A WOMAN'S LOVE

OR, A BROTHER'S PROMISE

CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

Word of this outrage found its way to Hector before the afternoon was far spent. His fury was as nothing beside the white anger that flamed in Bravo, who, really gentle soul that he was, cried for reprisal: but while rage kept Hector dumb, Maddalena had no doubt of her action, even though Asunta added to Bravo's impassioned demands the loud clamor of her hate.

"Madame," she blazed, "this is the mercy of Hispaniola. It was the same in Aruba. How did Marco meet it? With fire and sword and the rope. No quarter—no quarter! Let them perish."

The Queen, moved by the fate of the brave handful that already had taken death for her, was untouched by Asunta's scream of vengeance. Indeed, if it were possible, her tender eyes shone more tenderly, and the firm lines of her mouth quivered in a tremor of pity, as she raised her hand for silence.

"Hush!" she said. "Hush! Dona Asunta. I know you hate Hispaniola: you must know how I hate her. But those who have fallen into our hands, they are wounded, they are helpless. If I were to order vengeance to be taken on them who cannot defend themselves, how could I ever look for mercy who showed none? If Stampa finds pleasure in crushing the weak, am I to debase myself to his level? Nay: rather let our prisoners be treated well: fed better, lodged better, if possible, than my own soldiers."

Bravo, the unimpeachable courtier, lost self-possession for a moment, and began to strut in contemptuous wrath. The Queen's eye noted the unwitting insult, and ready to forgive him for the sake of how many years' devotion, averted her head. He began to splutter and clutch empty air with gripping fingers.

"But, your Majesty, you must retaliate——" he began.

Maddalena turned on him with a flash like the leaping of a sword from its quiet sheath. The old man stood open-mouthed while Hector was lost between admiration of this new manifestation of the Queen's nature, and sorrow for the abashed chamberlain.

"Must!" she cried. "Must! My pardon, Don Augustin. My pardon, sir!"

"Madame," he stammered, "O! madame, forgive——" And he burst into tears.

"Dona Asunta, Senor Grant, I pray you leave us"

A meeting with Asunta was not to Hector's liking, yet he was glad to be gone out of the room. Afterwards Bravo recounted to him with glowing pride what had passed.

"You were gone. I knelt before her. 'Don Augustin,' said her Majesty, 'all the years I was your pupil you taught me to remember, every moment of my life, what I am. You begged me, if I should see in a look, or hear in a word of yours, a shadow of disrespect for me, for the Queen—you begged me to reprove you. You have taught me well, sir; you have taught me well who needed no teaching on that point. Am I not a Ribeiro?

I ask you for advice, got guidance, perhaps for help: these I take, and for these I thank you. But, by the Holy Virgin, sir, I do not take orders. To make the offence heavier, you cry must before Senor Grant, a—a—stranger,—she stammered over the word, my friend: it was but her way of making me smart—'and before Dona Asunta, one of my own people. Before the stranger and before my own I have been insulted!' O! she was divine! She is true queen, and true woman too. Without passion what is a woman, what is a queen? Smooth monotony a man tires of in a day, a kingdom learns to scorn in a week. A spice of the devil is welcome even in a saint."

"But the peace is made?" said Hector.

"The peace was never broken, my friend; it was only proved. It is strengthened now."

"I am glad."

Hector, being a man of some imagination, had feared the meeting with Asunta; not so much by reason of doubt of himself, for he had sufficient restraint to avoid making any reference to that lurid scene at Friganeta; but he had measured Asunta to his own satifaction, and he felt certain that she would recur to the impossible subject. The first few formal phrases that passed made him think that his forecast was unjust: but Asunta was cleverer than her play with all her cards on the table had led him to conclude.

"Don Augustin," said she, "is fiery of temper."

"That is to say he is a true Palmetto," Hector replied.

"Yet surely his life of self-sacrifice should win him some consideration."

"Her Majesty will not forget what is due to him."

"You know her Majesty's mind well?"

"I have the honor to be somewhat in her confidence, and I think I know something of her kindness of heart."

"Her heart? A-ah!" This with a sneer of such malevolent significance that Hector was driven to look away, for he was jealous as a child lest any, and least of all Asunta, should surprise his hidden treasure, and he feared that in his face she might read his story. His silence only aggravated her.

"Kindness of heart," she repeated. "To you?"

"I spoke in a general sense. Not to me more than to another."

"I do not call it kindness to treat an old servant, an old friend, as she now treated Don Augustin." Hector kept silence. "You agree with me?" she urged.

"You forget that I, too, am a servant of the Queen. To agree with you would be to pass an opinion on my Royal mistress. A servant must not criticize the one he serves."

"Um! I did not know that you were a coward, Senor Grant."

"At least I am brave enough to differ from you."

"And a servile one, at that."

"Remember that I come of a race whose creed is that the king or the queen can do no wrong."

"So do I; but times—and kings—have changed."

"For the better, I believe."

There was oppressive silence for a few moments, but Hector did not care to break it: better the most uncomfortable silence than more uncomfortable speech. Asunta laughed a little to hetself.

"The Queen, then, is above criticism."

"As she is above suspicion."

It was an unfortunate reply. Spoken in all innocence and honesty, it showed Asunta the opening she knew was in his armor.

"To suspect her would be treason, then?"

"To utter suspicion of her would."

"So loyal a servant as you are would no doubt consider it his duty to report the traitor who should utter treason."

"Of a surety."

"Then, senor spy, go to your mistress"—in her intonation there was subtlest cruelty—"and tell her that I hate her, because she is not worthy to reign over Palmetto, because she holds herself too light——"

The sentence was never finished. She had assumed an air of bravado that was almost Billingsgate in its overacted vulgarity; her face, really beautiful, fell into a jaundiced debasement of sneering and jealousy: but the hate was behind it all shrank before the look that stormed into Hector's eyes.

"You make me almost forget, madame," he cried, "the courtesy a gentleman owes to your sex."

"Pray forget it, sir." She recovered herself.

"I wish you were a man, Dona Asunta"

"Oblige me by thinking that I am.

Hector laughed and waved a hand. The scene appealed now to his sense of the ridiculous, but he was not allowed to keep it on that plane.

"Shall I repeat what I said?"

He answered by a look in which there was as much pity for her foolishness as there was contempt for her insolent persistence.

"You walked with the Queen in the garden last night," she went on.

"I cannot deny it, since, no doubt, friendly eyes followed us."

"She spoke to you——"

"Her Majesty was honoring me with her commands."

"And her eyes spoke as well as her lips. They did not speak of State affairs!"

"Dona Asunta!"

"Is it usual for a Queen, when giving commands to her servants, to lean upon his arm?"

"Her Majesty was fatigued: the explanation is not due to you, but I give it."

"To lean upon his arms with both hands?"

"You are too young to play duenna, madame."

"The arm of an adventurer, too—who comes no one knows whence—who is no one knows who."

"That her Majesty trusts me——"

"Is not sufficient for those Palmettos who see the game you are playing, senor."

"The game!"

"God gave me wits, senor, and I have not let them rust. I have seen what I have seen, and I do not trust you."

That night at Friganeta sprang to his remembrance, and it must have lunged from his eyes, for like lightning she parried.

"I did trust you. I was misled by your show of candour, your enthusiasm, Don Baldassare"—again that name—"and I offered you my love. I know you now—your schemes, the webs you are weaving round the Queen—everything. I hate her, but, Santa Maria! how I hate you!"

"Are you mad?"

"No. The Queen is—you are. But Palmetto shall be saved without the help of either of you."

"What do you mean?"

"Go on, senor, go on. Plot and plan and scheme—you will find a woman's wits sharper in the end. You love the Queen—you love the Queen. Dare you say no?"

He had conceived the possibility of his secret being discovered, but such cruel blurting out of it, such dragging of it into the garnish light, he had not looked for; nor had he believed that man or woman could be so envenomed as do it. The first stun, the shock, was over: now the hot blood ran to his heart, and every fibre of him prickled with painful fire. Mad? Yes, this woman with her calculated torture was driving him mad. But like a cool hand on the fevered brow came the remembrance of those few moments in the garden and Hector was to all outward seeming ice again.

"The question you have asked me, Dona Asunta," he said, "is you will forgive me for not answering. Surely, your generous watchfulness makes a reply unnecessary. The whole of this interview has been, I think, unnecessary. I beg you will now permit me to retire."

"You go, I suppose, to tell the Queen——"

"No, madame."

"No!" with some surprise.

"I have no desire, madame, to be told, to her Majesty's face, that I am a liar."

She paled with anger. The shaft had gone home. It was a hazarded guess, but it was a true one: that was precisely the course Asunta had arranged in the event of a confrontation.

"Adios, Dona Asunta."

"A—dios, senor."

(To be Continued)

SENTENCE SERMONS.

Faint heart is famished heart.

Promptitude is the life of praise.

He who waits on fate wins failure.

Love never boasts of its sacrifices.

Spiritual growth is never spasmodic.

The truth that hits is the truth we hate.

Faith is never developed by finding fault.

The best kind of love is love of our kind.

There is no service where there is servility.

Men who are downcast are easily cast down.

There are no rights without responsibilities.

The high livers do not reach the heights of life.

The devil would have no dupes if he had no decoys.

He who gives the world most always finds he owes it most.

The world needs broad sympathy more than broad sentiments.

There is more health in happiness than there is happiness in health

He who works for the human race has a good show in the heavenly race.

There is no virtue in hearing two sermons if you do not practice either of them.

When money can secure your complaisance with wrong more money will secure your co-operation.

The gate of heaven may be narrow; but many will find that it takes more than narrowness to enter there.

THE DAIRY AS A TEMPLE.

The people called the Todas, living in the Nilgiri Hills, India, have a curious religion ritual evolved out of the ordinary operations of the dairy. The priest, says Dr. W. H. Rivers, is the dairyman, and the temple is the dairy. Only the milk of the sacred buffalo is churned in the dairy temple. The milk of buffaloes that are not "sacred" is churned in the front part of the huts in which the people live. The dairy temples are of different degrees of sanctity, corresponding to the different degrees of sanctity of the buffaloes tended in each. Even the vessels used in a dairy temple vary in sanctity, those that contain the milk being more sacred than those that only receive the products of the churning.

A BAD BREAK.

At last Mrs. Newlywed rose to her feet at the annual business meeting of the Very-best-society Club.

"Nominations for the presidency being in order," she said, "I propose the name of Mrs. Tenderfeelings It is the opinion of a majority of us here that she is our only member capable of filling our retiring president's shoes."

Mrs. Tenderfeelings sprang up hastily, her eyes blazing.

"You horrid, hateful thing!" she exclaimed, "when you know as well as I do that she wears three sizes larger than I do, and always has! I won't have your old nomination—so there, now!"

CHURCH ROBBERY.

Si Medders—"So they charged ye twenty-five cents fer yer supper at the church fair?"

Josh Whiffltree.—"Ya-as; they soaked it to me, b'gosh! Why, all I et was some scalloped osysters, an' stuffed veal, an' deviled ham, an' chicken-salad, an' pork an' beans, an' a leetle piece o' lemon pie, an' some coffee an' doughnuts an' pecannuts."

ALL DOWN.

Mrs. Newlywed—Doctor, that bottle of medicine you left for baby is all gone.

Doctor—Impossible! I told you to give him a teaspoonful once an hour.

Mrs. Newlywed—Yes; but John, and I, and mother and the nurse have to each take a teaspoonful, too, in order to induce baby to take it.

JAPANESE WOMEN IN WAR

DEEDS LIKE THOSE OF THE WOMEN OF SPARTA.

Loss of Son or Husband For the Mikado Is Accounted An Honor.

No nation has a better right to be proud of what its women have done in wartime than Japan. Even the mothers and wives of ancient Sparta have been rivalled in deeds of patriotism and self-sacrifice by the women of Japan.

In the feudal times, which came to an end in Japan only thirty years ago, all gentlewomen were trained in the use of the sword and lance. The women of the samurai class received a regular military education and if the castle of a daimio was besieged, they were capable of assisting in the defence if necessary.

A noted instance of the martial prowess of the Japanese women occurred during the siege of the castle of Wakamatsu in 1869, where the Shogun made his final stand aginst the forces of the Mikado. Nearly one thousand women and girls belonging to the families of samurai attached to the Shogun fought behind the barricades and on the castle walls. Many of them were killed in battle, while not a few committed suicide rather than undergo the humiliation of defeat.

Yet the Amazonian qualities of the women of old Japan did not detract from their womanliness. They were tender mothers and loving wives. The nursing of the wounded and sick was part of the education of every samurai woman.

With the passing away of the age of chivalry in Japan, upon the downfall of the Shogunate, the Japanese woman was called upon to face new conditions, and how she met these conditions is shown in the history of the

CHINESE WAR OF 1895.

It is a matter of record that some 10,000 Japanese women volunteered to get to the front as nurses in the field hospitals at the outbreak of the Chinese war, and advices from Japan state that the number of women volunteering to go to the front as nurses to-day is greater than in 1895. But the women who stay at home are not lacking in patriotic devotion.

There is an anecdote concerning the mother of the heroic Commander Sakamoto, who was killed on the bridge of his ship, the Akagi, at the battle of Yalu, which shows how the spirit of patriotism flames in the hearts of Japanese women.

An official of the Navy Department called on the family of the naval officer to convey, as delicately as possible, the news of his death. Having communicated his tidings to a member of the family, he was about to depart, when the shoji slid open softly and the aged mother of the dead commander staggered into the room.

She had been an accidental eavesdropper and had heard all. Trembling with emotion she bowed low to the visiting officer and said:

"Tell the Emperor I rejoice that a son of mine has been able to be of some service to him."

Some Japanese women refused to weep over their dead, because it was considered disloyal to the Mikado to weep for those who had had the honor to die fighting for him. When a wife or a mother heard that a husband or a son had been killed in battle, the first expression uttered, was an acknowledgement of the honor conferred upon her by the gods in being bereaved for the

CAUSE OF THE EMPEROR.

To the Western mind such patriotism appears to be fantastic and hard to understand. In the light of Japanese history it does not seem so strange.

The spirit of patriotism in the Japanese women of the present generation is the outgrowth of ages of feudalism. The loyalty and devotion which the women of past generations gave to their feudal family head are in the present generation given to the Mikado.

In time of war the Empress of Japan sets an example for all the women of the country by her activities in behalf of all those who are suffering or in distress. She may be seen frequently visiting the great military hospitals, accompanied by a party of court ladies and noblemen's wives.

Following the example of the Empress, all the great ladies of Tokio society do what they can to relieve the distress and suffering that inevitably follow war. There is no class of women that does not contribute something to this cause; even those butterflies, the geishas, and the unhappy creatures in the Yoshiwaras give their share.

It is not only the women of the samurai class who show passionate patriotism in wartime. All classes of society are represented in the modern Japanese army, and the peasant woman has given proof that she is quite as devoted to the Mikado as the samurai lady.

A story is told of an old peasant woman who sent her only son to fight for the Emperor in the Chinese war. By depriving herself of everything but the barest necessaries of life, and toiling early and late in the fields, she had been able to give her son a superior education, and she had the satisfaction of seeing him fairly started on a business career, which promised to be successful, when the call to arms sounded.

The little peasant mother bade her son give up his business and enter the ranks of the army. The boy did as his mother wished, and his regiment was one of the first to set foot

ON CHINESE DOIL.

Every morning just before daybreak the little peasant woman rose and, after meaking a careful toilet, as an orthodox Buddhist she went to a little shrine nearby and prayed to Ojin, the god of war. She did not pray for her son to come home safe and sound, but she prayed that he might prove worthy of the honor of wearing the Mikado's uniform.

One day, when the old woman was returning to her home from the temple, she met a messenger who told her that her son had been killed in the attack on Port Arthur. The mother's eyes grew dim with tears, and she swayed unsteadily for a moment. Then she turned and started to go back to the temple.

"Where are you going?" cried the messenger. "Don't you understand what I say? Your son has been killed."

"Yes, I understand," said the old woman, calmly, "and I am going to thank Ojin for the honor he has conferred upon me."

The Japanese woman who above all others distinguished herself in wartime was the Empress Jingu Kogo, who led a Japanese army in person to Corea in 203 A.D. and conquered that country. She was equally renowned for her beauty, her piety, her energy and her martial valor.

She assumed the supreme power on the death of her husband, the Mikado Chiunai, in 200 A. D., and immediately demonstrated her military genius by suppressing a formidable rebellion. A few years later she invaded Corea, and quickly subjugated that country. She dressed in male attire and fought at the head of her soldiers. After her return from Corea she gave birth to a son, who became the Mikado Ojin and like his mother a great warrior, Jingu Kogo is worshipped as the goddess of war in Japan to-day, and her son Ojin as the god of war.

The history of the feudal warfare in Japan is replete with instances of the heroism of the women. It often happened that the wife of a daimio was called upon to defend the castle from attack during the absence of her husband. She was well qualified for the task both by training and experience.

Considering what Japan has been in the past, it does not seem strange that the Japanese woman of to-day should possess a keen martial spirit and intense patriotism.

BURIED LANDSCAPES.

One of the most curious results of geological exploration is the discovery of "buried landscapes," by Rhich is meant parts of the former face of the earth now covered under later deposits, but yet retaining so many of their original features that the geologist can ideally reconstruct the scenes that would have been presented to the eye of man if he had been present among them. Sometimes buried landscapes exist in countries now densely inhabited. Recent investigation has shown that one lies beneath the region in England known as Charnwood Forest. The rocky projections seen there are the peaks and aretes of a buried mountain chain belonging to the old red sandstone period. Several different phases in the history of this landscape have been traced. At one time it contained salt lakes and desert expanses. In its modern form it is a pastoral region, with barren, stony tracts and rocky eminences where the ancient mountains project through the soil.

WHY SNOW BURSTS A GUN.

In a discussion at the Royal Society in London recently of some experiments on the effects of sudden pressures, attention was called to a singular experience, which, it was said, people who go shooting in winter sometimes have. If the muzzle of a gun happens to get plugged up with a little snow, the gun invariably bursts when fired in that condition. Light as the plug of snow is, it requires a definite time for a finite pressure, however great, to get it under way, aod during this short time the tension of the powder gases become so great that the barrel of the ordinary fowling-piece is unable to withstand it.

ELECTRIC FISHES.

There are about 50 species of fish known to possess electrical organs capable of imparting a shock. A special study of some of them has recently been made by Professor McKendrick, F.R.S., of Glasgow University, with the purpose of ascertaining the source of their peculiar power. He finds that the electricity is generated in specialized organs, which are either modified muscles or modified glands, structures which in all animals manifest electric properties. In economy of production these electric organs far surpass anything yet contrived by man, just as the light of the glow worm excels in a similar sense out best efforts to produce cheap illumination. In each case there is a secret yet to be discovered.