna burst into view. Although nearly unconscious Sweetwood remembers giving one hasty glance towards the river and noted the fact that it was comparatively clear of logs at that point, and the next thing he knew he was plunged into about eight feet of water. Contrary to his expectation of being crushed to death, he was unhurt, save the sickening sensation of the thrilling ride and the shock sustained by his sudden plunge into the river.

When he struck the water he was still on top of the log, and went under with it, but when he arose to the surface he was alone and within a few yards of the opposite shore. With some little difficulty he pulled himself out of the water, and after recovering to some extent th euse of his faculties, viewed with wonderment the scene of his ride and shudderingly thought of

HIS NARROW ESCAPE.

In his descent he supposed the entire trail of 100 logs was following swiftly after the one he was on, and when plunged into the river he expected to be ground to pieces with the logs. Now, as he stood on the bank of the stream and looked not another log was in sight, and his wonderment increased. Gathering himself together as well as possible, he sought a sheltered spot, and with dry matches found in an inside pocket kindled a fire and dried himself and sought composure after his thrilling experience.

Several hours later he made his way down stream until he found a place to cross, then retraced his steps to the drive and started back to camp. About half way to the mountain he found an explanation of the missing logs. The log next to the one on which he had been perched had evidently snagged on something in the drive, and its sudden stop had tumbled the whole string of ninety-nine in one promiscuous heap on the mountain side, breaking the drive and tearing small trees out by the root.

CAREER OF THE CORSET.

Fashion and science have joined hands lately on the subject of women's waists, and now that a belt may safely measure one, two, or even three inches more than it did a few seasons ago, it looks as if the time-honored corset was gradually being sent into semi-disgrace.

Many and various are the different patterns of waists offered to the woman whose health or whose advanced ideas urge a larger waist, and, as a matter of course, deeper breathing. But although all these compromises between stays and no stays are winning wide favor, it does not follow by any means that the day of the corset, pure and simple is over.

It has had a varied career since it first appeared in Italy during the extravagant gorgeousness of the Renaissance. Catherine di Medicis took it with her as part of her trousseau when she went to France to wed Henry II., and, in spite of its crude ugliness, most of the fashionable ladies in Paris adopted it. The fair Queen of Scots and Diana of Poitiers refused to don the tortuous combinations of iron and velvet, but their sinuous charms freed them from conventionalism and excused them for many things. Uncomfortable as the corsets unquestionably were, most of the fair dames bravely boxed themselves up in them, and the Elizabethan belle in her stiff ruff and endless length from shoulders to hips was not so very different from the fashion plates of the past few years.

However the inventive artisans soon substituted something more pliable than cold iron with which to encircle the fair ones of the hour; the days of Louis XIV. dawned, and the mould of fashion which pleased that fastidious monarch's eye was that which permitted no hint whatever of pliability in the feminine form or ease in posture and movement.

But when Louis XV. arrived Boucher his court painter, introduced the dames of the Oeil de Boeuf as coy shepherdesses and rural beauties, and for a time stiff waists became obsolete; but Boucher died, and the tenacious corset again was in favor until Marie Antoinette posed as a country maiden at Little Trianon, and once more easy lines were in vogue During the Directory the waist line was entirely concealed, and Roman and Grecian scandals and togas held their graceful sway. The empire gowns brought the waist immediately beneath the bust; but the empire fell, the waist dropped with it, and the modern steel whalebone and satin corset came in with the century, to last in undisputed favor until this latest movement against it took shape.

For the first time in its history the arguments against it are fortified by pleas for health rather than beauty, and it may be that its final doom has come; but the "ways of mankind are warious, but those of womankind wariouser," and no one can say, after we have had an era of substantial women and unfettered bodies, whether it will not be followed by the irrepressible corset in all its pristine stiffness.

SACRED DOMAIN.

The rooms of a Korean woman are as sacred to her as a shrine is to its image—indeed, the rooms of a wife or mother are the sanctuary of any man who breaks the law. Unless for treason or for one other crime, he cannot be forced to leave those rooms, and so long as he remains under the protection of his wife and his wife's apartments, he is secure from the officers of the law and from the penalties of his misdemeanors.

WHERE CONFIDENCE ENDS.

Is Jenks a man you can trust, papa? asked the fair daughter of the house.

Not if you expect to get your money.