

# KERSHAM MANOR.

CHAPTER XXVI.—CONTINUED.

"But why were you going to the orange grove at all? It is to meet him? to give you an answer, is it not? If you meet him to-night—the man that your husband warns, ed you against—even if only to say no, you are loosening all the ties of home, all the bonds of love and trust and faith!" She paused for a moment and pressed her hands more closely on Nina's arm. "Don't go dear," she said. "You mean to be true to your husband—who loves you—I am sure; but you are running into danger. You will never be quite happy again if you go now. When you go back—you say that you are going back—how will you be able to look at him and talk to him as usual?—how will you bear to hear him say that he loves you when you feel that if he knew—if he knew—that you had stolen out to the orange grove to-night to meet that man, he would certainly think that you had cared more for him than you do for your own husband, who loves you so very dearly? Nina, you can not do it! You love Sebastian, and you will be true to him. Darling, come back with me. Do not even speak to that wicked man again. You should not have let him think that you could hesitate."

Nina was weeping now. She flung herself into Esther's arms. "Yes—yes, I do love Sebastian, Esther. It is really because I love him that I am here—not that Major Knyvett is anything to me—though he has said things that—I can't tell you. He was ready to do anything for me if I would have listened to him—but I would not hear, indeed I tried not to hear. Only to-night—he said that he could give me proof that Sebastian did not love me; he said that he would show me some letters that Sebastian had written to—some one else, if I met him here; and I was so miserable, Esther, that I came. That is all—really all."

"The wicked, cowardly liar!" said Esther. "You may be sure that it was all a lie, Nina. He wanted you to compromise yourself, that was all. Oh, my dear, what a danger you have escaped! Will you not come back with me now—quickly? You can not believe that Sebastian does not love you?" "I don't know," said Nina, sobbing. "He is so angry sometimes—so cold—so silent—"

"He was not silent when he talked to me the other night, and told me how unhappy he was because you seemed to be alienated from him. Oh, Nina, you don't know what a happy woman you ought to be! Your husband—your children—think of them all! There is many a lonely woman, dear, who would give all the world for a day of happiness like yours. And you want to fling it away? Nina, I sometimes think—you may call it superstitious, if you please—that people who despise their own happiness are sure to lose it. Don't you despise it, dear. Don't kill his happiness and your own: it is the worst kind of murder."

She had drawn Nina away from the garden-door. "I don't want to lose it—to despise it," she cried, in a frightened voice. "I want to be happy. I never meant to believe what Major Knyvett said to me, although I went to listen. I am not wicked, Esther. And I love Sebastian. Don't—don't tell me that I shall never be happy any more."

She clasped her friend yet closer. "Nina," she said, with fervor, "I believe that you will be happier now than you have ever been before. Listen, dear, this is what you shall do. Go to Sebastian and tell him—Nina shivered—"tell him simply that you love him. That you have loved him all the time. That you have sometimes been wayward and jealous and suspicious—yes, tell him that—but that he has always been dear to you, dearer than anybody in the world. See, dear, you are close to the room where he is sitting. Go in and put your arms round his neck and tell him that you love him—then you will find out whether he loves you or not; the test will never fail. Go, Nina—and God speed you."

Nina lifted her head from Esther's breast. Her face wore a tremulous smile which was very sweet. She pressed her lips to Esther's cheek, then went to the window and pushed it gently open. Esther put her hands to her ears and ran down the steps, the garden path, and through the orange grove, like one possessed. She stood at last, trembling and panting, at the extremity of the orange grove, which terminated in a terrace high above the winding white road that led toward the town. Here she became aware that she had chanced upon a little group of figures. A carriage drawn by two horses stood in the road; coachman, postilion, a servant or two, lingered near; Esther could not tell exactly the number of the men. Steps sounded in the road, and, at a little distance, a man's figure came slowly from the gate which, as Esther knew, led to the Malets' villa. He paused when he reached the carriage and looked up. She saw the dark features, the sinister eyes of Major Knyvett. He started, as he recognized her, raised his hat with a look of sullen disgust and disappointment, then got into the carriage and gave his men the signal to drive away. She never saw him again.

Esther was not sure whether she ought to believe implicitly everything that Nina had said that night. But at any rate the danger was averted; Nina's sickle heart had veered round like a weathercock, and she was safe—in Sebastian's arms. On the following day she started, with Nina and the children, for Southampton.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

HENRY WYATT'S DAUGHTER.

A narrow slip of room, containing three desks set side by side against a wall, three chairs, a chest of drawers, and little else—this was the place in which Esther sat and worked. But Esther was not writing, she was looking over a pile of papers in different kinds of script: now and then she put one aside and made a mark on it, far more frequently she dropped them into a capacious basket at her feet.

Presently a knock at the door was heard, and a gentleman came in. He had a shrewd, contemplative face, a pair of sleepy brown eyes, with a humorous twinkle in them, and a long brown beard. He shut the door behind him and stood with his back against it, in a lazy attitude. He was the assistant editor of the Dundee Evening Gazette. He looked tired—almost too tired

"Looked at 'em?" he said. "Just finished," Esther answered with equal brevity. "Any of them good for anything?" "These two are not bad. The others are—dreadful."

"Throw them into the waste-paper basket. My drawer was full of them, I hadn't room for anything else." He spoke of poems, of course. The Evening Gazette had a nook for "Original Poetry," and the amount of local talent was prodigious. "One or two worth printing, you say?" "Look at this. I don't dislike it," said Esther, putting a paper into his hand. "Want me to read it?" he asked, making a wry face. "Well—before you put it in."

"I'll take it at your valuation. What do people write verses for, I wonder? Sign of mental weakness?" "Did you never do it yourself, Mr. Haslam?" "Never, I swear." He looked at the paper, and murmured a few lines half aloud as he read. "Why, the disreputable old vagabond!" he exclaimed at length, laying down the paper.

"What do you mean?" "I've not looked at the signature; it is on the other side. Now tell me, Miss Denison, isn't it signed 'H. W.'?" "No," said Esther, laughing, "it is signed 'Henry Wyatt.'"

"The same thing. The man would do anything in the world for a couple of shillings." "Why do you speak of him in that way? Do you so much dislike the verses? They seemed to me better than those we usually get—not much better, it is true, but—"

She took up the paper and looked at the poem again. It is a little obscure—a little trained and peculiar—but the metre does not halt, and that is something—"

"Spare my feelings!" said Haslam, with a grimace. "If you look up a file of the Gazette, you'll find that rubbish—these very verses, I mean—without a signature, in the month of January, 1872. How do I know? I confess the soft impeachment; I wrote 'em myself."

"Oh, Mr. Haslam! A sign of mental weakness?" "Which I've outgrown. At the same time I don't make presents of my verses to the first fool that comes along. I've suspected this man Wyatt before of sending in things that weren't his own. I've got a clear case now, and can kick him out with a free mind when next he comes to the office."

"Who is he?" "A drunken ne'er-do-well; that's what he is. Give me the paper. I'll send for you when he comes, if you like, and let you see him."

"Thanks, I think I would rather not? Is he so very poor?" "This looks like it, does it not?" said the sub-editor grimly. "Fancy selling your soul for half-a-crown—he wouldn't have got more if the verses had been his own."

"I know what you will do, Mr. Haslam. You will call him names for three minutes, then you will give him five shillings out of your own pocket and tell him not to do it again."

"I'm not such a fool," said Mr. Haslam, shaking his massive head. "But I shan't be able to say much if Jack Drummond is anywhere about. He always sticks up for old Wyatt. They say he is making love to Wyatt's daughter."

"Who is she?" said Esther absently. She knew that Mr. Haslam was fond of a gossip, and she wanted to do her work. "She's employed at the theater. Takes tickets, sells programmes, goes on sometimes and sings. Pretty girl with a frightful temper. They say that the father goes in fear of his life when she is out of sorts."

Mr. Haslam withdrew. Esther pulled a sheet of paper toward her and began to write. It was her duty to give an account of a bazaar which she had visited that morning.

From the office where Esther worked three papers were issued; two dailies and a weekly. The morning paper was solemnly devoted to news, local and political; the evening paper gave space to short stories, verses and extracts from magazines, and new books; in the weekly paper, which was more widely circulated than any of the others, a couple at least of serial stories were kept running, and there were competitions and puzzles and literary bric-a-brac of all sorts, which gave several people very hard work every week, and insured the daily bread of several families.

There was a sporting editor, whose acquaintance she never made; she regarded him with respectful curiosity from a distance. With Mr. Thorne, the "fictional editor," as he was sometimes called, she had a great deal to do. For herself, she occasionally wrote fiction, and criticised that of other people. Mr. Haslam had always been one of her chief friends; and with Jack Drummond, the man of whom he had spoken as "making up to" Wyatt's daughter, one of the sub-editors of the morning paper, she was on terms of the frankest friendship. The three editors were, of course much more inaccessible than their subordinates, but Esther found them all kind and friendly. Indeed the life that she now led was delightful to her. When she had got over the strangeness of working among men only—which, to one of her cloistral experience, seemed at first to her decidedly odd and a little alarming—she began to take great pleasure in her various experiences, and to pride herself on her connection with the Press.

As Esther continued to write another interruption occurred. It was Mr. Thorne who came in.

Mr. Thorne, on entering the office, nodded to Esther and sat down to open a pile of letters and manuscripts. Esther went on with her work, but presently Mr. Thorne addressed her: "How many manuscripts have come in for the Christmas story competition?" "Seventy-four."

"Have you looked at them? Of course they are all by women. I wish women were never taught to write!"

leaning back indolently and regarding the ceiling.

Esther felt inclined to tell him to read it for himself; but on second thoughts she answered amiably:

"It is a ghost-story. About a man who was haunted by the spirits of two dead children. He had no rest until he found out their story and made restitution of some property—"

"Hackneyed," said Mr. Thorne, with disgust. "No woman was ever able to make a plot. In fact to make entirely new plots appears to be a lost art. Almost a lost art. My plots are always entirely new."

Esther looked up to see whether he spoke seriously. Apparently he did, for his eyes were still gravely fixed on the ceiling, and he was tilting his chair gently backward and forward with an air of the most profound conviction.

"Mine are never hackneyed," he said calmly. "I can't help it. I am never at a loss. And I never write the same thing twice. I am entirely original. Good morning, Miss Denison."

He retired as abruptly as he had come. Esther laid down her pen and laughed. It was a little difficult at that moment to remember that Mr. Thorne was a clever man and a successful man in his own line. He did not look like it.

"There is more fun to be got out of this life than at the Dower House," Esther soliloquized. "I work harder than I did when I was there, and yet I am never half so tired. A good laugh now and then—What's that?"

She stopped short in her moralizing vein. An unaccustomed sound of voices raised in anger in an adjacent room. Anger? No, there was a laugh, and the noise of hurrying steps, as of persons hastening to the scene of the disturbance. Esther was a little tired of work, and not indisposed to inquire into the cause of these unusual sounds. She had to take a paper to Mr. Haslam, and with this paper in her hand she stepped demurely along a passage, and through a swing-door into the Evening Gazette room.

It was a long light room with three windows on one side and two doors opening into smaller rooms on the other. Mr. Haslam's desk stood between two of the windows; several reporters generally sat at a table in another part of the room, and a long counter ran down the centre. In a corner sat Mr. Whitehead, the man who made extracts for the evening paper, and a certain Mr. Craig had his station at the center table. At present the attention of the six or eight men in the room was fixed on a wretched, trembling, shambling individual in poor but decent clothes, who stood half-way between the door and Mr. Haslam's desk and seemed paralyzed by the treatment that he was receiving. Mr. Haslam had risen from the desk and was delivering a half-humorous lecture on plagiarism, emphasizing his "points" by taps of a ruler on the table. Mr. Craig was putting in a comment of his own from time to time, and the reporters were leaning with their elbows on the table and laughing at the scene.

"It won't do, you know," Mr. Haslam concluded at length, putting down his ruler and taking up the paper which Esther had placed in his hands. "This is a little too thin, Mr. Wyatt."

"Now Mr. Wyatt, you mustn't steal poems ready-made, you know. That won't do—especially as it's my poem that you happen to have appropriated. I think you'd better not bring your poems here any more, eh?"

"Very sorry—deeply regret—circumstances—"

The mumbled words scarcely reached Esther's ears. She was looking pitifully at the man who uttered them. He was tall thin, pale, with a red nose, and a flabby hanging chin. His eyelids were red and sodden, and he had the miserable dissipated air of a man who had been out all night. His coat was in creases, his necktie hanging loose, his hat was limp and broken. And yet there was an indefinable jauntiness about the man, an attempt at jocular waving of the question which was curiously out of place. "If I had known it was your property, I would not have trespassed on it," he said, struggling apparently with some feeling of mortification, and smiling a sickly smile. "I assure you, sir, that poverty alone drove me to this little mystification."

"Well, take your poverty and your mystifications out of my office," said Haslam, rather sharply, "for I have had enough of both, Mr. Wyatt. Good morning to you."

He moved back to the desk, but the shabby man followed him closely, and wined out a tremendous supplication. "Don't be hard on me, Mr. Haslam. I've had a miserable life. My daughter's not a good daughter to me; she's unkind to her own father. She denies me every little comfort—"

"There, there, go along with you," said the sub-editor, slipping a coin into the man's hand. "I've no time for anything more. The sooner you go—to the devil—the better for you, and for your daughter too."

The last sentence was spoken in an aside, but every one heard it, and some of the younger men laughed a little to each other. "Old Wyatt," as he was familiarly called, although he could not have been more than fifty, was well known in the office, and it was a matter of notoriety that Haslam, who always began by scolding, never sent him away empty-handed. Hence they laughed, and were still laughing, when the outer door flew open, and a tall girl with an imperious air marched rapidly into the room and flung a swift indignant look around her which sobered them at once. She went straight up to Wyatt and put her hand through his arm.

"Come away," she said. "What are you doing here?" She would have been a very pretty girl but for the fierce tense lines about her mouth, and the whiteness of her face—the whiteness of rage and not of her natural complexion. She had short hair, curling in soft brown rings over her forehead and on the nape of her neck beneath her hat. Her wide hazel eyes were full of angry light, her delicate features rigidly set, the soft white brows knitted, the beautiful lips drawn into a stiff line. "Medusa!" whispered one imaginative reporter—a very young man—to his neighbor. The girl must have had quick ears; she shot one lightning glance at him as if she wanted to annihilate him upon the spot and then turned again to her father, tugging at his arm with her thin, nervous hand.

"What are you doing here?" she repeated. "Didn't I tell you never to come here again?"

Where had Esther heard that imperious voice? where seen those sensitive lips and hazel eyes, those rings of nut-brown hair clustering over a broad white forehead with blue veins showing at the temples? She stood spell-bound, her eyes fixed on the girl's pale face, while Wyatt began feebly to protest.

"Told me? I am not bound to obey you; it is for you—you—to obey me," he said with an attempt at dignity. "Mr. Haslam is my very good friend; I shall come—come—see him whenever I like." It was plain that ever that he had been drinking.

"Open your hand," said the girl. "I thought so. You have been begging. Did you give him this half-crown?" she said, turning to Mr. Haslam with an accent of scorn that the man in office could not brook. "My good girl," he answered, "I'm not responsible for all the coins your father has, in his possession. And as I am very busy, you had better take him away with you; I really have no time to talk any more." He wheeled his chair round to his desk and opened a telegram which a boy had just laid on the table; evidently he did not wish to enter into conversation with Miss Wyatt.

The girl wrenched the coin out of her father's hand and held it toward Mr. Haslam. "You'll please not say 'my good girl' to me again. I'm not your good girl, nor anybody's. Now, will you tell me whether you gave my father half-a-crown or not?" "Well I suppose I did," said the editor soothingly. "There was no harm in that, was there, Miss Wyatt?"

"Do you know what he would do with it?" asked the girl between her teeth. "He would take it to the nearest public-house and spend it on gin. Yes, he would. That is what he has always done when he had money from you. I said I would tell you what he did with it if ever he came to you for money any more. He spends it on gin, and then he comes home and strikes me and curses me, although I pass my whole life in working for him, earning money that he may have bread to eat! That's all the good he does with the money you give him. Now, give him more if you dare!"

"Her passionate intensity made her voice low, not loud, but it was clear. Her eyes flamed, but her lips were less white than they had been; her feelings were relieving themselves by expression. She still kept her hold upon Wyatt's arm; and he, after much fumbling, produced a soiled handkerchief and began to weep. She hurried her father from the room, throwing the last sentence over her shoulder as she went. For a moment, the memory of that beautiful white face, those burning eyes, imposed silence upon the listeners. Then Haslam burst into an uneasy laugh.

"The little fury!" he said. "I wouldn't be her father for a kingdom. No wonder he took to drinking."

"It's a good thing Jack Drummond did not look in just then," remarked Mr. Craig, "or all the fat would have been in the fire. He's mad on Phil Wyatt."

"Phil Wyatt!" Phil? The word gave Esther a clue that was wanting. She threw her paper on the table and sped from the room in search of her early friend. But what had brought poor Phil to this bitter pass?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## Italian Affairs.

By the surrender of King Lo Bengala and his warriors the British have entered into full possession of Matabeleland. The campaign of the whites against the blacks has been short and sanguinary. It now remains for the whites to get all they can out of the country which has been wrenched from its native inhabitants, to develop the "gold reefs" known to exist there, which are believed to be even richer than those of Johannesburg, to establish peace among the tribes, and to introduce civilization under an orderly government. The British possessions in South Africa have proved to be a source of immense wealth to the conquering race, and to the country of which they are subjects. The Hon. Cecil Rhodes, Premier of Cape Colony, is the dominating spirit of British South Africa. Not long ago he gave the home Government to understand that he would strike for independence if he were interfered with.

The enemies of Signor Crispi and those who, though not formally ranged in the hostile ranks have been offended by his brusqueness, would make it difficult for him to regain his old place of supremacy. It will be three years on the 31st of January next since, after a sharp debate on Signor Grimaldi's budget, his ministry was defeated by a vote of 186 to 123, and the King was obliged to accept his resignation. There have been several crises since then, but King Humbert has hesitated to put him forward. The opinion seems to prevail just now that His Majesty hesitated too long, and that the situation requiring the strongest statesman that Italy has, Signor Crispi, whose resourcefulness is recognized by all the members, ought to have been sent for at once. The present deadlock is due entirely to the cliquishness of the Parliamentary groups and to the timidity and absence of broad views therewith associated. But, had the King urged upon the leaders of all but the utterly irreconcilable factions the necessity of organizing a strong government, it is believed by some that Signor Crispi would have formed an acceptable cabinet. There is one consideration that eases the strain due to the effort to maintain connection with the Dreibund, while satisfying the demands for financial reform and retrenchment. This is the assurance conveyed not long since to King Humbert that Germany and Austria, in view of Italy's circumstances would look with complacency on such reduction of the army as might be deemed requisite, preferring a smaller army with solvency to a much larger one with financial embarrassment. It is also believed that the name of Crispi would carry most influence abroad, if the moderate groups would combine to give him a working majority. Signor Zanardelli is looked upon as implicated with Giolitti and to virtually the same extent. Besides him and Crispi, His Majesty has consulted Baron Nicotera, Signor Sonnino, Admiral Brin, Senators Peruzzi and Brioschi, the Marquis di Rudini, the Marquis Visconti-Venosta and Signor Farini. It is the longest crisis that Italy has experienced since the establishment of the present regime.

Judge—"Can't you and your husband live happily together without fighting?" Mrs. Mulcahy—"No, yer anner; not happily."

## SOME GREAT WARS.

### What They Cost in Blood and Money.

In proportion to the numbers engaged, Waterloo was the bloodiest battle of modern times. Over 35 per cent. of the men engaged were killed or wounded.

During the civil war the Confederate cruisers captured or destroyed 80 ships, 46 brigs, 84 barks, 67 schooners and 8 other vessels flying the American flag.

The cost of the world's wars since the Crimean war has been \$13,265,000,000, or enough to give a \$10 gold piece to every man, woman and child on the globe.

It is estimated that there are 100,000,000 guns in the world. At an average of \$10 each, the cost of the world's rifles, shotguns and muskets would be \$1,000,000,000.

During the five years that the American revolutionary war continued 288,200 Americans were enlisted, but there were rarely more than 30,000 in the field at any one time.

The national debt of Great Britain at the Revolution of 1688 was only \$664,000. Since then it has increased, through war expenses, to the enormous total of \$685,000,000.

During the civil war the Union blockading fleet captured or destroyed 735 schooners, 155 sloops, 262 steamers and 170 other vessels that were attempting to run the blockade.

From June, 1791, to November, 1813, the French Government enrolled 4,556,000 men, nearly three-fourths of whom died in battle, of wounds or of diseases contracted in the field.

The expenditure for the German army in 1889 was £18,840,000, or about \$190 per man. Of the aggregate sum £5,500,000 was for pay, £4,300,000 for food and £1,200,000 for clothing.

The public debt of the Austro-Hungarian Empire is 5,620,185,000 florins, mostly contracted by the French war of the early years of this century and the Seven Weeks' war with Prussia.

The navy of Great Britain has 65,000 men; France, 54,000; Germany, 16,000; Russia, 29,000; Austria, 80,000; Italy, 13,000; Spain, 14,000; Holland, 8000; Turkey, 3,000; the United States 10,000.

In 1800 France had a national debt of 714,000,000 francs; Napoleon ran the sum up to 1,272,000,000. Under the Third Republic in 1889 the debt was 21,251,000,000 francs, mostly contracted by wars.

During the six weeks' war in 1866 between Prussia and Austria, 309,000 Prussians and 330,000 Austrians took the field. Of the former 20,774 were killed or disabled and 84,160 of the latter, a total loss of 104,934 men.

The war of the Spanish succession cost the British taxpayer £23,000,000; the Seven Years' War, £58,000,000; the American War of 1776, £116,000,000; the Napoleonic wars, £62,000,000; the Crimean War, £39,000,000.

During the siege of Sebastopol the batteries of the allied army threw into the besieged city over 30,000 tons of shot and shell. The cost of the artillery firing and the value of guns ruined and condemned is estimated at \$12,000,000.

During the Franco-Prussian war the Germans fired 30,000,000 rifle cartridges and 363,900 charges of artillery, killing or mortally wounding 77,000 Frenchmen, showing that 400 shots are required to kill or mortally wound one man.

During the most peaceful years the world has 3,700,000 soldiers, who are withdrawn from productive occupations to pose as soldiers. The pay, equipments, food and clothing of these men cost the world's taxpayers nearly \$8,000,000 a day.

In 1881 English ships brought to the bone factories of England 30,000 skeletons of Turkish and Russian soldiers who had perished in the Crimean war. They were to be utilized as fertilizing material, after being ground to powder in the mills.

All the wars of Napoleon Bonaparte cost his country £255,000,000, while the wars of Louis Napoleon cost France \$442,000,000. The former made the enemy pay most of the expense; the expense of the wars waged by the latter was borne by France.

During the civil war in the U. S. from 1861 to 1865, the Union ordnance department served out to the army 7892 cannon, 4,022,000 rifles, 2,360,000 equipments for foot and horse, 12,000 tons of powder, 42,000 tons of shot and 1,022,000,000 cartridges.

The soldier is the best fed individual of his class in Europe. The British soldier receives for his daily ration 16 ounces of bread, 12 of meat, 2 of rice, 8 of dried vegetables, 16 of potatoes, and once a week he receives 2 of ounces of salt, 4 of coffee and 9 of sugar.

The American revolutionists of 1776 were opposed by 29,166 men bought by the British Government in Hesse, Brunswick and Anspach. For these men the King paid £5, 127,000 or about £175 per man. Of the whole number of mercenaries, 11,843 perished in the war.

The largest standing army is that of Russia, 800,000 men; the next in size that of Germany, 492,000; the third that of France, 555,000; the fourth, Austria, 323,000; after which come Italy, with 255,000; England with 210,000; Turkey, with 160,000; Spain, with 145,000.

In the Crimean war of 1855 309,400 men went to the front, of whom 8490 were killed in battle, 39,870 were wounded, of whom 11,750 died in the hospital, 75,375 died of diseases contracted during the campaign. The total deaths were 95,615. The war cost £305,000,000.

The Krupp steel 130-ton gun has a range of fifteen miles, and can fire two shots a minute. The shot weighs 2600 pounds, and 700 pounds of powder are required for a charge. The cost of a single round from this gun is \$1500, and it is said that the gun can not be fired more than fifty or sixty times. The cost of the piece is \$475,000.

The regular army of China is said to consist of 323,000 men. Besides this, the Emperor's army, there is a national army of 650,000 men, who are paid about \$1 a month, but in consideration of this munificence, are required to feed themselves. The cavalry receives \$3 a month, feed their own horses, and if lost or killed, are required to replace them out of the pay given by the Government.