A Foolish Young Man;

Or, the Belle of the Season.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

When Ida went upstairs for the wash, the need for which Miss Isabel had so kindly informed her of, she found that her room was clean and fairly comfortable, though in appearance seemed strange after the huge and old-fashioned one at the Hall. The furniture was cheap and unsubstantial, the towels were small and thin; in place of pictures, aggressive, illuminated texts covered the walls like freshly made wounds, and the place had a bare, homeless look which made Ida shudder.

The dining-room, when she went down to it, did not improve her fifty more favorably; for here, too, the furniture was new and shiny with a sticky kind of shininess, as if the preadly varnish had not yet dried; there was not a comfortable chair in the room; the pictures were the most gruesome ones of Doré's, and there was a text over the mantelpiece as aggressive and as hideous in coloring as those in her room. A lukewarm leg of mutton, very much carved, on the table, with a cloth of which was by no means clean; the dishes, which contained quite cold vegetables, were greasy and did not match; the bread was of the commonest kind, that which is called "household;" the knives were badly cleaned, and the place was worn off the forks and spoons. It was considered intelligent to have gas in the drawing-room, therefore a cheap paraffin lamp was in the centre of the table, and was more liberal of scent than light. The curtains to the window were of that hungry red which shrieks down any other color near it, if they made Ida's tired eyes ache.

While she was trying to eat the slice of gory mutton, Mrs. Heron and Isabel watched her, as if she were some aboriginal from the wilds of Dorsetshire country, and then shot glances at each other, uneasy, half-guilty, half-envious glances, as they noted the beauty of the face, and the grace of the figure in black dress, which plain as it was seemed to make these still more vividly vivid vulgar. In the midst of his thrifty, economical, of the commonest and cheapest, Mr. Heron could not help noticing the perfect fit of Ida's dress, the delicate texture of her linen, the general air of refinement which pervaded her from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot. Isabel, too, looked at her with envy and admiration, and Mrs. Heron with a mixture of both.

"Where's Joseph?" he asked late to-night."

"He is at the office," replied his mother. "I hope he is not working very late this evening, as he has been working many evenings this week."

Isabel smiled at Ida, for what reason Ida could not divine; and while she was wondering there came a knock at the door, and presently Joseph entered.

He was a self-possessing young man with erect head and thick lips, over which a small, dark mustache was trained in a long curve; but it was the fashion in the City to be clean-shaven, and Mr. Joseph considered himself the pink of fashion. He had cut his hair tightly round, and wore a black dress-coat, made with extreme precision, and patent leather. His dark hair, parted low on the low, retreating forehead, and his face was flushed and heated, as if he would expect, pale from exercise.

Ida looked at him at the first glance, and at first hated him; more at the second, as she examined, with cool eyes fixed on her own face, the features evidently admiring. Joseph came round and shook hands with Ida, and cold like his father's. Mr. Heron introduced the two with much ceremony, and Joseph muttered that he was glad to see her.

"I've been entertaining Miss Laburnum with a summary of my personal experiences," said Ida, with a smile.

"Oh, I've no doubt she found them very interesting," said Joseph, with a sneer, which made Ida look at him with a sudden flash of anger in her eyes.

Mr. Heron introduced the subject of business, and Joseph said that he was glad to see her.

"I've been making inquiries about you, Miss Laburnum, and I find that you are connected with some very good people. I've had business relations with Lord Mauleverer, and I've met Lady Ida Carlyon at dinner at the Mansion House. I've also had the honor of meeting Lord Lanchester, and I've been introduced to Lord Ambrose Dashwood. I'm sure we shall be very glad to do anything we can for you."

Ida bowed her head, and thanked him with a smile.

"Mother and Isabel have been telling me how much they have enjoyed your company here, and how they have been entertained by your conversation. I'm afraid you'll find it very dull here, Ida," said Mrs. Heron, with a sniff. "You won't find any society in Wood Green; they're nearly all City people, and there aren't many large houses—this is as large as most—and John is very strict." She sighed; and it was evident to Ida that though her cousin John's "religion" might be some amusement to him, it was rather a bugbear and nuisance to his family. "But we must get Joseph to take you about; and perhaps you and Isabel might go to a matinee or two; but John mustn't know anything about it."

Ida made haste to assure them that she did not need any amusement, that she preferred to be quiet, and that she hoped her cousin Joseph would not take any trouble on her account. At this point Mr. Heron and his elegant son came in, a bell was rung, and the two servants came up for family prayers. Ida noticed that both the maids looked bored and discontented, and that the "parlor maid," a mere bit of a girl, appeared to be tired out. Mr. Heron read a portion of Scripture and offered up a long prayer in a harsh and rasping voice, with the manner of a judge pronouncing a sentence of seven years; and as the servants were leaving the room, called them back, and remarked sternly:

"I notice in the housekeeping book that a larger quantity of candles than usual has been used during the past week, and I fear that there has been reckless waste of this useful article. Do not let it occur again."

The servants went out suddenly, and Mrs. Heron suggested, much to Ida's relief, that Ida would no doubt like to go to bed. While Ida was brushing her hair and fighting against the natural fit of depression caused by the introduction to this cheerful household, there came a knock at the door, and she admitted Mrs. Heron. That lady was in a soiled dressing-gown bought at a sale and quite two sizes too large for her, and with a nervous laugh, she took from under this ample garment a small decanter of wine.

"I thought you might like a little, my dear," she said, as Ida eyed it with astonishment. "Of course we never call it that, strangers here, but we keep a little in the house for medicinal purposes, unknown to John, and it's a great comfort sometimes when you're tired and in low spirits. Let me give you a glass."

Ida would have liked to have accepted it, and was sorry that her refusal seemed to disappoint Mrs. Heron, who retired as nervously as she had entered. A few minutes afterwards, before Ida had got over her astonishment at the incident, there came another knock at the door, and Isabel entered in a dressing-gown which was one sister to Mrs. Heron's.

"I thought there might be something you wanted," she said, her bold eyes wandering over Ida curiously, and then roaming to the contents of Ida's dressing-bag which glittered and shone on the dressing-table.

"What long hair you have! Do you brush it every night? Don't mine, not every night, it's too much trouble. Are the tops of all those things real gold? What a lot of money they must have cost! What a pretty peignoir you have on; is it real lace? Yes, I see it is. You have some things!" with an envious sigh. "Don't you ever have a more color than you've got now? Or perhaps it's because you're tired. You must be tired, when I come to think of it." She dropped her voice and glanced around.

"Would you like to have a little brandy-and-water? I've got some in my room—of course, the rest don't know anything about it. Father's dental maid—but I keep a little for when I'm tired and down in the mouth; and when I run out I get some from Joseph's room. Of course, he don't know I've got it, but he says you announced that directly you saw him to-night, and weren't taken in by his fate at the office business."

Ida looked at her in amazement, and Isabel laughed knowingly.

Joseph goes to the theatre and plays billiards," she said, with sisterly candor. "He works it very cleverly, he's artful, Joseph is, and he takes father and mother in nicely; but sometimes I find a theatre programme in his pocket, and marks of chalk on his coat. Oh, I don't blame him! The life we lead in this house would make a cat sick. It's like being on a treadmill; nothing happens; it's just one dreary round, with mother always whining and father always preaching. You heard what he said to the servants to-night? I wonder they stand it. I should go out of mind myself if I didn't get a little amusement going up to the shops and sneaking into a matinee on the sly. I'm sure I don't know how you'll stand it, after the life you've led. What do you use for your hair? It's so soft and silky. I wish I had black hair like yours. Do you put anything on your hands? They're rather brown; but that's because you've lived in the open air so much, I suppose. I'll lend you some stuff I use if you like."

Ida declined the brandy and the infallible preparation for whitening the hands; and not at all discouraged, Isabel went on:

"Were there any young men at Herondale? You didn't say anything about them down-stairs, but I thought perhaps you would like to tell me when we were alone. I suppose there was someone you were sorry to part from?" she added, with an inviting smile.

Ida repressed a shudder and plied her brush vigorously, so that her hair hid the scarlet which suffused her face.

"I knew so few of the people," she said, "as I told you downstairs, my father and I led the most secluded of lives, and saw scarcely anyone."

Isabel eyed Ida sharply and suspiciously.

"Oh, well, of course, if you don't like to tell me," she said, with a little toss of her head; "but perhaps it's too soon; when we know each other better you'll be more open. I'm sure I shall be glad of someone to tell things to."

She sighed, and looked down with a sentimental air; but Ida did not rise to the occasion; and with a sigh of disappointment, and a last look round so that nothing should escape her, Isabel took her departure, and Ida was left in peace.

Tired as she was, it was some time before she could get to sleep. The change in her life had come so suddenly that she felt confused and bewildered. It had not needed Joseph Heron's mention of Sir Stephen Orme's name to bring Stafford to her mind, for he was always present there; and she lay, with wide-open eyes and aching heart, repeating to herself the letter he had sent her, and wondering why he who she had thought loved her so passionately, had left her. Compared with this sorrow, and that of her father's death, the smaller miseries of her present condition counted as naught.

CHAPTER XXIX.

As Isael had intimated, life at Laburnum Villa was not altogether hilarious. The environs of London are undeniably pretty, prettier than those of any other capital in Europe, but there is no shirking the fact that the Northern suburbs of our great metropolis are somewhat grim and soul-depressing. Laburnum Villa was in a long street, which resembled the other streets as one tree resembles another; and you had to traverse a great many of these streets before you got into the open country, that is, away from the red-bricked and stucco villas, and still smaller and uglier houses which had been run up by the enterprising jerry-builder.

But Ida would have been glad enough to have gone through this purgatory, to the paradise of country lanes which lay beyond if she could only have gone alone. But Mrs. Heron and Isabel never left her alone; they seemed to consider it their duty to "keep her company," and they could not understand her desire for the open air, much less her craving for solitude. Until Ida's arrival, Isabel had never taken a walk for a walk's sake, and for the life of her she could not comprehend Ida's love of "trapsing" about the dusty lanes, and over the commons where there was always a wind, Isabel declared, to blow her hair about. If she went out, she liked to go up to London, and saunter about the hot streets, gazing enviously at the "carriage people" as they drove by.

Ida didn't care for London, took very little interest in the shops, and none whatever in the carriage folks. She was always pining for the fresh air, the breezy common, the green trees, and on the occasions when she could persuade Isabel to a country ramble, she walked with dreamy eyes that saw not the cut-and-dry prettiety of Wood Green and Whetstone, but the wild dales and the broad extent of the Cumberland hills.

She was, indeed, living in the past, and it was the present that seemed a dream to her. Of course she missed the great house, where she had ruled as mistress, her horses and her cows and dogs; but what she missed more than all else was her freedom of action.

It was the routine, the dull, common routine, of Laburnum Villa which irked so badly. Neither Mrs. Heron nor Isabel had any resources in themselves; they were of the most commonplace, not to say vulgar, type; and a "Tea at Laburnum Villa" tried Ida almost beyond endurance; for the visitors talked little else but scandal, and talked it clumsily. Most of Isabel's time was spent in constructing garments given away by some periodical; admirable patterns, which, in skilful hands, no doubt, produced the most useful results; but Isabel was too stupid to avail herself of their valuable aid, and must always add something which rendered the garment outre and vulgar.

(To be continued.)

GERMAN DIPLOMACY.

Surprised She Has No Friends In the World.

The world does not know what was behind the important declaration of the Russian Czar when, toward the end of July, over the German parleyings, he declared, "We have had too much of this already." What he referred to, says the Boston News Bureau, has never been printed. From financial interests which are so necessary to government interests when war preparations are at hand, we can now give the inside scene which was at the bottom of Russia's resentment against Germany.

In 1908, when Russia was suffering from demoralization following the war with Japan in 1904-05, Austria, in violation of the treaty with all the powers of Europe, proposed to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Russian Prime Minister was seated at his desk one forenoon when the German Ambassador was announced. The request of the Ambassador was for an immediate response as to the position of Russia should Austria annex Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Russian Prime Minister protested that he must confer with his associates and the other signatories to the treaty of Berlin.

The German Ambassador replied in effect: "There is no time. It so happens that during the autumn manoeuvres our troops are on the Russian frontier. I am directed by my Government to remain at this office until I receive your answer, and to say to you that unless I have your assurance that Russia will remain neutral while Austria takes over Bosnia and Herzegovina, the German troops will immediately cross the Russian frontier.

"All the time I am permitted to give you in which to make answer is 15 minutes."

This has been the diplomacy of Germany; the diplomacy of force, and it now finds its expression in the 14-inch siege guns, which were never built for defences within Germany.

And yet Germany expresses surprise that it appears to have no friends throughout the world.

A Horse Laugh.

Motorist (blocked by load of hay)—I say, there, pull out and let me by.

Farmer—Oh, I dunno—I'm in any hurry.

Motorist (angrily)—You seemed in a hurry to let that other fellow's carriage get past.

Farmer—That's cause his horse wuz eatin' my hay. There ain't no danger o' yew eatin' it, I reckon.

Envied Him.

"My wife is a mind reader."

"Lucky dog. My wife is a mind speaker."

HOME

Tested Recipes.

Prune Tapioca.—To make this dainty put a tablespoonful and a half of tapioca, a quarter of a cupful of sugar, two cupfuls of water, and a quarter of a pound of the best prunes, soft and plump from soaking, in the top part of a double boiler. Steam three hours, adding more water if necessary, but do not stir as the prunes should not be broken. Cool and serve with cream.

Plum Marmalade.—Wash plums, put in preserve kettle with two cups of water for a half peach basket of plums. Cook until soft and put these in sieve. Some of the pulp and skins will still adhere to the pits, so return all to the kettle again, add another cup of water, and cook until mushy. Put through sieve again. Measure a cup of sugar for each cup of liquid and boil until thick. Pour into glasses and cover with paraffin.

Salad Dressing.—Take ten tablespoons strong vinegar and add enough water to make one and one-half cups. Break the yolks of two eggs into a bowl and beat with a fork, then add two tablespoons sugar, one-half teaspoon salt and two and one-half to three tablespoons of cornstarch, according to thickness desired. Stir until the sugar has partly melted and moistened the cornstarch, then add one-fourth cup of water, and pour into the vinegar and water, which has been heating, but is not boiling hot. Cook until thick and the cornstarch is done. Let cool slightly, and then, using a Dover beater, beat in the stiffly whiped whites of two eggs. This is equally good for fruit, potatoes or fish. If, as soon as it is cooked, and before the egg whites are added, you cover it with a cloth or two white paper napkins and a tight lid, it will not form a crust, as most cornstarch mixtures do.

Nut Loaf Cake.—Cream one-fourth cup butter. Add gradually one cup granulated sugar and then one teaspoon vanilla. Add alternately about one-half cup milk, one and three-quarter cups flour, sifted three times. Now put in about one-half cup floured hickory nut meats and fold in gently, the whites of three eggs, beaten very stiff. Mix well, adding two teaspoons of baking powder with a little flour kept from the required amount. Bake in a loaf about fifty minutes, in a moderate oven. Measure flour after first sifting.

Oatmeal Drop Cakes.—Cream one-fourth cup butter and one and one-half cups light brown sugar thoroughly. Add one-half cup oatmeal cooked very thick. Beat hard and add two well-beaten eggs and one teaspoon vanilla. Add alternately one and three-fourths cups sifted flour, with milk and water enough to make a good batter, putting in two teaspoons of baking powder with the last of the flour. Beat thoroughly and put in muffin pans. Bake twenty to twenty-five minutes in a fairly hot oven.

Spice Cake, 1.—Make like nut cake, using two whole well-beaten eggs instead of three whites, and one teaspoon cinnamon and one-half teaspoon ground cloves. Put in nuts and raisins to taste just before last flour and baking powder. Bake like oatmeal drop cakes.

Spice Cake, 2.—Add two teaspoons cinnamon, one-half teaspoon cloves and one-half teaspoon nutmeg to nut loaf cake.

Home-made Canned Soup.—A vegetable soup to can for winter. One-half bushel tomatoes, one half peck okra, one and one half bunches soup greens, one stock celery, two heads cabbage, six medium-sized carrots, three medium sized parsnips, three white turnips, three ears sweet corn, one half peck string beans, one cup salt, three red peppers. Boil tomatoes first, then add vegetables and boil one hour. Seal while hot. This is fine to add to a soupbone which is nearly done, and as it is already cooked it saves time and gas in the winter time. It is also an economical way of saving garden crops for a time when one wishes one had them.

The Uses of Salt.

Salt is a capital thing to use to keep the milk cool. Directly the supply of milk is left at the house it should be taken in and placed in the coolest place in the house. It should be left to stand in a basin of cold water into which a handful of salt has been thrown, the water reaching the milk-line in the jug. A piece of wet butter-muslin should then be placed over the top of the jug, these precautions resulting in the milk keeping much better than under the ordinary chance-it-turning-sour conditions. Some such treatment should certainly be adopted when babies are being fed on milk. Cream, it may be added, can be treated similarly.

Salt is also useful in the treatment of lamp chimneys. After washing the glass is polished with dry salt. The result is that the chimneys take on a brilliant shine and are also rendered less liable to crack. A little salt sprinkled over paraffin oil that may be spilt when the lamps are being filled will remove the unpleasant odor.

When washing colored handkerchiefs soak them in cold salt water for a short time before actually washing. The colors will then be prevented from running or fading. Common salt placed on a tablecloth on which tea has been upset will take out the stains. The salt should be allowed to stay in position for a little while, and then when the cloth is washed all the stains will have disappeared.

If milk is scorched while it is being boiled salt again comes to the rescue. The pan should be removed from the fire and placed in cold water. A pinch of salt is then dropped into the milk and stirred up, and the burnt taste will disappear.

Household Hints.

Two quarts of soup will serve from six to eight persons.

When breast meat is tender, chicken is sufficiently cooked.

A nail, if it has first been stuck in a cake of soap, may be easily driven.

Allow two level teaspoonfuls of baking powder to each cup of flour when no eggs are used.

A tablespoonful of water or milk should be allowed for each egg in making an omelet.

Pencil marks should be rubbed off with an eraser before soaking, as hot water sets the lead mark.

One medium-sized loaf of bread will make 20 three-cornered sandwiches or 10 large square ones.

When grease or oil is spilled on the carpet, spread fine meal over the spot; it will help absorb the grease.

A few pieces of gum camphor kept in the boxes in which silver is packed in wrappings will prevent its turning dark.

A teaspoonful of vinegar added to the water in which black stockings are rinsed will keep them a good color.

For something new and dainty, spread the buttered fudge pan with minced dates before turning the candy into it.

If a small piece of salt is added to all fruits when cooking half the quantity of sugar is wanted, and it also improves the flavor.

Place a lump of salt in the kitchen sink. It will dissolve slowly, and keep the drain-pipe wholesome. Boiling hot salt water is the best liquid for flushing drains.

After cleaning brass or nickel-plated bells or doorknobs, rub them over with a little vaseline with a woollen cloth. This will keep them bright for a long time.

Before using tea spread it on a sheet of paper in a warm—not hot—oven for 10 or 15 minutes. It will greatly improve the flavor, and it will also go much further.

If you put two tablespoons of vinegar in the water when boiling eggs they will not boil out if they are cracked. Eggs slightly cracked can be had for half the price of sound ones.

When you have bread very dry and stale hold the loaf under the tap till wet slightly; put it in a loaf tin, and place another on top and bake over again. The result will be practically a new loaf. Use a very hot oven.

A Humorist in Embryo.

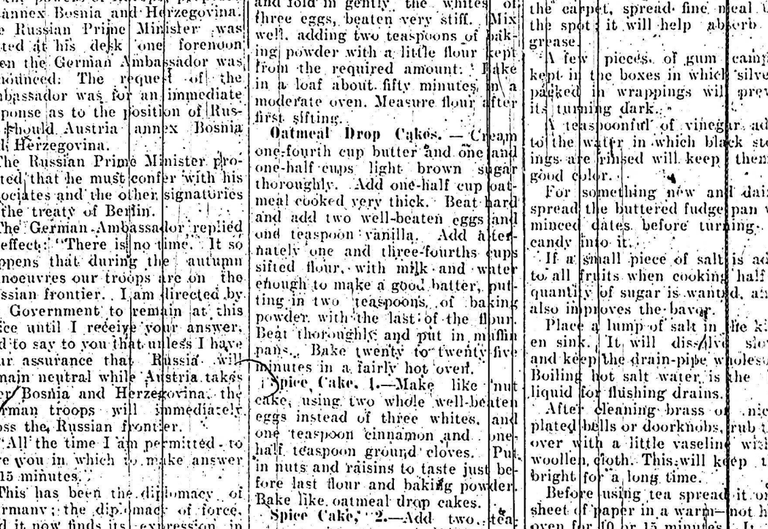
"My boy, I hope you keep the Sabbath."

"No, sir; it always slips away."

A Pertinent Question.

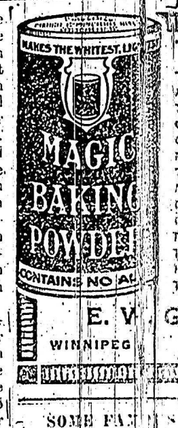
"Try one of these cigars, old man, they're the best thing out."

"How are they when lighted?"



Tommy Atkins in France and Belgium.

The picture on the right shows Braddock, a well-known British boxer, with his unit at Ostend. His duties now consist of preparing food for the marines who have been landed at that place. On the left are two English soldiers at Havre, with a French youngster, who is trying to keep up.



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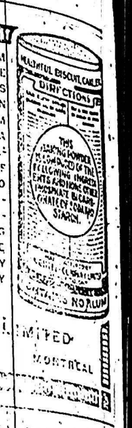

SOME FA[MOUS] S[IEGES]

Gallant Defence of Three G[reat] C[ities]

The defence of Liege by the Belgians against the German army corps numbering 300,000 men, to go down to history as the most brilliant of modern exploits of arms.

The French-Prussian war of 1870-71 was remarkable for the siege of Paris, the Bazaine held out for 70 days, the Germans forcing the capitulation, and finally surrounding the officers and troops, who had to submit to starvation and was sent to prison. Thousands of men, women and children died during the siege of Paris, which lasted four months. Thousands of people perished from starvation during the siege of Paris by the Germans.

Sebastopol, in the Crimea, was besieged by the English, French and Turkish armies for 349 days, during the Crimean war, 1854-55. The Russians had 102,000 men and 1,000 guns in the fortress, which finally fell into the hands of the besiegers after a bombardment of 349 days. The Russians lost