DARE HE?

OR, A SAD LIFE STORY

CHAPTER XXXVI.—(Continued).

"If I had as many gowns as the Mediterranean, how well-dressed I should be!" says Elizabeth, with a smile.

It is the first time she had spoken since they had set off on their return drive. She is lying back, with her hands carefully shielding in her lap a few little crockery pots that she has bought of a fat Turk for some children at her hotel. Her face looks tired; and yet over its small area is spread an expression of content that makes his heart warm. Is it only the pageant of sky and ocean that has called forth that look of real, if passing, happiness on the features of her who is always so tremblingly sensitive an instrument for all influences of beauty and grandeur to play upon? or has his own neighborhood anything to say to it? Before he can give himself an answer to this anxious question, she speaks again.

"You do not mind my not talking to you, do you?" she asks, half apologetically, and yet with a confidence in his sympathy that still further quickens the beats of his already not very still heart.

"No, I am sure you do not. Somehow—it is a great gift—you always feel in tune with one, and one does not chatter most when one is most greatly pleased, does one? Oh, what a treat you have given me!"

As she speaks, her humid eyes travel from his face to where, beyond the long Atlas range, delicately toothed and cut out, rises the gold-washed snow of the Kabyle mountains, that retire majestically invisible on dull days, and only come out, candescent and regal, when the great sun rides in pomp. Above their heads wild plumes of deep rose, that it seems ridiculous to call clouds, tuft the sky.

Jim's look has followed his companion's; the chins of both are in the air; the cheerful va et vient of the boulevard is lost upon them. They see neither the Frenchmen nor plump Frenchwomen drinking coffee outside the cafes, nor the idle indigenes leaning draped against the sea-wall. (Never does that industrious race seem to attempt any severer exertion).

"Thought was not; in enjoyment it
expired.'

But it is brought back to life with a jump.

"Arretez! arretez!" cries a female voice. "Jim! Jim! do you not see us? Arretez! arretez!"

Obedient to his ears, Burgoyne's eyes make one bound from the heavenly spectacle down to earth, and alight upon the Wilson's carriage, which, going in the same direction as himself, has just been brought to a standstill alongside of his fiacre, by the solemnly beautiful yellow-jacketed native coachman.

It is, of course, Cecilia's voice that has apostrophized him, but oh, portent! does his vision, so lately recalled from the skyey bowers, play him false?—or is it really the moribund Sybilla, stretched beside her, with only two instead of three cushions at her back, with a bonnet on her head—he did not even know that she possessed a bonnet—and with a color in her cheek and a lustre in her eye that may owe their origin either to the freshness of the evening air, or to the invigorating properties of the conversation of the very ordinary-looking young man seated opposite to her?

In a second Jim has leapt out of his own vehicle, and gone to the side of the other. It is a perfectly futile impulse that leads him to do so. Not all the leaping in the world from her side now can alter the fact that he has been driving tete-a-tete with Elizabeth Le Marchant, and that the Wilson sisters have seen him so doing; but yet it is a dim instinct of preservation towards, and shielding of her, that leads him to adopt this useless course of action. It is Cecilia who has summoned him, and yet, when he reaches her side, she does not seem to have anything particular to say to him. Sybilla is the one to address him.

"A miracle! a miracle! I know you are saying to yourself!" cries she, in a sprightly voice; "and well you may! This is the miracle-monger!" indicating with a still sprightlier air her vis-a-vis. "Dr. Crump, let me present to you Mr. Burgoyne—Jim, our Jim, whom I have so often talked to you about."

The person thus apostrophized responds by a florid bow, and an over-gallant asseveration that any person introduced to his acquaintance by Miss Sybilla needs no further recommendation.

"It is an experiment, of course; there is no use in pretending that it is not an experiment" continues she, with a slight relapse into languor; "but"—lowering her voice a little—"they wished me to make the effort."

It is a favorite allocation of Sybilla's that any course of action towards which she is inclined is adopted solely under the pressure of urgent wishes on the part of her family. Burgoyne has long known, and been exasperated by this peculiarity; but at present she may say what she pleases; he hears no word of it for his ear is pricked to catch the sentences that Cecilia is leaning over the carriage-side to shoot at Elizabeth:

"Oh, Miss Le Marchant! is it you? I beg your pardon, I did not recognize you at the first moment. One does not recognize people—does one?—when one is not expecting to see them"—is an intended sting lurking in this implication? "How are you? How do you like Algiers? I hope Mrs. Le Marchant is well. What a long time it is since we met! I hope we shall see something of you."

(No, evidently no sting was meant. Cecilia with all her faults, is really a good soul, and he will take her to hear the band play next Tuesday.)

There seems to him to be a slight falter in the tone with which Elizabeth responds, and her voice sounds curiously small and low; but that may be merely owing to its flute quality, following upon and contrasting the other's powerful organ.

It is not till the two parties have again separated, and that he is once more seated by her side in the fiacre, that he dares steal a look at her face to see how plainly written on it are the traces of vexation caused by a meeting which has produced in his own breast such acute annoyance. Good heavens! it is even worse than he had expected. Down the cheek nearest to him two good-sized tears are unmistakably trickling. No doubt the consciousness of the mysterious story attaching to her past makes her smartingly aware of how doubly discreet her own conduct should be—makes her bitterly repent of her present indiscretion.

He is a strait-laced man, and it seems to him as if there were something gravely compromising to her in this tete-a-tete drive with himself, in the known absence of her parents at Hammam Rhira. Why was he fool enough this morning to admit to Cecilia that they had gone thither? He had no business to have led her into temptation, and she had no business to have fallen into it. Remorse and irritation give a tartness to his tone as he says:

"After all, I do not think you need take it so much to heart."

"Take what to heart?" she asks, in unaffected surprise, turning her full face, and her blue eyes, each with one hot rain-drop dimming its slate-blue upon him. "Oh, I see!"—a sudden enlightenment coming to her with an instant spring to a carnation—"I see what you mean; but you are mistaken—I—I—it had not occurred to me; I was only thinking—only remembering that the last time I saw her was at—at Vallombrosa."

Vallombrosa. Is he never to hear the last of Vallombrosa?

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The latest waking impression left on Jim's fancy is that it is the golden rule of Elizabeth Le Marchant's life to comply with any and every request that is made to her; moreover, that in her mind the boundary line which parts the permitted from the unpermitted is not so clearly defined as, did she belong to him (the naked hypothesis makes his strait-laced heart give a jump,) he should wish it to be. If, on the morrow, with the sun shining and the leaf-shadows dancing on the fretted balcony-wall, he invite her to some fresh junket, he is sure that she will readily and joyfully acquiesce; that her spirits will go up like rockets at the prospect; and that her one anxiety will be that she may be sure to hit in her choice upon the form of dissipation most congenial to him. He will therefore not invite her. He will have a greater care for her reputation than apparently she has for it herself. Not until the return of her parents, not until the difficulties of intercourse with her are centupled and the pleasure minimized, will he again seek her.

To put himself beyond the reach of temptation, he sets off immediately after breakfast on a long walking expedition, which he means to occupy the whole of the daylight hours. He wanders about the great plain of the Metidge; he visits a Kabyle village, with its hovels cowering among its hideous fat-fleshed cactus; later on in the afternoon he finds himself in the little Erench hamlet of Biermandreis, and finally drops down upon the Jardin d'Essai, the delightful botanic garden which is one of the many blessings for which Algerian France has to thank the much-vilipended Napoleon III.

It is difficult for even the reddest Republican to think hardly of that dead ruler as he walks down the avenue of gigantic palms, that lead, straight as a die, to where, like a deep-blue gem far away, the Mediterranean shows

"No bigger than the agate stone
On the forefinger of an alderman."

Jim walks along beneath the huge date-palms that give him a crick in the neck to gape up at ere he can perceive their towering head of waving plumes far up against he blue. They remind him absurdly of the pictures in the missionary books of his youth—the palm-tree, the log-cabin, the blackamoors, and the missionary in a palm hat. Is he the missionary, and is this inky negress in a black bonnet, scarcely distinguishable from her face, his one catechumen?

Alternating with the date are superb fan-palms, of which it is difficult to realize that it is their stunted, puny brothers which, anxiously tended, sponged and cosseted, drag out a languid existence in London drawing-rooms. Among their Tital fans lies their mighty fruit, like a bunch of grapes, a yard and a half long, strung upon ropes of yellow worsted.

Half-way down its length the main avenue is intersected by a splendid alley of bamboos, which lean their smooth-jointed stems and their luxuriant narrow leaves towards each other across the dimmed interspace, and unite in a pointed Gothic arch of living green.

Jim paces objectlessly down the long arcade, stooping now and again to pick up a fragment of the peeled bark that looks so strangely like a papyrus roll with a mother-of-pearl glaze upon it. He pulls it idly open, as if to find the secret of some forgotten race written upon its shining surface; but if he reads any sceret there, it is only his own, which, after all, is not much of a secret. He merely sees written there that it is too early to go home yet; that there is no security that Elizabeth may not still be sitting on the terrace, stitching away with her gold thimble and her colored silks. The sun, it is true, has left the garden, but he departs thence over early. It will be safer to stay away yet half an hour or so.

Thus resolving, he retraces his steps, and explores in a new direction; saunters down a rose-alley, where, climbing immoderately high up tall palms, seeming as if they would strangle them with their long bowery arms, rose-trees wave far above him in the still air; and upon them, though it is still but the month of January, when people are skating, blue-nosed in England, creamy tea-roses show their pale-yellow hearts, fair and frequent, on the unpruned boughs, rioting in licensed liberty above his head. The walk ends in a circle of gigantic magnolias, which take hands round a square fountain-basin. Each huge trunk is, as it were, a little commonwealth of trees rolled into one, instead of a single tree. Beneath them benches stand. Upon one his negress sits, chatting with a French bonne; on a second there is also something female and slender, something with its little white profile, how white it looks in this deceiving light!—lifted, although white, yet smiling, animated, and talking to a man beside it.

He has dawdled and kicked his heels, and run the chance of contracting a spiteful Southern chill, in order to avoid Elizabeth; and he has succeeded in running straight into her arms.

He does not at the first glance recognize her companion, but a second look shows him that he is one of the inmates of the hotel—a French vicomte; and though Jim knows that he is both consumptive and the father of a family, that knowledge does not hinder the rising in his breast of the jealous and censorious thought that he has detected Elizabeth in throwing a great deal more than the necessary modicum of amiability into her manner to him.

As Jim comes into sight, the Frenchman clicks his heels, doubles up his body, lifts his hat, and walks away. It is evident at all events, that their meeting was a casual one; and the reflection brings with it a sense of relief, coupled with a feeling of shame at his own rooted readiness to suspect her, on any or no evidence, which yet, on the other hand, is not strong enough, when she turns her sweet bright look towards him, to hinder the thought that it is scarcely, if at all, sweeter or brighter than that which he had caught her squandering on the casual table d'hote acquaintance who has just quitted her.

"You, too!" she says; "why, the whole hotel seems to be emptied out into these gardens; the widow Wadman is buying violets—mark if they do not appear upon Uncle Toby at dinner to-night. The vicomte——"

"Yes, I saw you engaged in animated dialogue with him," interupts Jim, with slight acrimony; "I had no idea that you were such allies."

"Had not you?" rejoins she innocently. "He was telling me about his English governess, what a treasure she is"—her face dimpling mischievously—"and how wonderfully pure her accent. So it is—pure Cockney. You should hear the little vicomte talk of the biby and the pipers."

He rewards her small pleasantry only by an absent smile, and she speaks again—rather wistfully this time.

"Have you been on another expedition?"

"No, not on an expedition; only a walk. If"—yielding to the temptation of putting a question which no one would have judged more severely than he, had it been put by anyone else—"if I had invited you to do me the honor of making another excursion with me to-day, do you think that you would have consented?"

As he speaks, he departs yet further from the line of conduct he has marked out for himself by sitting down on the bench at her side.

Her eyes are fixed upon the soaring date-palm, which stands, instead of a water-jet in the middle of the fountain-basin, and on which the last year's dead plumes hang sapless and ready to fall off, in contrast to this year's verdant vigor.

"Is not that rather a tantalizing question when you did not ask me?" inquires she, with soft archness. "Yes, I suspect that I should; I was so very happy yesterday; and although you told me the other night"—swallowing a sigh—"that you supposed I must love my own society, in point of fact, I do not think I do."

After all, the sun is not quite gone; there are flashes of light in the verdant gloom, and green reflections in the water.

"And, yet," says Jim thoughtfully, "you seem to have a good deal of it; I suppose, in your position, it is unavoidable."

He had meant an allusion to her situation as bad third to her uxorious parents; before his mind's eye has risen a picture of the little forlorn shawled figure he had seen studying its Italian grammar with the door shut upon its loneliness; but almost before the words have left his lips, he sees how different, of how cruel, a construction they may be capable.

He snatches a glance of real terror at her, to see whether she has made that erroneous, yet all too plausible application—a glance which confirms his worst fears. She has turned as white as the pocket-handkerchief which she is passing over her trembling lips.

"Yes," she says in a hollow whisper; "you are right. In my position it is unavoidable, and it is cowardly of me not to accept it as such."

"I mean"—he cries desperately—"I only meant—I mean——"

But she does not suffer him to finish his uttered explanation.

"It is cold," she says, rising. I will go home."

He does not attempt to accompany or follow her.

(To be continued).

ON THE FARM

PASTURING HOGS.

I often think of the loss that is sustained by many of our farmers when they do not provide suitable pasture for their hogs, thus necessitating the feeding of more expensive foods during a season when they could, with very little expense be kept in a thriving condition on pastures, writes "Hog-Raiser."

The hog is a pasture lover. With pastures he thrives, keeps healthy and pays a premium for the grain which he consumes; while without it he degenerates, gest out of condition, and becomes an easy mark for disease. It is the men who raise hogs without pasture that usually tell all manner of hard luck stories. Their brood sows have small litters, the pigs are weak, and the sows eat their young.

Feeding hogs without pasture means selling grain at a poor market. It is a great mistake to shut up growing hogs in a close pen without exercise and without enough variety in feed to make them healthy. The longer the hog can be kept on pasture the better, for the less time will he have to be kept in the pen.

Prof. Geo. E. Day, one of the highest authorities on swine in Canada, has the following to say in regard to some of the most common crops that are grown for green feed for pigs:

Rape.—This is an exceptionally valuable food for swine, and may be pastured or cut and fed to the pigs in the pens. For fattening hogs, best results were obtained by the Ontario Agricultural College from feeding about two-thirds meal ration and all the rape the hogs would eat. The hogs were kept in pens with small outside yards, and the rape was cut and carried to them. This method of feeding gave more economical gains than fattening on pasture, and the bacon was of equally good quality. For breeding sows, however, pasturing rape is preferable, owing to the exercise the animals receive. When on rape pasture, mature sows require little other food, but young growing sows require a moderate meal ration in addition to the rape.

Vetches.—Hogs will eat vetches even more readily than rape, but the vetches do not furnish so much food per acre. Vetches are ready for pasture a little earlier than rape and if a part of the pasture lot is sown with vetches early in the spring it can be sown with rape after the vetches have been eaten off, and thus the ground will raise two pasture crops during the one season. Vetches may also be used as a soiling crop as described under rape.

Hairy Vetch.—The seed of this crop is very expensive. There is no doubt, however that it makes an excellent pasture crop for swine. If not pastured too closely, it grows up quickly when the hogs are removed. For early spring pasture, it should be sown during the latter part of August, so that it can make a considerable growth the preceding fall. About one and one-half bushels of seed per acre are required.

Green Rye.—Fall sown rye will make a very early spring pasture, and after it has been eaten off, the ground may be sown with some other crop such as rape. It has not a very high feeding value and its main recommendation is the fact that it gives early pasture.

Red Clover.—This crop is best suited for pasture, and the hogs should be given a large range or the clover will likely be killed out. It is especially useful for breeding sows. If it is used, two pastures are necessary, one to seed down while the other is being pastured and so on back and forth from year to year.

For a short order hog pasture my own experience is that a heavy seeding of a mixture of rape seed, barley and oats is a good combination of seeds to sow, especially on land where clover does not thrive. Experiments conducted at the various experiment stations in Canada and the United States indicate that from sixty to eighty pounds of grain go farther when fed to hogs on pasture than one hundred pounds of grain without pasture.

Hogs can be grown so much cheaper on pasture that there is no money in the hog that is fed all summer from the pail.

RULES FOR SHEEP DIPPING.

The best time for dipping is from one to three months after shearing.

The sheep should not be overheated or thirsty at the time of dipping.

If the sun is very hot it is better to have the draining pans under shade.

If the nights are cold, the dipping should always be stopped soon enough to allow the sheep time to dry before sunset.

See that the preparation is properly mixed and the correct quantity of water added. Don't guess at it.

Never hurt them in dipping. Always take care that every sheep is kept in the bath the full time—never less than one minute nor more than two minutes.

Have the bath well and regularly stirred up from the bottom always before beginning to dip, and whenever any stoppage occurs.

Never allow drippings from the sheep to fall on anything they are likely to eat. If rain comes on before they are dry, keep them off pasture until after it has ceased.

When dipping twice allow an interval of not less than 12, or more than 18, days between the dippings.

Unweaned lambs should be kept apart from dipped ewes for a few hours after dipping.

GOOD STOCK PAYS.

One of the greatest mistakes, and the most common, among our farmers is the notion that because they have an inferior mare they should breed her to a common scrub horse because the service fee is low. In this way you are sure to get an inferior colt. But if you pay $5 or $10 more and breed to a first-class horse you stand a show of getting a colt that will develop into a horse that will sell for double what you would get for your scrub. The difference in service fee is a small matter, and it costs no more to raise a good colt than a poor one.

NOT EVEN REPORTED.

"Father," said the young man, as he leaned on his hoe, "they say the balance of trade is against us as a nation."

"They do—eh?"

"And that our bank reserves are rapidly diminishing."

"D'ye tell me so?"

"And that railway extension has come to a halt.'

"Well, I never!"

"And that Government securities are substantially without a market."

"No! And do they say anything about a fellow stopping to lean on his hoe to talk, when he might just as well talk and hoe at the same time?"

The young man resumed.

THERE'S KNOWLEDGE FOR YOU.

The Corporal was one day drilling a batch of raw recruits.

"Why is it," he said to a bright-looking chap, "that the blade of your sabre is curved instead of straight?"

"The blade is curved," the recruit answered, "in order to give more force to the blow."

"Nonsense," said the corporal. "The blade is curved so as to fit the scabbard. If it were straight how would you get it into the curved scabbard, you idiot?"

WHY WILLIE WENT.

The following excuses were recently brought by two pupils:—

"Dear Teacher,—Kindly excuse John's absence from school yesterday afternoon, as he fell in the mud. By doing the same you will greatly oblige his mother."

The other read: "Dear Teacher,—Please excuse Willie's absence last Friday, as he had to go to the hospital after his sore nose."

HE GETS T.

Edgar—"Does your mother ever give you anything when you are real good?"

Jimmie—"No; but you bet she gives it to me good and proper when I ain't."

SAVES LIFE.

"Do you think that it prolongs a man's life to be insured?"

"Yes," replied the man, who had just been interviewed by an agent; "it does something towards keeping him from being talked to death."

TIME HAD EXPIRED.

Mrs. Nagger—"Perhaps you recall, it was on a railway train that we first met, and——"

Mr. Nagger—"Yes; but it's too late now for me to sue the company for damages."

HOW HE PROVED IT.

"I knew you were a fool before I married you!"

"I presume my proposing to you satisfied you on that point!"

ENOUGH OF HIS OWN.

Prospective Suitor—"Sir, I love your daughter."

Her Father—"Well, don't come to me with your troubles."

HIS TROUBLE.

"My friend," said the philosopher, "you should try to be content with what you have."

"I am," said the man who had been grumbling. "It is what I ain't got that I am dissatisfied about."

FILTERED.

Teacher—"Now, Harold, can you tell me what water is?"

Small Harold—"Yes, ma'am. It's mud with the dirt taken out."