

UNREQUITED LOVE.

BY MISS M. E. BRADON.

"I wish we were sane," retorted her ladyship, "and then he would not have brought home that Radical's imp."

"Oh, but if he likes to provide for the little things, send her to some cheap school or some institution—orphanage—don't you know, he is rich enough to indulge his benevolence."

It was in vain that the great Lady Pitland's daughter protested against her step-son's folly in adopting a pauper's brat and hinted that the clever foot of Socialism showed it self in the act.

"I made up my mind as we drove home last night, mother," said Lashmar, gently, gravely, resolutely, in a tone which her ladyship knew only too well. "Spillington and the child were both asleep. I mean to adopt Boldwood's child and to bring her up as my own daughter. I have long wished for something to love—some young unschooled creature that should be dependent upon me and should grow up at my feet as it were. I am very fond of Victorian, but he can seldom be my companion. But a friendless little girl, whom I can train and educate into companionship, will afford me just the kind of solace, just the kind of innocent sympathy which I have sighed for. A little more than a dog, a little less than an equal."

"You will find the creature a horrid nuisance before you have done with her. If you should think of marrying, for instance."

"I shall never marry; never have children of my own. By the time this girl has grown up I shall be declining into the vale of years. She will be my link with the future. I have been told lately—you remember my long chat with Sir William Spenser the last time he came down to see me—that in spite of miserable health I may live to be an old man."

"And you look to the child of such a man as Boldwood to be your friend and companion in after years—the mongrel of a gypsy and a domineering gogue," exclaimed Lady Lashmar, unable to control her temper. "You make no allowance for hereditary instincts."

"I believe more in association and education than in hereditary instincts. The child has a fine broad forehead, bright well-opened eyes, sensitive nostrils, thin lips, delicate chin—not at all a bad subject to work upon."

"I really think she is the ugliest child I ever beheld," said Lady Lashmar, rapping the table with an elephant's task paper knife. "How you who pretend to worship ideal beauty can be interested in such a little monster is more than I can understand."

"She is small and brown, but I don't think her ugly. Her eyes shone like stars last night. It is my idea that she will grow up a very interesting woman."

"You have such odd ideas!"

"Don't be angry, mother," pleaded Lashmar, with wondrous gentleness. "Granted that I am somewhat eccentric—nature has made me in a mould of her own, you see—but after all I have very few whims. And I promise you that this last caprice of mine shall give you no trouble. The child shall live in this house, but you need hardly be aware of her existence. All she will want will be a couple of rooms on the top story, where we have a score of rooms that only serve as a rat warren."

"Mice, not rats," protested her ladyship.

"Well, we'll call them mice. It sounds pleasanter; only they are the biggest breed I ever saw, and the noisiest. However, my protege will help to scare away the mice. I shall engage a maid for her, and arrange a couple of rooms for her and her maid, those two pretty rooms in the southwest tower, for instance. She will live on that top floor, have her meals there, plague no one, and when I want her company in my study I can have her brought down to me as I would any other plaything. You may meet her on the stairs or in the corridor occasionally. But that is about the utmost you need see of her."

"This is your house, Lashmar. If you choose to have it infested by the spawn of Socialism it is not for me to gainsay you."

"I hope the day will come when you will be reconciled to my adopted daughter; when she may perhaps be a comfort to you as well as to me. Never, Lashmar! I can tolerate her existence in the house out of deference to you. I should have to submit if you took it into your head to keep a rattlesnake; but I have none of your Utopian ideas; and I have not the least doubt that you will have cause to repent your generous folly before you and your protege are three years older."

"We will compare notes three years hence, and I hope that I shall convince you that you were mistaken," said Lashmar with perfect good temper. "And now, mother, have you

any young woman on your list who would make a good maid for Stella?"

"There is Barber's niece, her father's broadest you can get—some scarlet and some pale blue. I will write you a check for twenty or thirty pounds before you go. Buy everything at Ponsford's, where her layship deals."

"The dearest shop in Brumm, my lord."

"The dearest shop is apt to be the cheapest in the long run."

"Ten pounds ought to be ample, even at Ponsford's," said Barber. "I shall only have to buy materials for Betsy is very clever with her needle, and she will make all the little frocks and things."

Betsy grinned and reddened at this praise.

"What a capital Betsy!" exclaimed Lashmar, "I shall make the check twenty, and be sure you buy soft and fine stuffs; I want my little girl to look pretty."

"That she will never do, my lord," answered Barber with conviction; "but me and Betsy will do our best to make her look nice."

"To-day? Now?" she questioned.

"No, dear; not now—not to-day. He has gone on a long journey."

"To London?" she asked.

"A longer journey than that."

"Where?"

"To a beautiful country. You shall go there some day and you shall be with him again."

"Let me go now."

"No, dear; not yet."

"But I will go," cried the child, scrambling off Lashmar's lap and running towards the door.

Lashmar followed and stopped her; she cried and stormed and struggled with him.

"I want to go to my daddy; I will go to my daddy."

He was a quarter of an hour soothing her and arguing with her.

"Tell me your name, little one," he asked.

"Stella."

"Stella! That is a very pretty name."

"It means a star," said the child. Daddy told me."

"Will you be my star? Will you live with me in this house, and play in those gardens out there, and go in my boat on the river?"

"No," said the little one firmly, after she had contemplated that delicious picture for some moments. "I don't want to live with you. I want to live with my daddy."

Lashmar explained how the journey on which daddy had gone must needs last for a long time, how Summer and Winter must pass before he could come back, or Stella go to him, but how they should meet in the days to come.

"And you will leave off crying, and be very good, for his sake, won't you, Stella?" pleaded Lashmar. "Fathers are unhappy when their children are naughty."

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She will never pay for dress."

"I will have her in cream color," said Lord Lashmar, decisively; "and you can buy her half a dozen sashes, the broadest you can get—some scarlet and some pale blue. I will write you a check for twenty or thirty pounds before you go. Buy everything at Ponsford's, where her layship deals."

"The dearest shop in Brumm, my lord."

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"Ten pounds ought to be ample, even at Ponsford's," said Barber. "I shall only have to buy materials for Betsy is very clever with her needle, and she will make all the little frocks and things."

"The intruder did not take kindly to her new life. Again and again, with piteous tears and childish, unreasoning iteration, she entreated to be taken to her father. 'Where is daddy? Take me to my daddy!' That was the burden of her cries. So with weak tenderness he took the little girl upon his lap and drew her to his breast and told her that she should see her father again some day.

"To-day? Now?" she questioned.

"No, dear; not now—not to-day. He has gone on a long journey."

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ing, trying to kindle the fire of ambition in that young mind.

"As a younger son you are bound to distinguish yourself, Victor," she said. "Your poor brother is Lord Lashmar; he can afford to dream away his days in a library; but you will have no distinction except that which you may win for yourself. You must be the architect of your own fortunes."

"I wouldn't much mind being the architect," said Victor; "but I don't want to be the builder—not to have to lay brick upon brick and carry the load of mortar, don't you know—not to have to work my way upward inch by inch as some poor beggars do in the church or in the law."

"You need have no profession but politics."

"That's deuced slow work and deuced hard work, I'm told. One has to drudge over blue books and cram statistics and sit in the office on Sunday evenings to ask questions when life and fashion are at flood tide at Burlingham or when the Four-in-Hand Club is meeting by the Magdalen. If I could make a great speech now upon some burning question at midnight and wake next morning to see myself famous."

"Ah, that is the way with boys. They want to succeed without working for success!"

To be Continued

SIGNALS AT SEA.

They Are Now Being Made With Beautiful Fireworks.

In the old days it was a mariner's belief that all signals to be effective must be simple, but that was yesterday.

From the many beautiful combinations invented by Mr. Pain, the famous maker of fireworks, it would appear that that implicit once demanded by the old salt in respect of signals used at sea is a thing of the past, for signaling at sea is now accommodated with that picturesqueness and variety associated with the pyrotechnic art.

Ten years ago and more it occurred to the firm named to bring out an entirely new system of signaling at sea

so that it would be safe to say that the notice of the leading steamship companies who adopted it at once.

Today the pyrotechnic system is general.

Every ship leaving port must carry a certain supply of signals for distress purposes, these consisting of rockets, blue lights, detonators and so forth, in all, about 100 pieces; but it is left to the discretion of the various companies and owners to carry board their vessels any other kind of signals, either for private use or as we have said, for signaling at night.

Up to the time of the creation of the new system there was no recognized or organized method for noting ships that had passed in the night

so that it was a difficult matter for officials stationed at points along the coasts of the various seas to determine the name and owners of a vessel as she passed, but now, if you were standing by the side of a Lloyd's agent, and in the black night out at sea you distinguished a blue light, red light amidships, blue light aft, and two rockets throwing blue, red and green balls simultaneously, the same officer would tell you that that was the signal of a boat of a certain line.

The law does not compel a ship's owner to carry such signals, but their practicality is so palpable that very few owners have failed to register their own peculiar private signals, and to secure correctness in this pyrotechnic system of signaling at sea is duly recognized.

And then, feeling that his words

were outside the child's comprehension he drew her to his breast and told her the story of Jesus.