A WOMAN'S LOVE

OR, A BROTHER'S PROMISE

CHAPTER III.

Instead of taking has way to the Embankment, as he intended, Hector pas ed up Essex Street into the Strand, crossed into Wych Street, and stopped through the gates of New Inn. He entered one of the doors on the left, climbed to the top floor, and kicked violently at one of the sported oaks. Through the letter slit he whistled a few bars of "Higrland Laddie," and an answering voice from within replied, "Right O!" The oak swung open and Hector ente ed.

"Well," said a stout little man, reseating himself at a table where was spread the i evitable bachelor breakfast of bacon and eggs. "Well," he said, going on with his meal.

This was Dr. Henry Balfour—a Scot, of course, the great authority on Nerves. He was short, stout, and sturdy; he was blackhaired and black-moustached, and he had a chin of unusual strength and depth. "'Give me a man with a nose,' Napoleon said, he used to exclaim. "'Give me a man with a chin,' say I." One other thing he prided himself on—he never showed surprise.

So when Hector seated himself and said, "Look here, Henry, you're going to give me a certificate that I am suffering from a nervous breakdown, and that my only chance of recovery is a six months' holiday," Dr. Henry Balfour helped himself to another cup of coffee, winked knowingly, and ejaculated mournfully, "O! Heckie! Heckie!"

Hector laughed and said, "What do you mean?"

"O! a clear case! a clear case!"

"Clear case of what?"

"Cherchez la femme, my boy! O! yes, I'll give you your certificate. You'll disappear for six months, and then one fine spring morning you'll turn up and introduce Mrs. Hector Chisho'm Grant."

"You're wrong, Henry; indeed you're wrong."

"Deny there's a women in it."

"I won't deny anything of the sort."

"No, because you can't. Well, it's none of my business. My business is to provide that certificate, I suppose."

He went to a desk and wrote the misleading document, siging it with all his titles and degrees. Many wondered why a man with such qualifications chose to lead so quiet an existence; but that quiet existence it was which enabled him to do such good work in his particular branch of science. He lived alone because he worked alone, and when he was not engaged at the great hospital for nervous diseases in Whitechapel, or was eating or sleeping, he was working. Never was such a glutton for work. While daylight lasted he would pore over a microscope, and when his lamp had to be lit he would sit down and write far into the small hours.

"This is a thundering lie, he said, as he handed the paper to Hector, "but hang it, if a man can't tell a thumper for his friend what's the good of him? Now, get out. You're going away for six months. I know. I can see it in your eye. When I'm slogging away here, I shall think of you basking with Amaryllis in the shade. Naughty, naughty!" And he shook a reproving finger at Hector, who would have loved to tell his friend all about the adventure that was beginning, but he has pledged his own word to the Queen and Bravo that he would not speak of it save to those who might be of use. And he did not see how Balfour could help.

"Good-bye," said Hector. "I'll tell you this much! there is a woman in the case, I am disappearing for six months, and there the matter ends."

"Ends—for the present," said Balfour. "For the present? The rest follows. Would you dispute my intuition, the intuition of Henry Balfour, M.D., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.P., Corresponding Member of the Pasteur Institute, Vi e-President of the Neurological Society, Grand Manufacturer af Fraudulent Certificates to Lovelorn Highlanders? Get out, Heckie, and good luck to the wooing!"

As Hector went down the narrow stai s he laughed at Balfour's rattlebrain chaff; but behind his laughter there lurked for a moment the merest shadow of a desire that such an end to his adventure were possible. Just for a moment he made a picture—Maddalena and himself—but he rubbed the colors out with a sigh.

As he passed into his office he nodded to the porter and said, "Let me know when the directors come in: they meet at half-past eleven, I think."

"Yes, sir, half-past eleven. Let you know at once, sir."

For the next hour Hector busied himself with his work. At least he tried honestly to busy himself, but in the middle of making up a page, or writing three lines to fit a column he would sit back in his chair and murmur to himself, "Queen Maddalena, whom God preserve!" The foreman compositor stood patiently waiting for Hector to complete some very trivial task. Hector, staring into vacancy, forgot all about him. The porter entered with papers, a junior sub-editor came with some corrected galley-slips, a clerk laid down a bundle of contributors' payment-sheets that needed Hector's signature: Hector was oblivious of everything. For ten minutes the long-suffering foreman endured it. Then he ventured to remonstrate.

"Try a smoke, sir," he said.

"Eh? what's that?"

"Get the steam up, sir," and the man laughed apologetically. "You're never right of a mornin' until you get the engine goin'."

That was true. Hector as a rule could do nothing until he had a cigarette. He lit ore now, mechanically, took a deep inhalation, and then blew the smoke out slowly.

"Now we're all right, sir," said the foreman. "We're be'ind this mornin' and I've got sixteen pages of the Christmas number to do to-day, too."

"Christmas number! Damn the Christmas number!" said Hector, flinging his cigarette into the paper-littered fireplace. "And damn The Week Illustrated, and damn all newspapers. That tobacco's not worth smoking." His palate remembered the cigarettes of the night before. "I'm not fit for work to-day, Goodman, and I'm not going to do any—that's more. I'm going away for a holiday, I'm going to cut this, I'm going—Here!" Bundling together galley-proofs, payment vouchers, unopened letters and papers, Romeike cuttings and all the omnium gatherum of a journalist's table, and thrust the heap into the astonished foreman's arms, and pushed him out of the room.

"There's something for you, Goodman. That'll keep you going. Make a paper out of that. Come back in an hour and tell me how you are getting on."

The foreman departed sadly. He was used to the madmen who make papers, but for Mr. Grant to do this sort of thing——

"'Anwell's where he'll take 'is 'off-day, Brick, take my word for that," he remarked to the porter, jerking his head towards Grant's room.

"John Highlandman?" queried the porter.

"That's 'im," replied the foreman. "Clean off, 'e is. You can 'ear 'im damnin' the Christmas number now. Look what 'e's given me for copy! I've 'ad some queer gents through my 'ands in my time, but this 'ere beats cock-fightin'."

"'E ast me," co fided the porter, "to tell 'im w'en the directors come in. 'Spose 'e's goin' to damn 'em next."

"'E's fit to tackle the Queen of Shebar this morning."

"They'll fire 'im, then. The Colonel won't stand much o' that. Sent me for a bottle of champagne last Friday. 'E wanted Dry Monopoly. I fetched 'im Mowey Shandon. 'Should 'ave 'eard 'im. 'Cussed like a hexpress train, ninetcen to the dozen. 'Did my 'eart good to 'ear 'im. 'Wouldn't mind standin' im' a bottle to 'ear it all again."

"Good-morn', sir—good-mornin'," and the foreman bowed to the Colonel, who grunted acknowledgment as he opened the Board-room door and pas ed in.

"They're all in now," said the porter. "'Sh'll 'ave to tell John Highlandman." And he stepped out of his box and went towards Grant's room.

"See that your pistol's 'andy," called the foreman after him.

Brick had to reveat his information three times ere Grant grasped what he was saying.

"Directors in all now, sir."

"Thanks, Brick—— Here, a minute. There's a sovereign for you, Brick."

"Thankee, sir. Much obliged, I'm sure. Thankee, sir," said Brick, adding to himself as he went back to his box: "If this's 'is special madness, long may it continue."

Grant tapped on the Board-room door, and without waiting for an answer entered.

The Board was in full session. The Colonel sat in the chair at the head of the table. The other four—an Architect, a retired Plumber, a Barrister, and a Guinea-Pig—sat two on each side. The Secretary sat opposite the Chairman. The Guinea-Pig was talking.

"The fact that he is my son-in-law," he was saying, but he stopped dead at the sound of Hector's entrance. The Board looked up, caught sight of Hector, looked a trifle guilty, and then began fiddling with pens and blotting-pads.

"Good-morning, gentlemen," said Grant.

"You wish to see us, Mr. Grant?" said the Chairman. "We're very busy just now."

"I won't keep you longer than I can help," said Hector; "but there is a matter of some importance to both of us which I would like to bring before you."

"Well, make it as short as you can," said the Colonel. He had a wholesome fear of Grant; indeed, so had the whole Board, individually and collectively; because, as may be gathered from the nature of their respe tive pro essions, they knew absolutely nothing of newspaper business, and Hector knew it from top to bottom.

"The fact is, gentlemen, I have been working the machine too hard——"

"What's that?" cried the Plumber, who was dull of hearing. "Wants more machinery? Nonsense. I'll be no party to any more expenditure. I came on this Board to see——"

The Architect explained in a whisper.

"I have been to see my doctor this morning, Dr. Balfour, the nerve specialist. Here is his certificate. You will see he recommends that I should take a six months' holiday."

"Um—ah!" said the Colonel, reading Balfour's elaborate fabrication. "Um—ah! Then, Mr. Grant"—and he he itated for a moment—"what do you propo e doing?"

"I wish to ask," said Hector, "for six months' leave of absence."

"This is very awkward, very awkward indeed," said the Chairman. "When you came in we were just discussing an enlargement of the paper. In these days of severe competition we must move with the times."

"With the Daily Mail," sniggered the Barrister, who had heard the jape in court the previous day.

"We were looking to you to help in the matter. We have also been formulating a scheme for financial retrenchment in all the departments. Your aid there would be invaluable. We have been dropping money heavily of late, as you know."

"I know nothing of the kind," said Hector.

"Then you ought to have known, Mr. Grant. We know," with a wave of his hand towards his brother-directors.

"The profits for the last six months," Hector began.

"Pardon me," said the Chairman, "I was speaking. And in any case, Mr. Grant, that has nothing to do with your request, which I am afraid I must characterize as something unheard-of in the—ah—journalistic world."

"Surely," said Hector, "four years of work without a holiday is some claim."

"I know nothing about that," put in the Colonel ainily. "I have now been Chairman of this company for, let me see——"

"Seven weeks," said Hector. "You are the fourth Chairman within as many months."

"And I have no cognizance of what has happened in the past. I trust I have, in my long experience of men and things, learned the A. B. C. of business—namely, to deal with every case on its own merits." And he bowed his head modestly.

"Speaking for myself, and I think also for my colleagues on the Board——"

"Hear, hear," from the Guinea-Pig, who was never known to say anything el e, except when he wished to unload one of his many sons-in-law on one of his many suffering companies.

"Colleagues on the Board, we cannot entertain your—um—proposal—ah—that we should grant you so long a term for—for patching up the machine. Besides," he went on in a great hurry, "my col'eagues and myself have been noti ing a—a—falling off——"

"Thank you," said Hector. "You need say no more. I think I can suit myself best, and you, too, by resigning formally. I do so now."

"Kindly note, Mr. Thompson," said the Chairman to the Secretary in a great hurry, "that Mr. Grant has placed his resignation in our hands. Note also that we have much—er—regret in accepting it. By the bye, Mr. Grant, when do you wish to begin your holiday? In three months' time, I suppose."

"I wish to begin it now," said Hector, whose temper was beginning to warm, although, on the whole, he was rather amused by the farcical formality of the whole thing.

"You forget that we are entitled to some sort of notice."

"You forget," said Hector, "that in my four years' service I have never taken a holiday. Let the time due to me stand for notice."

The Guinea-Pig slipped round to the Chairman and whispered in his ear. The Chairman nodded with satisfaction, and the Guinea-Pig went back to his chair.

"My colleague," he said, waving his hand towards the Guinea-Pig, "has been pleading with me for you. I have decided—and I think I may speak also for my other colleagues of the Board——"

"Hear, hear!"

"That we will waive the question of notice. We will also waive the question of compensation in lieu of notice. This, I trust, Mr. Grant, you will recognize as very magnanimous on our part; it is practically tantamount to presenting you with six months' salary. Good-morning, Mr. Grant."

"Thank you," said Hector, and the humor of it all seized him. He roared with laughter, to the astonishment of business intellects.

"Now," he went on, "that I am a mere outsider, I may tell you something. It won't do you any good. You won't believe it, and I tell it you only because it pleases me to do it. It is this: You're a set of patronizing humbugs; you are fools; you are worse, you are fools that don't know you are fools."

"Anyhow, we were going to sack you if you hadn't resigned," roared the Colonel, stung out of his self-complacency.

"Then that's one more item to be scored against you," laughed Hector. "I shall wipe that score off one day. Good-bye till then."

"Of all the insolent——" began the Colonel.

"Anyhow, he's gone," said the Guinea-Pig. "Now Gregory—that's my son-in-law—as I was saying, can begin at once."

"At half Grant's salary?" said the Colonel.

"Certainly," said the Gui ea-Pig.

"Kindly note, Mr. Thompson, that Mr. Charles John Gregory has been appointed to succeed Mr. Grant."

And the Board sent Brick out for drinks. The shareholde s paid. Before Brick had returned Hector was packing his bag for a journey to Liverpool.

"The Orange King!" he murmured.

"He's the man!"

(To be Continued.)

HEADQUARTERS OF NILE

AND THE REGION ABOUT LAKE BARINGO.

British Explorer Traverses Territory Never Trodden By a White Man

In February, 1902, Major Powell-Cotton left Mombasa, on the eastern coast of equatorial Africa, with an expedition of seventy-eight men to explore the region about Lake Baringo and the country toward the headquarters of the Nile. A considerable portion of the route had never before been trodden by a white man; and further interest was added to the trip by the hope that more specimens of the okapi, a new species of giraffe-like antelope discovered by Sir Harry Johnston south of Lake Albert Nyanza, would be obtained. This hope was not realizedf but Major Cotton's diary, which he wrote during his sixteen month's trip abounds with new and important discoveries of both scientific and general interest.

The first tribes visited were the Kikuyus. Their villages are so cleverly concealed in the dense vegetation as to be easily passed by unobserved. The only entrance to them is by means of a low tunnel through a stockade of growing thorn bushes. The hair of the chiefs is matted together into curious shapes by means of clay, and in order to prevent this decoration from running away as mud when it rains, a little hood of monkey skin is placed over it.

Near Lake Baringo the caravan was met by a party of native warriors, carrying green boughs as tokens of peace, who presented the curious and somewhat startling appearance of a thicket in motion. At Lake Baringo, Mr. Cobb, the only other white man of the party, turned back, and Major Cotton spent several months in exploring the country in various directions. During one of these expeditions he came upon

A PACK OF WILD DOGS,

and succeeded in shooting one of them, a very unusual feat. The whole pack immediately turned and attacked him, and it was only by accurate and rapid shooting that he saved his life. What he describes as one of his narrowest escapes occurred while elephant hunting in this region.

"We heard elephants feeding in a thick bamboo clump," he says. "I took only one gun-bearer with me to work toward them, and I saw a group of three or four, but as they were all cows we traced our steps without disturbing them. A little further on we could hear another beast feeding, and, thinking it might be a bull—for these often feed apart from the cows—we picked our way along an old elephant path.

"The fallen bamboos and the litter of leaves on the ground made it difficult to do this silently. The beast stopped feeding, there was a moment's pause, and I could hear the crashing of the bamboos as the animal charged toward us, screaming loudly. It was impossible to tell exactly the point where it would appear, for, of course, the dense bamboos completely hid it from view. It was equally hopeless to turn to run, for even along the path we had come the interlaced bamboos would have tripped one up at once; so, signing to the gun-bearer to stand silently behind me, I held my double-barreled cordite 600 in readiness.

"As the elephant's head appeared through the bamboos, almost facing me, with trunk uplifted and ears sticking straight out, I raised my rifle and

FIRED BOTH BARRELS

in quick succession, aiming through the trunk for the frontal shot. Immediately after I turned to flee, tripped and measured my length on the ground, but had the satisfaction of hearing a mighty crash behind me as the elephant fell over on its side."

While at Lake Barnigo a native genius was discovered who had dressed up his donkey with the horns and hide of an antelope, and was in the habit of using it as a decoy for getting within bow shot of the antelope herds.

In the Kimagar country a single specimen of the forest hog was obtained in the Mau forest.

The country about Mount Elgon, where the cave dwellers live, was visited. Major Cotton found these cave houses no more than usually dirty, but Sir Harry Johnston described them as excessively filthy. "They so swarm with flies and are so noisome from the atrocious stench arising from the ancient manure that any extensive examination of them was intolerable."

On the parched Kamopa plateau north of Lake Baringo, the most interesting portion of the journey began over country never before traversed by a white man. The party soon found great difficulty in getting water, and at one time was threatened with death from thirst. One of the native carriers in his delirium strayed away into the bush and his body was found several days later.

Part of the equipment of the expedition consisted of a gramaphone with which a number of concerts were given in the jungle. The natives were much impressed by this "talking horn," and many curious and

AMUSING INCIDENTS

occurred among the audience. "Band pieces did not appeal to them," he says; "but banjo duets or anything with the human voice, whistling, or the imitation of animals' cries evoked roars of laughter or approving grunts."

The strange ideas of finery which the jungle people have were well illustrated in the motley crowds which gathered before the gramophone tent. Iron-hooked finger rings, used for tearing the enemies' flesh at close quarters, were much worn. Many of the chiefs had a piece of elephant's fat hanging on the neck. As this was melted by the heat a thin, greasy stream ran down over the chest, a sign of wealth and high position. The curious clay headdresses were usually numerous, as well as strange skin decorations, among which may be mentioned a band of artificial pimples around the body and a coat of white paint-like fluid over the entire skin.

Some distance northwest of the Tarash valley, along the foot of a range of hills, one of the most interesting "finds" of the expedition was made, in the shape of an elephant's "dying ground." It is extremely rare even in the best elephant country to find the skeletons of elephants which have died a natural death; and although native stories have been told of regular cemeteries to which the beasts resort when about to die, they are usually set down as fables.

"In all my journeys," says Major Cotton," through the elephant country, I do not think I have ever come across the skeleton of one of these beasts for whose death the guides could not account, and on no occasion did I ever see two skeletons together. Here I was surprised to find the whole country side

STUDDED WITH REMAINS.

I thought at first that some fell disease had attacked a vast herd, but on questioning my guide he said:

"'Oh, no; this is the place where the elephants come to die. We often come here to pick up the ivory.'"

In going through the Dodinga country the expedition was repeatedly attacked by the natives, and had several narrow escapes; a number of Major Cotton's followers were killed, but he finally succeeded in reaching Minule, one of the Uganda government stations on the Nile, on June 9, 1903.

With the exception of comparatively small, isolated areas, similar to that traversed by Major Cotton, the geographical exploration of Africa was completed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the remaining work is simply the filling in of detail. There are still several sections, such as the great Congo forest, about the natural history of which little is yet known.

Further exploration in these areas may be expected to disclose other new discoveries as remarkable as that of the okapi, but geographically Africa is completed. From the outlining of the coast line in the fifteenth century by the Portuguese until the middle of the last century the interior regions were almost untouched by the white man, except for Mungo Park's travels in the Niger country.

About this time (1850) a series of remarkable expeditions were inaugurated which have finally resulted in the complete mapping of the African continent. Livingstone, Burton, Speke, Grant, Baker, Dr. Barth, and Stanley are among the famous names in the fifty years' campaign.

SENTENCE SERMONS.

Grumbling is the child of greed.

Sincereity is never self-cons ious.

Sin is never healed by humoring it.

It takes all of life to know a l of love.

Faith is the greatest force in the world.

You cannot feed the soul on frozen truths.

Style is no substitute for sterling strength.

The life that does no good is guilty of much harm.

Character may be sold, but it cannot be bought.

Some people fear to try lest they should succeed.

The hope of this world is in the hard things we have to do.

As soon as a man is good enough he is no longer any good.

Character is what we are when we haven't time to calculate.

People who borrow trouble are always ready to lend advice.

The devil leads to do nothing for the man who has nothing to do.

No man moves this world until he is profoundly moved himself.

It takes more than a bellows in the pulpit to start a fire in the church.

They who laugh at another's distress have no ability to share another's joy.