A WOMAN'S LOVE

OR, A BROTHER'S PROMISE

CHAPTER IX.

It was nigh dawn when Hector and Alasdair turned their horses into the down-sloping road, six inches deep, with lava-grit, that wound between great chevaux-de-frise of flowered and fruited cactus, and ended in the cup of Caldera, the insurgents headquarters. On this hand on that pinnacles and masses of extinct volcanoes frowned and glowered, the deep shadows of them charged heavy with the mystery that broods for ever where life has been and is not. In front of them and behind the hollow where lay their halting-place, towered the mighty tops of the Grande Monte. The gulding stars paled fast, and through the gorges that cut seaward came ever and anon a following breath, cool and fresh and new, the breath of morning. The topmost peaks took the sun; their grey-black, and deep black, and black of death changed into wavering splashes of purple and yellow and amber and fitful crimson that slid down the gigantic lava glacis as water slips over smooth stone; and up from the hidden hollows crept quiet, unexpected little wisps of gossamer mist, to climb and climb until the quickening blue gathered them to itself, and they were no more. Cocks began to crow lustily, and once or twice came the tinkle of a chapel bell and the call of a herd to his goats. Down and down fell the light into the valleys, and down with it rode Hector and his foster-brother.

In the burning ages Caldera ("the Cauldron") was the crater of the vast volcano that is now Palmetto. Miles across and miles deep, it is a perfect cup. The sides are terraced with vineyards, cut with cactus-guarded paths, and brilliant as Joseph's coat with patches of bright color, while at the bottom nestles a round of tender green, dotted in the centre with three tiny houses washed white and pale pink. On the right, like a broad streak of grey paint, runs from bottom to top a bar of unrelieved granite, half a mile wide—a ladder, whose perfect steps rise at intervals of three hundred yards or so. This is Attalaya, the home of the pierced by shallow niches, where dwell some three or four thousand barbarous mountain folk, exclusive, poor, and proud—the same to-day as when Columbus touched there on his westward way—making with the simple craft of savages common pottery of porous clay for sale in Palm City, and subsisting mainly on coarse onions and coarser crusts. Even such poor devils as these were not beneath the notice of the Hispaniolan tax-gatherer: a water-jar of their rough make they sold for two pence, half of which the Hispaniolan took. So there was small love lost between them—a word would set the Attalayans fighting-ready.

Not to the pink and white amid the green did the two riders turn. Keeping well to the left of the little fields, they held on for a split in the face of a grey cliff. Day was now full on the heights, yet down here, in all sorts of nooks and gullies, night lingered. Ten minutes' smart trotting brought them to the beginning of the gap, where they dismounted and led the horses over the boulders of a baranco. For a hundred yards or so they walked, then the mountain seemed to close above them, and all in front was darkness.

Suddenly out of the black flared a torch. For this they made.

A man came to meet them: short, stout, stubbly-bearded and fiery-eyed.

"Senor Grant," he cried. "San Bernardo bless you!"

"You did not expect me, Colonel Tornielli?"

"No, by the Virgin! Not now. We have had never a word of you for three or four days, so I was looking for a surprise visit. But you find me ready. The regiment of Firgasi is here. We have been busy all night, I can tell you. I am hoarse as a raven. Difficult—yes, it is difficult to instruct five hundred men when you have but twenty rifles for the lot. But I have got over that. Ah! senor, if we only had the guns! How enthusiastic, how eager! their hands are itching for the guns. One night with the real article, and they will face any Hispaniolan force—the swine!—any force double their number—face them and thrash them. They can shoot, you know, our heroes: but Mausers are different from fowling-pieces. Yet even knowledge of fowling-pieces tells."

As he talked they entered the cave. In a side nook near the entrance they left their tired horses. Far the cave stretched, and high it lifted, and all was black as the jaws of night, save for the flare of half a dozen torches set in iron loops clamped into the solid rock. Full a hundred yards wide was the cave, and it was at least the same in height. They walked between two rows of sleeping men, four deep: men in the dress of quarriers, vinedressers, carpenters, house-builders, goat-herds, and so on: sleeping soundly on the hard floor, worn out with their military exercises. Tornielli had been in the Hispaniolan army, and he had no notion of how to husband the strength of his men; and besides, he knew the time was short, so he worked them hard.

Half-way down the lane of slumbering men, Hector stopped. It was to Alasdair he spoke, and he used the Gaelic, the speech of his youth, the speech he never used save when he was moved beyond his wont. (It is strange that though a Scottish Highlander may not have used his mother-tongue for many years, let him be stirred to his utmost feeling, and out wells the Gaelic, either to height of love or to hell of hate; tender in endearment or fierce in imprecation, and in either vehemence unapproachable.) And truly this was a scene that might have moved a pessimist of pessimists, a cynic of cynics. Like children they slept; every characteristic expression of the day, all hopes and fears, all anxieties and perturbations, all personal attributes of vanity and arrogance or weakness and cowardice, sublimated and resolved by the magic of sleep: Maddalena and Palmetto forgotten; sleep their only queen, their only country drowsihood. And over their dark masses, where only the scarlet or bright blue of a faja made half contrasts, fell the fitful flare of the torches, hiding more than revealing—on the breast of one a crucific, on the breast of the next the tattooed name of his sweetheart, on the cheek of a boyish third the faint down of dawning manhood, on the uncovered head of a fourth the whitening hair of age. And all these thought Hector, are ready to yield life-blood for Maddalena, a woman, a queen on whom they had never gazed—to yield it for love of liberty—material benefits, the calculating cynic would say; and Maddalena a mere shibboleth, would say the same cynic.

With a wide wave of the arm Hector indicated the slow-breathing sleepers to Alasdair; and in Gaelic:

"See, Alasdair, brother of my heart, they will fight for her, they will die for her. Father mother, wife, children, all they give for the queen—these that have not seen her, these that have not seen, and I that have seen, that know——"

Alasdair's single eye glowed like a coal, and in Gaelic he, too, spoke.

"God be good to thee, Hector, son of my mother's breast, that hast drunk of my mother's milk, the madness is on thee too. Is it indeed she?"

"She it is, Alasdair, and none other. Thou speakest of madness, and true is thy every word. Madness it is, yet better the foolishness of the wise than the wisdom of the foolish. O! man, Alasdair, when thou lookest upon her, the marrow shall melt in thy bones, and the spirit go out of thee to be a breath to cool her brow; thou shalt be servant of her, even as I, ghillie and cup-bearer and shield and footstool, yet lord of all men that love her not."

"Yea, yea," answered Alasdair. "Is she then so fair?"

"Fair!" laughed Hector. "I had thought that in the old tongue I could say anything, could tell thee of the sun and of the moon and the stars, and the red heart of life; but even the old tongue is savorless and empty to utter one little thing of the fairness of Maddalena. All the stars of night are in her eyes, all the tenderness of night is in her hair, all the kingdoms of the earth are in the cup of her little hand. Yet is not her fairness the only snare: she is a saint for purity and a woman for warmth in one; the glamor of the fairies, the the wise ones, is upon her, yet is her breast the house for a man's heart. O! man, Alasdair, I'm a bairn that wants the bonnie star, and a king that despises the earth By God! my father's son would not be more."

"Your father's son could not be less," said Alasdair.

"Maybe, maybe. O! man, there's no pleasure in life without her. The day is dark, and there is no peace in the night: I can but bear in mind that I have touched her hand, and that the grace of her loveliness was upon me. For any man that is enough: it is more than enough for me, whose heart was a wood of withered trees until she looked upon it, and it grew as full of singing birds as Rothiemurchus Forest at the pairing time."

"And the Queen," said Alasdair, laying his hand on his brother's arm, "has she no mind towards thee and thou a Grant?"

Hector smiled sadly at that last little touch of Highland pride.

"Queens do not mate with their ghillies, Alasdair. I am no more than that. Tush! do not answer me, I am no more than that. When thou shalt have seen her, had been caught up for a moment in the soft summer of her eyes, thou wilt understand how a man asks no better fate than to be the stool for her feet, than to be the least one of those that die to pleasure her."

For the first time since Hector had set eyes on Maddalena, and had felt the thrill of her in his blood, he gave utterance to the full thoughts that were in him: before there was none to whom he could speak; now he had Alasdair, and the old happy tongue of boyhood, the rare language of dreames and honey-sweet mysteries and blood-close bonds, the speech of strange lyrical liltings, bore him and his heart and his passion as on a spring spate, and flung him high to the very heavens. This free confession of his surrender to the divine dream of Maddalena eased him, and gave him the deepest pleasure his life had known.

The past, in that moment among the sleeping hundreds, faded and was gone: nought but Maddalena stayed. The years of youth made the background against which the Queen stood radiant: the years of toil and struggle, the years of brain-sapping routine in London, the years of uneventful plod—these were blown out of sight and mind as a common curl of smoke. Remained only the beauty of youth, the dreams of it, long days among the heather, long nights on the lochan, memories of Dee and Don, of King's old Crown and rooks cawing in the elms of Chanonry: remained these only—these, and the Queen. That was all his life had to show; the rest was naught; that was good, and of men he was proudest. The future was to come: death was sure, and love, and some share of fighting. The greatest can have no more, and if they but will, the meanest need have no less.

"But has she no mind towards thee?" persisted Alasdair.

..."Have I not answered thee, blind mole?" said Hector with a laugh. "Queens do not mate with their ghillies."

"Happiness comes not always of mating: I did not speak of that. O! Heckie, man, I would make a supper off my dirk to please thee, and I would have all the world, and the queens of it, of the same mind."

"Brother of mine, we be all creatures of a dream: and what is true and what is not true we know not. But I have looked in her heart—O! the fair place it is—like a bed of roses in a garden of the hills, and I saw growing there the flower that shall yet lie on my breast for remembrance—roses of love and roses of sorrow."

"God save us! Saw ye that?"

"I said that we be all creatures of a dream, and what is true and what is not true, we know not. But that I saw."

"May the day be far, Hector, that shared my mother's milk."

"May the day be soon, Alasdair, son of the breast that suckled me."

"Even if that be thy pleasure, God give it thee!"

(To be Continued.)

THE GREAT SMITH FAMILY.

It Beats the Joneses, the Browns, and all Others.

If numbers make for greatness then is the Smith family incontestably the greatest of all the families inhabiting these islands says the London Daily Mail.

The pride of Smith is writ large upon the pages of the new Post Office London Directory, for in the "court" sections are enshrined the names of 504 Smiths, to which may be added 21 Smyths and 9 Smythes. There are individually recorded here 36 ladies whose sole appellation is plain "Mrs. Smith."

At the head of the family list stand a Judge, a Baronet, 2 Knights 2 Members of Parliament, an Admiral, 3 Colonels, 1 Lieutenant-Colonel, 1 Major, 4 Captains and 13 Reverends, all of the name of Smith.

In the much larger "commercial" section of the directory are found eighteen columns of Smiths, each containing the names of about ninety individual Smiths; so we may take it that there are at least 1,600 Smiths inhabitiog the commercial world of London.

A large number of permutations and combinations of Smith are to be found. Thus we have Smith and Smyth, or, with the addition of the genteel "e," Smithe and Smythe. In the plural we have Smiths, Smithes, Smithyes, Smythies. In the comparative degree, Smither, Smiters, and Smythers; there is no Smithest. We also have the allied active forms Smithem, Smitham and Smithett, also Smithson and Smthson.

Foreign forms are Smit, Schmit, Schmitt, Schmidt, Schmitz and Smits. There are doubtless other variants, but the above are all that the eye of the untrained man is likely to detect, further differentiation may be left to Smith experts.

The Joneses muster but 295, of whom 42 are plain "Mrs. Jones." There are 203 persons named Brown besides three named Browns and 57 Brownes. The Robinsons are nowhere, by comparison.

NONE SUCH.

"I'm looking for a painless dentist. Can you recommend one?"

"I never knew any that didn't hurt at least once."

"When is that?"

"When his bill comes in."

"I remember your wife as such a dainty and pretty little thing, Humly, and yet they tell me she has turned out a fine cook." "Turned out a fine cook? She has turned out half-a-dozen of them within the last three months."

"I don't doubt that the readin' of it's all right," said the customer, "but it ain't the book I'm looking for—the cover don't suit me." "My dear sir," said the bookseller, "will you kindly describe just the book you're after?" "Well, to be plain with you, I want a book that will do to put in a handsome new house."

LION AND TIGER HUNTERS

LADIES WHO RIVAL MEN IN THIS GREAT SPORT.

Society Queens Who Have Hunted Big Game in the World's Wilds.

In these advanced days one need never be surprised to learn that the lady whose grace and charm are the admiration of West-end drawing-rooms is still more in her element when shooting big game in India or the Rockies, leading the field over a stiff country in the wake of the hounds, wrestling with salmon in Scottish rivers, or tramping, gun in hand, over leagues of moorland says London Tit-Bits.

Few men have such a record of adventure in pursuit of big game as Mrs. Alan Gardner, the pretty and charming wife of Colonel Alan Gardner, who a score of times has had nothing betwixt her and death but the barrel of her gun. She has shot fierce tigers in India—indeed, she has written a thrilling account of "A Day with the Tigers"—lions in India, Nepaul, and Assam, and bears in North America. She has led for months at a time the rough life of a wandering hunter in Somaliland, Abyssinia, and Australia; has stalked deer and caught record salmon in Scotland; and yet, true to the strange contradiction of her sex, she is noted for her skill in delicate needlework and as a delightful society hostess.

But Mrs. Gardner has a fair and formidable rival in the Duchess of Somerset, who has spent many a delightful month roughing it with her husband among the wilds of the Rocky Mountains, tracking and shooting grizzlies and revelling in the wild life so graphically pictured by

FENIMORE COOPER.

Another duchess who is an expert with the pen, and who, indeed, has few superiors even among men, is her Grace of Bedford, who as a girl was noted throughout India for her skill and daring as a markswoman. The Duchess is a true sportswoman, who scorns to have her game driven, and is supremely happy when tramping the moors in search of it in the company of her husband and dogs.

But nowadays the list of society women who are clever shots, and who can bring down a stag or pheasant as well as most men, is a formidable one. The Duchess of Hamilton and Lady Tweedmouth are rival queens among deer-stalkers, and it is difficult to say which of them has the greatest number of the finest stags to her credit; and among other shots almost equally good are the Comtesse de Paris, the pioneer of lady-shots in England, the Marchioness of Breadalbane, and Adeline Duchess of Bedford.

Of famous lady-anglers the name is legion. The Duchess of Fife, an enthusiastic and skilful angler, holds the record for the greatest number of salmon ever caught by a woman in one day. The Countess of Wilton once took 120 lb. weight of barbel from the Thames within three hours, thus establishing a record for lady weilders of the rod

SOUTH OF THE TWEED.

Ever since Lady Annesley landed, at her first trial, a 12 lb. salmon, she has been one of the keenest of anglers, and spends months every year with her rod in Scotland and Ireland. Lady Westmorland has had a wonderfully successful career as an angler, and little, if at all, less expert are the Duchesses of Portland and Bedford, Lady Limerick, and Lady Bridge, while possibly the best lady-fisher in the three kingdoms is Miss O'Connell, sister of Sir Daniel O'Connel, of Killarney.

When our grandmothers were young the very suggestion that a lady could, under any circumstances, be a mistress of hounds would have sent them in horror to their smelling salts, and yet to-day it is recognised as quite a proper thing that a woman should fill this essentially masculine office; and that she fills it excellently there can be no doubt.

There is no more daring follower of the hounds in Wales than Mrs. T. H. R. Hughes, who took over the control of the Neuaddfawr Foxhounds on her husband's death, and who, a season ago, swam her horse across a swollen river, while the rest of the company, men and all, made a cautious detour over Llanfair Bridge. The Duchess of Newcastle has for many years been "master" of a fine pack of hounds at Clumber, which

SHE HANDLES SPLENDIDLY.

Miss Edith Somerville has proved as clever a master as her Grace of Newcastle since she has controlled the West Carbery Foxhounds, her own pack; and she has rivals in Ireland in several lady masters and whips of harriers, such as Miss Isa McClintock, Mrs. Stacpoole, and Mrs. Brisco.

Lady Ileene Campbell, who is certainly one of the pluckiest huntswomen in England, is a master of harriers, and a story is told of how, when three men armed with stones defied her to pass over a certain gate, she tossed her head with a laugh, shook her horse's reins, and took a flying leap over the gate, to the open-mouthed amazement of its custodians.

Lady Gifford has acted as "master of the hunt," both in Sussex and Northumberland, for many a season; Mrs. Cheape, the popular Worcestershire "Squire," and one of the finest horsewomen living has for many years been master of the Bentley Harriers; and among other well-known lady-hunters of recent years are Mrs. Pryse-Rice, who acts as her own "huntsman" in Carmarthenshire and Miss Hilda Lfoyd Price, the finest horsewoman in Wales, who has for long acted as whip to her father's harriers.

THE PLOTTERS OF SIBERIA.

In Exile the Russian Revolutionist is a Conspirator.

Siberia is not exempt from the spirit of insubordination so strongly manifested throughout Russia, says the London Times. The exiles, as well as the general population, are striving to organize resistance against the authorities. The number of escapes and attempted escapes is increasing. Helping hands are extended on all sides. In England and in other countries money is collected and sent to Siberia so as to facilitate the escape of political prisoners.

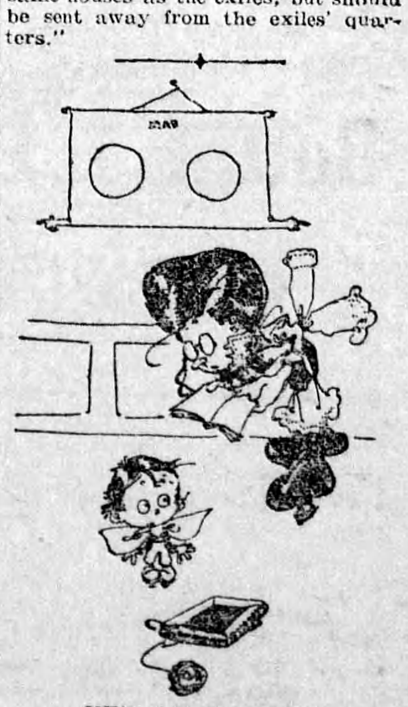
The jailers themselves and the troops or police are sometimes purposely careless in the execution of their duties. That some persons in authority sympathize with the revolutionists is further demonstrated by the fact that a recent circular, though headed "absolutely secret," has nevertheless fallen into revolutionist hands. It is entitled:—"Instructions given to the Governor of the province by His Excellency the Governor-General of the town of Irkutsk, Count Koutayssoff, in 1893." This document is worded as follows, and it gives a picture of what this high official himself thinks of the present situation:

"According to the reports concerning the surveillance of the political exiles who have reached the place of their exile and who are there submitted to public control, I remark that their frequent escapes and the unauthorized journeys they make, going even beyond Siberia, are due to the lack of proper watchfulness. The authorities content themselves with sending official reports. According to the information supplied, taking as a basis the reports of the Department of Police of Aug. 1 and Sept. 14 last, which are numbered 7,201 and 8,205, it is easy to see that the exiles have direct relations with the revolutionary league. They take an active part in the criminal work done in Siberia by the League committees. The object, therefore, for which these persons were exiled has not been attained.

"The lack of proper watchfulness is more particularly evident in the districts of Minusinsk and Atchinsk, which are within the government. At Enisseisk not only do the exiles often escape or travel to other places without being authorized to do so, but it has been clearly shown that the exiles Kracikoff, Dr. Heycine, Pokrovsky, Arkhanguelsky, and others entertained direct relations with labor groups.

"In order to put an end to the criminal action of the political exiles I recommend all the police agents in the country who are under my authority to watch continually the private life of the exiles. For this purpose a police must be organized for the surveillance of all places to which exiles are sent. This police must draw up a daily report on each exile according to the accompanying formula. Those individuals who by their manner of living give rise to the suspicion that they are acting for criminal groups should be subjected without warning to examination. The commissioner of police of the district should give orders for these examinations, indicating at the same time their motive. The examinations should be made frequently.

"It is absolutely necessary to read the entire correspondence of the political exiles. Individuals who are suspected of bad political intentions must not be allowed to live in the same houses as the exiles, but should be sent away from the exiles' quarters."



HE'D LICK TOMMY.

Teacher—Bobby, if your father gave you three cents and gave your brother Tommy five cents, what would it make?

Bobby—Trouble.

"What is the matter?" asked a lawyer of his coachman. "The horses are running away, sir." "Can't you pull them up?" "I am afraid not." "Then," said the lawyer, after a judicial delay, "run them into something cheap."