Fall of the Elect

"I do hope, my dear, that she is not one of those dreadful new women."

"I trust not, indeed."

The dean of Chirchester peppered his chop with a thoughtful air, and Mrs. Carberry poured out his tea with a hand which absolutely shook with apprehension. Chirchester was a cathedral town which had not traveled apace with the rest of the world; they disapproved even of tennis, except when played mildly on private grounds, and had played croquet steadily when croquet was dead, with a lordly disregard of their guests' amusement. Now that it had come in again they played it joyfully, but still with the old light mallets and wide hoops of their youth. The mothers of Chirchester read the new library books with horror-stricken looks and little trickles of guilty enjoyment. Cricket hunting, and the new "biking," were things their daughters might not do; riding gently along the roads was ladylike and permissable, but the archdeacon's wife actually blushed when a thoughtless person asked her what safety habit her daughter wore, for Louisa Holroyd's pretty figure was hidden in an ample garment made by the loch tailor, the skirt of which came well below her deepest grievance, her tiny buttoned boots. The archdeacon's wife was the sternest and most unbending of the "select," as the country people dubbed the church circle.

The bishop and his fat merry wife had no children, and were given to laughing leniently, at the vagaries of the new woman. So it fell on the archdeacon and the dean to keep the select circle together, and, though there was a twinkle in the handsome dean's eye and a swing of his broad shoulders which hinted he had sometimes played brighter games than croquet, that, as Rudyard Kipling would say, was "another story," and, so far, he and the archdeacon had been equal to their task.

To-day the dean was disturbed as he looked at the open letter on the table. The letter was from a cousin who was obliged to go abroad for an indefinite time on business, and had written asking the dean if he would give his only daughter a home during his absence. "A bright, pleasant girl; I feel sure you would like her as a companion to your own girl," and, if the dean consented, she was to come in a week. How could he say no? He was to be liberally paid for his guest, and her father was an old friend; he must write to say he should be delighted.

"I am glad," said Mrs. Carberry, nervously, "that Cissie is away; very glad. More tea, dear?" and in sheer absence of mind she watered the teapot from the hot milk jug, and handed a cup of the strange liquid to the dean, who looked at it resignedly and rose, for he was an equally tempered man.

"Yes," he said, "it is an excellent thing, for then, if the girl is at all advanced, there will be time to get her into our ways before Cissie returns."

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A week later. The dean and Mrs. Carberry stepped nervously forward as the mail thundered in from London and discharged its living freight on the platform; then their eyes fit joyously on a girl clad in the quietest of traveling costumes, who was evidently their guest.

"You are Helen Adair?"

"Ah, yes, and you are Mrs. Carberry?" The girl held out her hand, dextrously evading the affectionate peck which the elder lady would have bestowed on her. She was a tall, slim girl, with big mischievous gray eyes and peculiarly dainty hands and feet.

"Would you see to my things for me, Mr. Dean? Here is the list," and she vanished in the crowd. The dean made his way to the luggage compartment, and had just finished his task when Helen's voice sounded sweet and low at his elbow.

"Everything's there, I see. Would you get a special messenger to wheel this up, or shall I ride it?" She had her hand on a smart Humber, which she was rolling tenderly through the crowd.

If the box next to him had not been a wicker one the dean would have sat on it and gasped; as it was he gasped standing.

"My dear, a bicycle," he said weakly. A bicycle in the innermost circle of the select!

Helen Adair caught the stony despair in Mrs. Carberry's eyes and saw the dean's flushed cheeks, and her eyes danced suddenly as she took in the situation.

"Don't you ride one, either of you?" she said sweetly. "Perhaps I'd better ride it up; I'm very precious of it."

A girl on a bicycle following the deanery carriage! The dean gasped again, and gave some hasty orders to the porter, and Helen was bundled into the wagonette, her eyes looking somewhat anxiously back at the pleasant Humber.

Between her natural kindliness and her horror at receiving a new woman into her home, Mrs. Carberry spent a restless evening, for they soon gathered that Helen hunted and fished and shot, and yet she spoke of none of those things, but drew the dean into an animated discussion on the Transvaal question at dinner, and told Mrs. Carberry of the latest things in chiffons afterward. The dean could not help thinking he had not spent such a pleasant evening for a long time, and Mrs. Carberry would have agreed with him had it not been for the metal steed reposing in the front hall. As it was, she thought of the austere archdeacon and his wife, of Mrs. Green, the doctor's wife, and others, and she sighed occasionally

Mrs. Holroyd hastened to call next day, and came in with heightened color, having passed the wheeled monster in the hall.

"You must put your foot down," she said sternly, drowning some weak defense of Mrs. Carberry as to everyone riding now. "Remember, my dear, no half measures; she must not use it here."

Then Helen came in, and matters might have run smoothly had they not begun to discuss with bated breath one of the newest books, and Helen joined in carelessly. "It's rather clever," she said.

Mrs. Holroyd dropped her glasses with a clatter. "You—have—read—that—book," she said, dropping each word out slowly.

"Oh, yes," Helen smiled. "It is a very ordinary book, you know," I rather agree with the authoress."

Mrs. Holroyd rose slowly; she could only show how shocked she was by withdrawing her stately presence. "No, thank you, Mrs. Carberry," she said, "I cannot stay for tea this evening. Good afternoon, Miss Adair. I cannot understand what your father must have been thinking of to allow you even to hear that book's name." And, not without an inkling that her last sentence was slightly overdrawn, she withdrew, leaving Helen to laugh muchly at her antiquated ideas. And cowardly Mrs. Carberry forgot to defend her.

There gradually came a rift from that time among the select; the girls murmured openly because they were not allowed to ride bicycles; they groaned enviously when they saw Helen's numerous tennis prizes. And Louisa Holroyd was said to have wept bitterly when she saw Helen riding in a smart covert coating habit, and caught a glimpse of the neat "tops" which just showed below the skirt. The elders, to quell the rebellion, were stricter even than usual to their daughters, and prided themselves more than ever on their customs not being as other men's.

* * * *

Mrs. Carberry was "at home" to the surrounding country and town; croquet was being played on the trimly kept lawn, archery, bowls, even Aunt Sally in a faraway corner, where shouts of unseemly laughter were smothered by surrounding shrubs. Everyone had come, the day was cloudless, and Mrs. Carberry felt it was all a tremendous success.

Nearly everyone had gone in to tea only Helen and two flannel-clad men were on the croquet lawn, aimlessly hitting the balls about. They had voted the tea room too hot to bear.

"Stupid game, isn't it?" said one of the men, as he missed a hoop and hit the ball away in disgust.

"Yes, isn't it?" said Helen, "and," regretfully, "what a lovely cricket ground it would make. I haven't played for ages—no one does here."

"Oh, lots of the country girl do. Look here, I came on from a cricket practice. I've bats and a ball stuck in the trees over there; let's have up these hoops, and I'll bowl to you."

Helen was delighted, and in a moment walking sticks and an umbrella represented the wickets, and Helen was hitting distinctly easy balls in all directions. The dean's portly figure appeared at the end of the walk. He stood still, amazed.

"Cricket, Helen!" he exclaimed, laughing. "If Mrs. Holroyd saw you! Have you seen a parasol anywhere? Old Lady Damer sent me to look for hers; it's all real lace, and she's anxious about it."

"No, I haven't. I say, Uncle Joe, she had long ago said Mr. Dean was too formal, bowl me a ball; they can't get me out," nodding contemptuously at the officers. A distinctly ungrateful speech, considering they had only been too grateful to leave her in.

The dean's fingers closed mechanically on the leather-covered ball, which Captain Elton handed to him. The trim lawn faded away, and he heard again the triumphant yells of his side at Oxford, when, with the victory apparently a certainty for the others, he had bowled three men for three balls and lift his side victor by two runs. He stepped carefully up to the walking stick which marked the second wicket, flourished his arm once or twice, and bowled. It was a nasty, slow ball, breaking in, and Helen's off stump went down with a crash.

"What a splendid ball!" exclaimed the two men, and Helen clamored for more, "for practice." The dean laughed triumphantly. Then Helen suddenly exclaimed: "Let's have a match, Uncle Joe, Church versus State; I'm sure we could beat these two," and before the dean knew where he was they had tossed for going in, and found himself bowling vigorously at Captain Elton, who, armed with a rake handle, was at the wickets.

"It is very hot," he gasped, and, looking round guiltily, he quickly flung his coat on the grass and flew to catch a ball which Captain Elton had returned to him. Then he stood appalled for the bishop's voice came to his ears, and turning, he saw the bishop and his wife standing close behind him. "Cricket!" The bishop's pale, intellectual face was full of laughter as he saw the dean, coatless and breathless, flying for the ball. "I thought this was strictly forbidden."

"Oh, my lord, come and umpire; we want one badly," called out Helen, quite unabashed, and the dean, who had stood still, horror-stricken, picked up the ball again when he saw the lenient expression on the episcopal face, and saw the bishop move in to umpire, while Mrs. Howard sat down on a bench and absolutely shook with merriment. Cricket in the dean's garden, it was too amusing.

By dint of what Helen called poking, the two soldiers had made fifteen runs, and then Helen took her place at the wicket. She was really a fair lady cricketer, and, as fielders were scarce, she ran up the score to eleven in a few minutes, retiring with a cry of disgust as Captain Elton caught her out cleverly with his left hand.

"Now, Mr. Dean," the bishop's wife called out impatiently, as the dean stood hesitatingly, "go in; there's no one else to see."

And the dean went in. A rake handle is not the best of bats, but the dean made a mighty smite, caught the ball on the half volley, and away it went over all their heads into a clump of bushes. Once, twice, thrice did the dean fly to the stick and back—his breath was gone, his face was scarlet—four times.

"I can't go again," he gasped, piteously.

"You must!"—Helen had set her heart on winning. "Once more and we win; run, Uncle Joe, run!" But the delay was almost fatal, for, as the dean turned to run back Captain Elton flung in the ball.

"Run on!" cried the bishop's wife. "Oh, do hurry."

"Out!" cried Mr. Ely, banging down a walking stick

"Oh, no; in!" said Helen.

The dean had no breath to argue with.

"In or out, my lord?" the rivals appealed both together to the bishop, who was holding his sides as he laughed. But, then, what a sight met their eyes as they turned. The whole of the dean's large party stood looking on, on the edge of the ground, led by Mrs. Holroyd, and what had they seen as they came up? The dean, their dean, flying coatless and hatless, up and down, playing cricket in the sacred precincts of the deanery, and the bishop cheering him and laughing. How could the select ever hold up their heads again, and before all the country, too—the country which they had so often lectured on its advanced ways? Mrs. Holroyd looked round in stony despair; words that were too bitter to utter trembled on her lips.

The dean hurriedly picked up his coat and hid as much of his breathless person inside it as was possible. The bishop had decided he was fairly in, so his triumph enabled him to face without flinching the glare in the eyes of his circle and his wife's piteous face.

"My parasol, Mr. Dean?" said Lady Damer, smiling, "you appear to have forgotten it."

"I am so sorry," stammered the dean "It wasn't here, and I—"

Lady Damer put up her pince nez doubtedly. "I really believe," she said, "yes, indeed—why, you were using it as a wicket," and she fished the middle stump which was adorned with lace, out of the ground.

Mrs. Carberry groaned audibly.

"It was my fault," exclaimed Helen; "I never looked for it."

"Never mind, my dear," said the old lady, laughing, "you must come out and play cricket with my grandchildren. We'll get up a match, Mrs. Carberry, as you don't object to cricket now. Let me see, shall we say next week—Thursday?" And Mrs. Carberry said "Yes."

The fall of the select was complete for they picked sides and played more cricket that same afternoon, minus the dean. Mrs. Holroyd accepted her defeat and was silent, even when Alicia Holroyd announced openly that she must come up to try a ride on Helen's bicycle. Only Louisa Holroyd sat away and spoke no rebellious words, but she was deciding what color her new habit would be and whether she would buy brown top boots or black.

IS WOMAN SELFISH?

There are a number of pessimists who insist that women are growing selfish—that they are more concerned with their own pleasures, their own caprices than they are for the welfare and comfort of their husbands and children, says an exchange. How far such opinions are justified by the fact each person must determine for himself or herself. Some have gone so far as to designate womankind generally as "the selfish sex," and not, perhaps, without reason. A writer in an Eastern publication takes the ground that a majority of wives pay little heed to the wishes or interests of their husbands, particularly when it comes to selecting the places where they will enjoy their outings, and the manner in which they will conduct themselves when away from the society of their husbands. "It isn't merely the seeking of enjoyments in which he cannot share that makes it reprehensible," the writer says. "It is the fact that by so doing she makes the conditions of life so much harder for him, for to a man of domestic tastes what is home without a wife but a more or less luxurious prison cell, in which he is condemned to endure solitary confinement? And yet year by year the number of women who thus selfishly desert their husbands when they most stand in need of their ministering care is steadily increasing. Day after day in the list of new arrivals one reads the names of scores of married women whose husbands are not with them because they have to stay in the city and earn the money which their wives are spending."

They are entirely free from any compunction of conscience as to the rectitude of their conduct. Apparently they have all partaken of some opiate which has lulled to sleep that invisible mentor which is supposed to discriminate between right and wrong. The faintest suggestion that they should stay at home and strive to make a life of toil in torrid weather a little easier for their husbands is met with a scornful toss of the head or wide-eyed astonishment that an idea so grotesque and absurd should be seriously entertained for a moment.

"The truth is," the writer in question avers, "that the women of to-day are more selfish than their mothers used to be, because they have been spoiled by too much flattery. The social atmosphere is surcharged with it. Every newspaper has its woman's page, filled with fulsome adulation of the sex; every city has its score or more of clubs, where there is much eloquent discussion of women's rights, but no consideration of woman's duties. The moral superiority of woman over man is assumed by all women who condescend to make comparison between the sexes, and the man who has the temerity to dispute the assumption is regarded as a brute, to argue with whom would be like casting pearls before swine."

"And so it has come about that the average modern, or so-called "up-to-date" woman regards herself as a law unto herself. Whatever she does is right because she does it. Her most firmly rooted idea is that she was sent into this world to get a good time out of it, and that man was made to help her get it. From her point of view, therefore, when she marries one, it is perfectly right and proper that he should work like a slave through the hottest part of the year that she may enjoy herself in the coolest spot that she can find.

Charles Darwin's statue in bronze has been set up in his native town, Shrewsbury.

TRAINS FOR DEADLY WORK

ARMORED COACHES PREPARED TO MEET THE ENEMY.

Realistic Proofs of What Could be Accomplished in War—Ingenious Experiments Made By Captain Stone in England—Practical Difficulties Overcome and Good Showing Made in an Imaginery Encounter Near London.

It is always interesting to turn back to records of the past and note the wild, chimerical schemes that have been associated with the birth of nearly every great invention or discovery. In connection with that of steam power and railroads, imagination soared to unusually giddy heights; engines it was said, should be made to employ their superfluous power in impregnating the earth with carbonic acid and other gases, so that vegetation might be forced forward despite all the ordinary vicissitudes of the weather and corn be made to grow at railway speed.

Again, acting on the theory that no great invention could long remain without making its influence felt on war and warfare at large, crack-brained military enthusiasts came forward with schemes for huge steam plows, emitting noxious vapors, and with scythes affixed to their wheels after the pattern of Boadicea's chariots. These were to take the place of cavalry in future campaigns, where driven at high speed, they might crash through the

RANKS OF OPPOSING ARMIES,

Suffocating those whom they did not mince up.

As time went on calmer suggestions prevailed. The enormous importance railroads for the rapid transit of troops became fully recognized, and the idea of utilizing the iron road as a means for the establishment of armored trains or a species of flying martello towers, to patrol our coast line, first made its appearance. There have been many claimants for the honor of this practical but strangely neglected suggestion.

Captain Fisher's armor-clad train during the first stages of the campaign against Arabi Pasha in Egypt was the first practical example of railways being put to such a use. This train was constructed at Alexandria by a party of bluejackets spoiling for the want of aggressive occupation. It was composed of a locomotive and a number of trucks protected by iron rails, iron plates and sandbags. The engine was placed in the middle of the train, while a Nordenfelt was placed on the first protected truck, and a 40-pounder on the next. The latter, by means of a small crane carried with the train, could be quickly remounted and dismounted, one minute sufficing for the halting of the train to remount and fire the gun. An empty truck or two was run in front of the working portion of the train, so as to minimize any danger that might arise from the explosion of any mines laid in the permanent way by the enemy.

Unfortunately, Captain Fisher did not have many opportunities given him to proving its mettle. In one slight skirmish only did it have a real chance, and then this strange assortment of rolling stocks

ACQUITED ITSELF RIGHT WELL.

Coming upon the scene at a critical moment and creating a great effect by its unexpected fire. Since then, however, both France and Germany have awakened to the value of armored trains as a properly recognized unit of a nation's fighting equipment.

Some five years ago Captain, now Major, Stone, R. A., when acting as Brigade Major, R. A., in the Southeastern District of England, found that if ever it became necessary to mobilize the First Sussex Artillery Volunteers there would be with the corps some 300 men to whom, under the mobilization scheme, no special duties were allotted; and, further, that at Shoreham there was with the corps a forty-pounder breech-loading gun not destined to any particular embrasure or position. He then conceived the idea of utilizing both men and gun on an armored train.

The scheme was no sooner broached than it was well backed up by private capital, and the train's construction followed. The train consists of an ordinary locomotive, a truck specially constructed for the gun, that is, the gun and its carriage are mounted upon a turntable platform pivoted on the center of the track and revolving on a circular racer, and two third-class carriages, rendered bullet-proof with iron plating, for conveying the men, the limber and the projectiles. When working the gun, the gun detachment is protected by a plating some six feet high around three sides of the turntable, and the gun is fired through an aperture.

The main problem involved was the mastering of the recoil so as to prevent the truck capsizing bodily when the gun had to be fired crosswise to the railway line, and also to prevent the rails being torn up or damaged by the

SHOCK OF THE FIRING.

These difficulties were successfully overcome by the addition of a hydraulic brake, and by rising slides on which the gun wheels rest, causing the gun to return automatically to the firing position after the exhaustion of the recoil.

Again by an ingenious arrangement of cross girders, which can be run out and supported on blocks, a broad base can be obtained for the truck when the gun is fired at right angles to the permanent way, while to increase that stability the truck can be connected with the metals by strong clips, acting upon the principle of the ordinary railway couplings, and capable of being screwed up to any degree of tightness.

During the maneuvers of 1895 in the southeastern military district the Sussex armored train furnished realistic proofs of its capabilities. The railway company placed at its disposal a certain stretch of line near Lydd, and though the engine was in the wrong place—that is in front instead of behind since the Board of Trade regulations must be inspected in mimic warfare, and the same do not allow transports to be pushed, they must be pulled—the train's special duties were clearly exemplified.

A screen of cavalry scouts having reported the line all clear, the train advanced, and emerging from a cutting caught sight of a battery of the enemy's artillery in the disadvantageous position of being in the act of limbering up some 2,000 yards away. In a trifle over five minutes five shots, discharging five imaginary forty-pound shells had been dropped among them, and the gun was speeding back before a shot could be fired in return. On the return journey the train had to run the gauntlet of a heavy musketry fire directed from a bridge above, but the defenders were presumably safe in their

BULLET-PROOF COACHES.

Again, in the military maneuvers held in the Southeastern district last autumn the armored train gave further proof of its peculiar qualities for unexpected attack.

September 15 the general idea of the maneuvers on that day was to the effect that an invading army, having landed at Rye, was advancing on London. To meet the enemy, the defending force had been moved from Dover to Wingham, and while the first object of the invader was to cut the railway line between Canterbury and Folkestone line where the armored train was standing, shunted on a siding, but ready to steam off and harass his retreat.

The train left Canterbury and proceeded to Barham, but, not seeing any signs of the enemy, advanced boldly into the Elham Valley. Still unsuccessful in its search the train returned to Barham where it ran right into the middle of the enemy's cavalry scouts. Five rounds from the forty-pounder and a leaden ball from the Maxim quickly put the latter to flight.

Their retreat was followed up, and a running fight ensued at a range of about 2,000 yards, but the enemy did not have a chance in this unequal conflict. Finally the armored train came into touch with the main body of the invaders, and then the gun truck was uncoupled and the gun slowed round for action, broadside on. At this juncture the "cease-fire" sounded, and the train returned to Canterbury, having done a good day's work.

The objections raised against the practicability of armored trains in real warfare are as follows: First, there is the suggestion that the enemy, with a few men carrying

SMALL PARCELS OF DYNAMITE

Could easily destroy the permanent way. Doubtless they could do so if the defender's cavalry stood idle while they advanced for this purpose; while, again, if the enemy pushed forward any considerable force with that object he would be obliged to advance with a considerable front, the defending force naturally possessing a broad front in proportion.

Considering the successful issues of the numerous trials and experiments to which the Sussex train has been subjected, the feasibility of mounting more up-to-date weapons on similarly constructed trains seems apparent. The 4.7-inch quick-firing gun, and even guns of some considerable power, such as the six-inch B. L., would be an interesting experiment. Objection is taken to their weight; but this is a mistake. Artillery experts are of opinion that the gun truck would safely carry the 4.7-inch gun were the former counter weighted with five to ten tons of metal; while for heavier ordinance larger trucks mounted upon bogies could be provided. When in action the pins of these bogies could be securely bolted, curbing their lateral play, additional clips constructed to catch the sleepers, and the strain further distributed by rigidly connecting the various trucks and carriages forming the armored train.

The cost of such trains is not great; artillery officers have reported favorably upon their efficiency, and now that the old martello towers have become hopelessly obsolete their place might be filled by flying prototypes, which would be quite capable of offering serious and unexpected resistance to predatory gunboats or small landing parties.

ANOTHER AUSTRALIAN SYSTEM.

During the last two years, Victoria, Australia, has successfully dealt with the labor question by the formation of labor colonies and village settlements for the unemployed. The colonists received governmental help in raising their first crops. This came in the shape of loans at low rates of interest, and secured on the crops. The village settlements were made near swamp lands, the reclaiming of which provided ample labor and support for all able to work. Thus, while aiding the settlers to support themselves, the government has realized large profits from the enhanced value of the lands In this way 2,500 families have been provided for and are now permanently settled on these once waste lands.

PRESERVING HIS BOOTS.

A new wrinkle may be learned from an English soldier, who was noted for keeping his boots in better condition and making them last longer than any of his brother officers. When asked what he did to them to prevent the leather from cracking and keeping it soft and smooth his reply was "Mutton bone." When an explanation was demanded he said: "It is nothing, I assure you. My man asks the cook for a knuckle bone, which he cleans and then bakes. After rubbing the leather with cream, he then frotes them as hard as he can with the bone. Usually my boots last me three years."

A RANK OFFENSE.

May we have the pleasure of your company, this evening, Colonel? she asked.

The colonel drew himself up haughtily and replied with every evidence of offended dignity.

Madam, I command a regiment!