A Double Disobedience.

CHAPTER VII.

"As to the granddaughter — Nina Daryl, as he calls her now — if you want to know anything about her antecedents, I believe I can tell you," Lady Penryth said in a low confidenvoice to Mrs. Marsh, a rather fast widow who was among the number of the guests gathered at Mr. Daryl's house. "Draw your chair closer. There is no use in everybody hearing the tale; but you, Mrs. Marsh, I know are discretion itself, and perfectly safe to entrust anything to."

"Oh, I shall never breathe a word of what you may choose to tell me," murmured the widow, eagerly, rather surprised to find her reputation for discretion so unimpeachable in Lady Penryth's eyes. "We could not help knowing of course that there was more than we were told in the sudden appearance of a granddaughter when no body even knew that Mr. Daryl's son was married. I suppose that that is all right, dear Lady Penryth?"

"My nephew's marriage, you mean? Yes—that is all right. You need have no scruples in associating with the girl on that account. Every one is aware how particular you are, and it would never do to bring a person into your company who was not at least highly respectable."

Mrs. Marsh, affecting not to notice the sarcasm in the last speech, leaned forward eagerly, and Lady Penryth went on—

"You, with your unexceptionable circle of friends, may not know that there is a certain person called Warrender, living at a place called Merridale, quite close to us——"

"But I know Mr. Warrender," murmured Mrs. Marsh, puzzled. "That is——"

"Let me advise you, then, to drop his acquaintance!" cried Lady Penryth, raising her voice. "I should not like to repeat to you, ignorant as every one knows you to be of the wickedness of the world, the stories that are afloat about the life which that young man lives.

"Well, my brother accidentally heard that there was some love-affair between this Warrender and his granddaughter, and he determined of course to put an end to it at once. He had no fancy for his heiress to follow in her mother's footsteps, which Warrender's life would have driven her to if she had married him. Mr. Daryl had not intended to acknowledge the girl at once, but, when he heard what was likely to take place, he had no choice.

"However, here the worst part of the story comes in. This will shock a person of your refined feeling, I know. I was at the pains to tell her in what estimation Warrender was held, but it had no effect on her. She is dying of love for him, I hear, my brother does not know to what extent infatuation may carry her. Only yesterday she met her lover, and could not hide her agitation from everybody's eyes. She had to run and shut herself up in her room the moment she came in to try to recover her composure."

"Shocking!" cried Mrs. Marsh, who was rather disappointed not to find the story quite as interesting as she had expected.

"I told my brother that it was only what might be expected from a person of her bringing up," Lady Penryth went on. "These bourgeois never know how to conceal their feelings. And the worst of it is that Lord de Bruyne was with her. You may have remarked—you are so very unselfish about the attentions that other women receive — that he seemed inclined to be taken with her, but of course he will never think of marrying her now. She may give up all thought of that."

"But if she is in love with Mr. Warrender she will not care about Lord de Bruyne," Mrs. Marsh objected.

"Warrender will not marry her. Everybody knows that she is dying about him, but he has sufficient common sense to be aware that his pretensions to Miss Daryl are over after what we have heard. And now she cannot get Lord de Bruyne either! I never pretend to virtue, and I do not mind telling you plainly, Mrs. Marsh, that I think the girl got what she deserved; but you, I am sure, are so sweet and kind that you will pity her, or will say that you do. Every one knows Mrs. Marsh's womanly charity."

"I cannot say that I pity Miss Daryl," Mrs. Marsh replied, not finding these constant sneers agreeable, "if she cannot control her feelings sufficiently to conceal her attachment for a man such as you describe Mr. Warrender. Of course nobody could expect Lord de Bruyne to take any more notice of her. Where is Miss Daryl just now, Lady Penryth? It strikes me that I have not seen her for some time."

'I do not keep a watch on her movements. Shall we go back to the drawing room? This conservatory is rather cool for me, being an old woman. A person like you, in the first bloom of youth, does not notice it."

Mrs. Marsh, who had begun to be of an uncertain age, reddened and rose, glad to escape from the spitefulness of her companion. She had found her revelations rather dull, and, though she might make some capital out of Miss Daryl's infatuation for Mr. Warrender, and Lord de Bruyne's consequent scorn for her, she could not, on the whole, render the story highly interesting. She quitted Lady Penryth as soon as she conveniently could, and mingled with the other guests. She only half believed the stories which Lady Penryth had hinted at in connection with Mr. Warrender, and she vaguely wondered if she had not been made a fool of by that wicked old woman. She came to the conclusion to wait for further light before spreading any whispers derogatory to Mr. Daryl's granddaughter, her own footing in society being a rather precarious one, which any false step might destroy.

The two ladies had held their conversation in the conservatory which opened off the drawing room. Their voices and the rustle of their garments had scarcely died away when Kilmeny, pale with passion and wounded feeling, rose up from a couch where she had been sitting concealed from view, but near enough to have heard the whole conversation. Latterly she had become a poor sleeper, and the whole night after her meeting with Chris she had lain wide awake thinking — thinking, until she felt as if her brain must reel. She had hidden herself this evening, when dinner was over, in the cool quietude among the flowers, and as she sat there, her throbbing brow resting on the arm of the chair, sleep had stolen over her for a few merciful moments.

Lady Penryth's voice had awakened her, and she had kept quiet, in order that her retreat might not be discovered. There, as she listened, every cruel word had reached her — every pitiless syllable in which her secret had been held up to ridicule. In the tumult of her anger and suffering she was unable to think connectedly, or to remember anything except that she must do something to show all the world that this hateful, shameful accusation was false, that she had done with Christopher Warrender, and had by her own deed broken with him for ever.

Anything—anything to escape from this house and near neighborhood to him! Anything to drive childhood's and girlhood's memories from her mind, tortured beyond her strength! She could never go back to her old home, where everything would be a fresh wound; she could not remain where she was, with the continued chance of meeting Christopher. Kilmeny laid her head down again on the arm of the chair, her mind filled with a wild longing to escape by some means or other, and to show to all the world that she was not trying to force her love on a man who was unworthy of it.

Mingled with the pain of her heart was a burning anger against Lady Penryth. A wish to show her that she was not to be trampled on or despised possessed her.

"I have been looking for you Miss Daryl," Lord de Bruyne's voice said, close beside her.

It was a very gentle voice, with something strong about it which arrested Kilmeny. He sat down near her, and she lifted her eyes slowly and looked at him. She had been wishing for a way of escape, and for a means of triumphing over Lady Penryth, She knew now that both were possible.

"What has that woman been saying?" Lord de Bruyne asked, with a contained force of anger in his voice. "I saw her and that Mrs. Marsh come away together from this place, and I missed you, so I knew that she was at some mischief. Tell me what she has been saying."

"Oh, it is no matter!" cried Kilmeny. She had already forgotten Lady Penryth's words in the certainty that something was before her, more momentous and fateful than any deed of her life. Her eyes were fixed on Lord de Bruyne's, and the magnetic power in his held hers as by a kind of fascination. "What did she say? Something that I want to forget—something that was a lie. She did not know that I was here."

Lord de Bruyne laughed scornfully. "She knew that you were here well enough!" he said, and stretched out his hand to take Kilmeny's. "Lady Penryth," he added, "hates you. A girl like you never could tell or have any notion of what a woman like her would say or do to stab or ruin you. There is no lie which she would not invent, no cruelty which she would hesitate at. The only thing for you is to let me manage her and everything else. I want you for my wife, Agree to marry me, and in a few days I will take you away from all this. Lady Penryth is afraid of me; she knows me thoroughly, and, however she may dare to injure Nina Daryl, she will know better than to say a word against Lady de Bruyne. Before a fortnight is over you will be where I can protect you. Say that you will do it."

He knew better than to speak of love. She wanted escape only, and he offered her that. As Kilmeny saw the glitter in his blue eyes and marked the firm set of his square jew, she recognized that, if he chose to put himself between her and the world, it would not dare to injure her. He could take her away at once from this horrible web of lies and misrepresentation which tangled her feet now so that she could not extricate herself. Life with Lord de Bruyne would be as tolerable as life anywhere else, and he had promised to take her away at once. That was all that seemed clear to her.

"Well?" he said, and his hold on her hand tightened. "You will consent? I may tell your grandfather and everybody else this evening that you will marry me and leave them all in a fortnight's time? Just say the word—that is all that I want."

He had risen, and he stood close to her, tall and strong and resolute. In his heart was exultation, but he was wise enough not to show it. Kilmeny was looking at him with desperate eyes, nerving herself for the great decision.

"Well?" he repeated, smiling at her. "It is not such a great thing after all. You have known me too short a time to be in love with me, and I do not ask anything of that kind from you. We shall be just the same as long as we are here. All that you have to do is to leave your hand in mine, and say, 'I promise to marry you as soon as everything can be got ready,' After that make you mind easy and leave all to me. Who do you say?"

Then Kilmeny spoke the fatal words. "I will marry you," she said.

"Bravo!" cried Lord de Bruyne, laughing. "Now, Miss Daryl, are you the least bit different from what you were before you spoke those dreadful syllables? All the change is that you may feel safe and leave me to manage. What do you want to do now? Will you return to the drawing room, or would you rather not? You are to do just what you like."

"Oh, if I could but get away!" Kilmeny cried. "If I need not see all those people just now, or ever see Lady Penryth again!"

"Come," he said, smiling. "I know a way out without the necessity of returning to the drawing room. You need not meet anybody that you don't want to. And it will be no use expecting to see Lady Penryth in the morning, for you won't see her. Now, do you know your way? Good night."

They had reached the foot of the great staircase which Kilmeny had first ascended in Chris Warrender's company. She had then laughingly declared that she liked its mystery, but she had little known what darkness and misery that mystery involved. Chris was lost, and she had promised to marry the man beside her.

She fled up the stairs without waiting to reply to his "Good night," and he went away smiling to himself like one well pleased. It was not a smile that Kilmeny would have liked if she could have seen it, but then she was gone. He went straight to Mr. Daryl when he returned to the drawing room.

"I want to see you alone," he said in a low voice.

Mr. Daryl glanced at him and rose. As he did so Lady Penryth grew pale even under her rouge. She was remarkably good at a species of calculation known as "putting two and two together," and she understood what had happened as well as if she had been present at the interview between Lord de Bruyne and Kilmeny in the conservatory.

Everybody heard next morning that Lady Penryth had returned home, recalled by urgent business, and she appeared on the scene no more. But the momentary wonder which that circumstance excited was swallowed up in the surprise which was created by another announcement—that of the engagement of Miss Daryl to Lord de Bruyne.

The news of her engagement was published far and wide, and was soon known in her old home and to Christopher Warrender. But Kilmeny's life was now in skilful and unscrupulous hands, and if any remonstrance or appeal from those who loved her was sent it never reached her. She had promised her grandfather not to write to any one for a month, and she kept her word. Lawyers came and went, drawing up marriage settlements and making everything secure. Mr. Daryl, satisfied that he had withdrawn his granddaughter completely from her old associates and friends, whom he hated with the hatred of a mean nature conscious that it is under obligations which can never be discharged, destroyed his old will and made a new one constituting Kilmeny his sole heiress. Dressmakers and the paraphernalia of a fashionable wedding were perpetually in evidence, and Kilmeny was in a whirl from morning till night. She was never allowed a moment in which to think.

Lord de Bruyne was the only one who ever saw that she was fatigued, and insisted on her leaving the wedding finery behind and going out with him. They drove together every day, but that was the only sign of their engagement besides the ring which she wore. He offered no caresses and, asked for none. He talked no lover's talk to her. Their intercourse was pleasant and friendly on his side, absent and silent on hers. She often sat turning her engagement ring round and round, not hearing a word of his conversation; but he made no remark about her inattention.

It seemed to her indeed as if her whole life had been crowded into that fortnight, and yet it flew by with incredible rapidity. She came at last to the day before the wedding. Lord de Bruyne called in the afternoon to take her for a drive, but for the first time she declined.

"Not to-day, please," she said, "I want to be quiet for a while."

He looked at her curiously, but he did not press his request.

"Where are you going to be quiet?" he asked. "There is not much chance of that anywhere but out-of-doors, I imagine. Why not come with me? I promise not to say a word the whole time."

But Kilmeny shook her head.

"I know a place," she said, "where nobody will find me, and I can be quiet enough there."

"All right," he said, rising to go. "If you like that better, it is all that I want. If I come over again later in the day, can I see you?"

She looked up at him, and he saw the entreaty in her eyes. He smiled at her

"Well, I will not come. You shall have a quiet time, and shall not see anybody. Good-bye!"

For the first time he kissed her hand before he left, and when he was gone, Kilmeny rushed away to her own room and in feverish haste put on her hat and wrapped a cloak around her. The touch of his lips on her hand had reminded her that on the morrow she would belong to him, and would have taken the irrevocable step of marriage. She hurried out of the house and away to the place she had spoken of—a melancholy little dell at some distance from the house. She believed that nobody knew anything about its existence but herself, and that she would be secure from intrusion there She sat down on a mossy stump out of sight, and prepared for the first time to contemplate her situation.

Before she could collect her faculties the sound of steps approaching warned her that her solitude was to be broken. She drew back noiselessly in order more effectually to conceal herself, and the next moment was amazed to behold Lady Penryth moving slowly through the brushwood, evidently bent on gaining the house unperceived. She paused from time to time and listened, and Kilmeny, with a breathless choking expectation of something impending, listened too. As the two women, the one hidden and watching, and the other believing herself alone, waited during one of these moments of tension, quick and resolute footsteps came breaking through the undergrowth, and the next moment Lord de Bruyne stood beside Lady Penryth.

To be Continued.

COLOR IN FLAGS.

Red Predominates Largely in the Standards of the Chief Nations.

Though the policy of military authorities in using less glaring colors in uniforms has been very marked of late years, red remains the most popular color for national standards.

Of 25 countries, 19 have flags with red in them, the list including Great Britain, United States, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Belgium, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Mexico, Chili, Portugal, Venezuela and Cuba.

The countries which have blue as an element of their flags are Great Britain, United States, Russia, France, Holland, Ecuador, Portugal, Chile, Venezuela, Portugal and Cuba.

Three countries have black as one of the elements of their flags— Germany, Belgium and China, but Germany is the only one of the three that has black and white together.

There are six countries which have green as a color: Ireland, Brazil, the flag of which is green chiefly, Mexico, Egypt, Italy and Persia.

Nine countries have flags in which the color is partly yellow. These countries are Austria, Spain, Belgium, Egypt, Sweden, China, Persia, Brazil and Venezuela.

Countries with flags partly white are the United States, France, Germany, Russia, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Turkey, Persia, Japan, Mexico, Holland Denmark, Portugal, Cuba, and Chili.

There is no white in the national standard of England, but the British naval flag has a white background.

The flag of Ecuador is nearer white than any other country, being made up of two parallel white columns, between which is a column of blue, upon which are white stars.

GLENCOE HERO'S WIFE.

Lady Symons is Immensely Popular in Social Circles.

Lady Symons was as a girl a Miss Hawkins, of Birmingham. Her parents lived at Edgbaston, not far from the residence of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. Miss Hawkins was very quiet in disposition, but was, nevertheless, one of the most popular girls in that suburb. General, then Captain, Symons was visiting some friends in Birmingham, connected with the volunteers—in which corps, by the way, he took great interest—when he met his future wife. The impression he gave the Birmingham folk he met was rather that he was not a man to distinguish himself, as he struck them as being specially quiet and retiring, and much surprise was felt when the engagement was announced that two persons so similar in disposition should have been mutually attracted. On the whole, the feeling was that Miss Hawkins had married a man who was bound to be undistinguished. Consequently his remarkable career and the heroism he has ever evinced have taken the doubters a good deal aback. But it is not the first instance of great qualities not being early recognized. The marriage has turned out a great success, and Lady Symons is immensely popular in society, though both she and her husband always preferred a private life, and had the greatest dislike to anything savoring of notoriety. Every woman is now saying: "How proud she must be of him!"

GEN. SIR CHAS. WARREN.

He Has Been Appointed to Command the Fifth Infantry Division in S. Africa.

General Sir Charles Warren, who has been appointed chief of the Fifth Infantry division ordered to Cape Town, is nearly sixty years of age and has seen considerable service in South Africa. When seventeen years of age he entered the Royal Engineers. Since that time he has occupied the positions of assistant instructor and chief instructor at the School of Military Engineering and the School of Gunnery for several years. Later, he acted as Royal Commissioner for laying down the boundary line between Grinqualand and the Orange Free State. As a major he commanded the Diamond Fields Horse int he Kaffir war, Griqualand rebellion, Bechuanaland war, and northern border expedition of 1877-79, receiving the medal and clasp, mention in despatches and promotion to Brevet Lieut.-Col. He served throughout the Egyptian war of 1882, receiving the medal, Khedive's star, third-class medjidie, and the decoration of K. C. M. G. He commanded the second Bechuanaland expedition of 1884-85, receiving the decoration of G. C. M. G. From 1886 to 1888 he was Chief Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, commanded the troops of the Straits Settlement, 1889 to 1894, and the troops of the Thames district from 1895 to 1898.

GEN. SYMONS' DOGS.

An Amusing Incident in the Last Zulu Campaign.

A military correspondent recalls an incident of the last Zulu campaign, in which General Symons, then a captain in the 2nd Battalion of the Twenty-fourth, took part. Four companies of the 24th and 88th combined were advancing to an attack in skirmishing order. Symons was followed without his knowing it by two favorite dogs of his, highly bred pointers. Presently, when the firing began, these two dogs, who had hitherto been sneaking carefully behind—knowing full well they were not allowed on parades or at church—got wildly excited by the firing, and bounded off between the enemy's position and the advancing line of skirmishers. At first they showed by their actions the excellent training they had received, and worked for all they were worth. But at last neither seeing nor scenting any game, notwithstanding the perpetual rattle of the firing they evidently lost all patience and emphasized their disgust at the proceedings by falling upon one another and fighting fiercely, until their master's voice recalled them to their better sense. This homely incident started the whole line in roars of laughter, and made everyone forget that we were engaged in what might have been a serious undertaking, though, as a matter of fact, it turned out a blank day after all.

AGE AND MARRIAGE.

A woman's prospect of marriage is distinctly affected by age. The statistics of all countries show that the majority of women marry between the ages of, 20 and 30, Before reaching 20 a woman has, of course, a chance of matrimony, but the objections raised by parents or friends of marriage at a tender age frequently outweigh the desire of the young woman to acquire a husband, and lead her to defer the wedding day.

All the statistics that have been gathered bear out the statement that a woman's best chance to marry is at the age of 25, that over six-tenths of the marriages take place between 20 and 30, and, consequently that a woman's chance increases up to 25, and steadily decreases after that age until it reaches the vanishing point somewhere about 60.

Out of 1,000 married women, 149 marry before the age of 20, 680 between 20 and 30, 111 between 30 and 40, the woman in her thirties having not so good a chance as the girl in her teens; between the ages of 40 and 50 the falling off is enormous, only 41 in 1,000 contracting an alliance in that decade, while past 50 the chances still further diminish, for the woman who has celebrated the semi-centennial of her birth has only nineteen chances in a thousand.