Through Storm and Sunshine

Vivien Neslie was standing in the full glow of the sunshine, near a cluster of gladioli, that formed a picture in themselves, all crimson and gold, bees buried in the bells, butterflies hovering round them. She had been looking at the gorgeous flowers, and still held one in her hands. There was no fairer spot in England than this sunlit garden, where the heiress of Lancewood stood with thoughtful face and dreamy eyes. Look where she would, nothing but beauty met her eyes, marvels of color, wonders of sunshine and shade. It was a garden rather old-fashioned than otherwise, full of heavy, rich roses, orange and scarlet nasturtiums, big fair clusters of hydrangea; there were blossoms of purple and white carmine-hued carnations, and lilies with white, pure bells—a garden wherein a poet might dream, and a painter lose himself in the divine beauty of flower and tree. An old-fashioned sun-dial stood near the bright gladioli; not far from it was a fountain of rare and quaint design; tame white doves fluttered round, and birds of bright plumage sang in the trees. The June sun shone, and over all floated a breath of perfume sweet as the odors of Araby.

Vivien Neslie gazed round with dreamy eyes. Looking at her, one would say she was rightly placed near the crimson and golden gladioli. She was in perfect harmony with the beauty of the garden—a tall, stately girl, with a Titian face, dark, glowing, splendid in its exquisite coloring and perfect features, the eyes of a rare purple hue, such as one sees in the heart of a passion flower, darkening with every passing thought, bright as the stars in the sky, fringed with long lashes—mystical, dreamy eyes, full of passion and power—eyes in the liquid depths of which it was easy to lose both heart and senses; straight, imperial brows; a mouth like a pomegranate bud, sensitive, sweet, yet with some proud, scornful curves—a girl that Titian would have painted, holding with white hand a crimson flower to her lips. A mass of dark hair, soft and shining, was drawn back from the beautiful face, and lay in luxuriant profusion over the white neck and shoulders. In the bloom of her girlish beauty she looked brilliant as a passion-flower in the sun.

Suddenly one of the tame white doves fluttering round, lighted on her shoulder, and Vivien Neslie awoke from her dream.

What do girls fair and young dream of in the sunshine and flowers? Of the lover who is to come—of the love that is to crown them—of the sweet, vague possibilities of life?

No such pretty thoughts occupied the heiress of Lancewood. She had been through the Hyde woods and round by the river; returning, she stopped to rest by the old sun-dial, and there her dark eyes wandered over one of the fairest scenes in England. She saw the dark masses of trees in Hyde woods; she saw purple hills rising in the far distance, crowned with rich foliage; she saw the deep, clear river gleaming in the sun; she saw rich clover-meadows, golden cornfields, acre after acre of undulating, fertile land; she saw a picturesque park, where grand old trees of the growth of generations formed a shade for the antlered deer; and to the left lay the sunny Southern sea. She saw Lancewood Abbey, the home of her race, the grand, massive building that was like "a poem in stone;" and the thought that brightened the dreamy eyes was—"One day all this will be mine." All this—the wealth of wood and forest, of field and meadow—even the far-famed old Abbey—all would one day be hers, for she was the only child of Sir Arthur Neslie, and heiress of Lancewood. She had the proud air of one who had always been obeyed. There was a grandeur about her such as comes only from always holding high authority, a frank independence, a certain kind of defiance—for it was a noble face, and a noble soul looked out of it.

"All this will be mine," thought the young girl—"and I will make good use of it. If I live long enough, my good deeds shall be my monument. I will leave a name that will live in the hearts of the people around me. This is my kingdom, and I shall be its queen."

It was not vanity that shone in her face as she said the words—it was something higher and nobler—pride that, rightly trained, might have made her what she wished to be, a noble woman—pride of race and of lineage, pride in a spotless name and high descent, pride in the grand old home that was second to none in the land.

All to be her own—and she would—use it royally. She had often stood there by the old sun-dial, looking round on the vast domain, thinking what she would do when it became hers. She had been brought up as heiress of Lancewood. No other fate, no other lot in life, no other possibility had ever occurred to her except this. She had filled her mind with grand and noble thoughts, all for the good of others, when she would be queen of this her fair domain. It should be a pattern and model for all others—no one should be poor or sorrowful. She would be a lady bountiful, going amongst her people with open hands and open heart, relieving all distress. There should be churches where none had been built before—schools, almshouses. Her heart warmed as she thought of it all, as she pictured the white heads of the old and the fair faces of the young, and all were to be made happy by her. They were noble dreams—not out of place in the glow of the sunlight and amid the fragrance of flowers.

The pretty tame doves aroused her from them. She dropped the spray of gladiolus, and turned to the fountain. The gold fish almost seemed to know her as she touched the water softly.

Presently down a broad path shaded by acacia-trees came a young, handsome man, looking about him eagerly, as though in search of some one. At length he saw the glimmer of a white dress amongst the trees, and he stood still, silently watching her. She was singing just then in a low, sweet voice, and he listened to the words with a peculiar smile on his face. They were words by the poet Dibdin, quaint and sweet—

"I once had gold and silver—
  I thought them without end;
I once had gold and silver—
  I thought I had a friend,
My wealth is lost, my friend is false,
  My love is stolen from me;
And here I lie in misery
  Beneath the willow-tree."

He recognized the song as one called "The Mad Lover," and again a significant smile stole over his face.

"It is a strange for her to sing," he thought to himself. "One never hears her singing love ditties, as other girls do. She is far too imperial for that, I should imagine."

Then he went up to the fountain where the gold fish darted amongst the emerald-green weeds and the sun shone in the waters.

"Good-morning, Miss Neslie," he said, with a low bow.

The words of the song ceased abruptly as Vivien Neslie turned quickly round to see from whom the greeting came. A smile came over her face.

"Good-morning, Mr. Dorman; you startled me. Have the books come?"

"Yes," he replied. "I came to tell you. They are well selected; you will be pleased, I think."

"The last were all tiresome—nothing of any value in them," she continued. "Have they sent Browning's last poem?"

"Yes; we have several poetical works this time."

"If it is not troubling you too much will you bring Browning out here to me? I should like to read in the sunshine; it is very pleasant."

She spoke to him with a kind of half-distant, half-reserved familiarity, that showed plainly enough that she did not consider him on an equality with herself. He seemed to feel and understand it, and his face flushed slightly as he replied—

"It is always a pleasure to obey you Miss Neslie."

"Then pray let me have Browning at once. I have but an hour's leisure; I must not lose it in talking.

Again his face flushed. He waited until he could speak calmly, and, then producing a letter, he said—

"The post-bag was delayed this morning; I have only just opened it. Sir Arthur has written to me—and this is for you."

She fancied there was something strange in his manner—something of hesitation and uncertainty. Then she took from his hands the letter which was to change the whole course of her life.

"It is from Sir Arthur," she said, quickly—"a letter from my father! How cruel of the post to delay this morning, above all others!"

She opened the envelope with impatient fingers, wondering why the young secretary lingered there, looking at her with such strange eyes.

"What a long letter!" she said, laughingly. "This extends to over a page; Sir Arthur seldom writes more than four lines."

"Let me find you a seat," he proposed, "while you read it. You will be tired of standing."

Still with the same strange expression on his face, he brought one of the little garden-chairs to her, and she sat down.

"Why do you not go for my book?" she asked, with laughing impatience.

"There may be a message for me in that letter, Miss Neslie," he replied. "Permit me to remain while you read it."

She sat down where the faint, odor of the lilies floated round her, where the cooing of the white doves reached her, and read the words that darkened her whole life.

"My Dearest Vivien—Writing, as you know, always fatigues me; I detest it. But I have something to tell you which will astonish you greatly—perhaps even anger you.

"It will be foolish of you, Vivien, to be angry, for I have perfect and undisputed right to please myself; no one has any right to take umbrage or offense at what I do.

"I feel a certain degree of reluctance in making my announcement—why, I cannot tell. You would wish me to be happy, and I have sought happiness after my own fashion. Vivien, I have married again. My wife is a beautiful young French girl—her name was Valerie d'Este; she is very piquant, attractive, graceful. You will be sure to admire her. We were married in Paris, and intend returning home next Tuesday.

"Now, Viven, remember that being angry and vexed about it is simply a waste of time; I had a right to please myself, and I have done so. If this wife were to die, it would be no one's affair should I marry a third. Tell Mrs. Spenser to have the rooms in the western wing set in order and prepared for Lady Neslie. Tell all the household of the change, and see that my wife is received with due honor and respect.

"One word to yourself, Vivien. What is done is done. If you are wise, instead of battling with the tide of events, you will swim with it. From you, my daughter, I shall expect love, kindness, affection, attention, and consideration for my wife. If you show all this, well and good; if you refuse it, you will see the result. Meet me with a smile, Vivien; let me hear no reproaches.

"I had a right to please myself. Your whole future will depend on your treatment of Lady Neslie.

"My fondly-loved daughter, adieu. We shall be with you on Tuesday, and hope to find all things well.

Arthur Neslie.

She read the letter slowly, and then turned back and read it again. The young secretary watched her intently. He saw the color fade from her face, the light die from her eyes; he saw her lips grow white, as they had never been before; he watched her curiously, keenly, for he would have given his life to save her from pain.

Suddenly, with an angry gesture, she rose from her seat, a crimson flush spreading over her face; she flung the letter on the ground at her feet.

"I will not believe it!" she cried. "It is a forgery! My father never wrote that."

He made no reply; his pity and his love were so great that they made him speechless.

"Read it!" she commanded. "Read it, Gerald Dorman, and tell me if I am mad or sane!"

He took up the letter.

"Do you really wish me to read this, Miss Neslie?" he asked.

"Yes," she replied, slowly. "I cannot believe it. My eyes, my senses must have deceived me; the words I have seen cannot possibly be written there. Read it, and tell me if the news be true."

He read the letter. She stood watching him with a bewildered, dazed look, with white parted lips and darkened eyes. Then he laid it down on the sundial, and turning to her, said—

"It is quite true, Miss Neslie. I knew it when I brought this letter to you."

"You knew it!" she cried. "How?"

"Sir Arthur wrote to tell me. I received his letter this morning, and I felt sure that yours contained the same intelligence. It was for that reason I ventured to disobey you and remain here instead of looking for the book."

"Then it is true," she moaned; "my father has a wife—some one in my mother's place. I—I cannot believe it, Mr. Dorman. Why, only ten minutes since I was thinking of all I would persuade him to do—and now I find he has a wife. He has been all the world to me—as I have been to him; and now he has a wife. The love and the home that have been mine so long will be mine no more."

"Nay, Miss Neslie," said the calm, pitying voice, "it will not be so bad as that. You are, and always will be heiress of Lancewood. The Abbey will always be your home, unless—" Then he stopped and hesitated.

"Unless my father should have a son to succeed him, in which case Lancewood would never be mine," she said, slowly. "Half an hour since, Mr. Dorman, I thought myself as certainly heiress of Lancewood as that the sun shone in the sky."

"You must not look on the very darkest side, Miss Neslie," counseled the young secretary. "Sir Arthur says that Lady Neslie is young and beautiful."

of supreme contempt.

She interrupted him with a gesture

"One must be as weak as a man," she said, "to care much for youth and beauty."

"Pardon me," he continued, gently; "I was about to say that, being beautiful, she is almost sure to be kind of heart. Minds and faces are in harmony."

She interrupted him again.

"How little you know of the matter, Mr. Dorman! As though beautiful women ever cared for anything except themselves."

"Being young," he pursued, "she will be timid, and will not venture to take any leading part in the management of the household."

She laughed bitterly.

"Did you ever see a timid Frenchwoman, Mr. Dorman? I never did. What can have possessed my father to marry—above all, to marry a French girl?"

"Perhaps," said the young secretary, with a meaning look that any one less proud would have understood, "Sir Arthur may have fallen in love, as others do."

"Love!" she repeated, scornfully. "Pray, pardon me, Mr. Dorman, but the notion of my own father's falling in love is too absurd."

There was an interval of uncomfortable silence; it was broken by the young secretary, who said:

"I am sorry, Miss Neslie, to bring a disagreeable matter before you, but Sir Arthur says he wishes arches of evergreens erected in the drive. I am to consult you about them."

"You may spare me the insult, sir. If I erected an arch at all, it would be one of yew and cypress.

He bowed, being quite at a loss for words.

"Sir Arthur has also directed that the pictures in the blue room shall be placed in the apartment in the western wing known as 'my lady's boudoir.'"

"That was my mother's room!" cried the girl, with flashing eyes. "It shall not be touched!"

"Dear Miss Neslie," pleaded the secretary, "do believe me; opposition is all in vain. Let me counsel you to comply with Sir Arthur's wishes."

"I do not need your counsel, Mr. Dorman, and please do not call me 'dear' Miss Neslie. I am not so desolate yet as to require that."

He drew back with such an expression of intense pain that her proud heart was touched. She held out her hand to him.

"Forgive me," she said. "I need not speak so unkindly to you — you have not displeased me. But I am so hurt, so grieved, so wounded, I do not know what to say."

"If speaking harshly to me could lessen your pain, I would submit to it forever," he replied.

She did not seem to hear him—and he was quite accustomed to have the passionate utterances of his great love treated with silent indifference.

"Tell me," Mr. Dorman," she said, after a pause, "all that Sir Arthur requires to be done."

"Sir Arthur wishes to have triumphal arches erected all along the drive. They are to be surmounted by the word, 'Welcome.' He wishes also that every servant belonging to the household should be in the great hall to bid Lady Neslie welcome home. He wishes the rooms in the western wing to be prepared, all the pictures of the Blue Room to be placed in the boudoir, dinner to be ready at eight instead of seven—he invites me to dine—and, lastly, I am to say to you that he hopes neither expense nor trouble will be spared in welcoming Lady Neslie home."

She turned her proud face to him.

"Do you know, sir, that that is the very welcome my mother received when she came, a bride, to Lancewood Abbey twenty years ago?"

"I can imagine it," was the cautious reply.

"And do you think the same welcome given to her will be given to this French girl—this girl of nineteen? I tell you 'No!' I would rather cut off my hands than use even one finger in such sacrilege. Let those who will erect triumphal arches — I shall not."

The young secretary looked terribly perplexed.

"I can understand your feelings," he began.

She turned again with her queenly gesture of impatient scorn.

To be Continued.

HOW TO RIP A DRESS.

Most people have an idea that it is easy enough to rip a garment to pieces. Any child can do this. It is a matter that requires scarcely any care or attention. Dresses are usually pulled to pieces, snipped at with scissors, or cut with knives.

To rip up a garment properly there should be no pulling, tearing, or dragging apart. If one cannot take the end of the thread and pull it out, the stitches should be cut with a sharp knife. Very few persons can rip a garment with scissors without doing it great harm; indeed, many find it impossible to cut stitches with anything without making holes that render the goods absolutely worthless for the one who originally wore it. When it is done the edges are so ragged that a much smaller pattern must be used. In preparing goods for the dyer, or to be made over, every stitch should be taken out. It seems scarcely necessary to say that facings, braid and hooks and eyes must be removed, but this is imperative, in view of the condition in which garmnts come to the dressmaker and the dyer. Many dresses, capes and jackets are perfectly wearable after being carefully ripped, brushed, sponged and pressed. It is a wonder that some one does not set up an establishment for ripping clothes and putting them in order for the dressmaker. The owner of them frequently has not time to rip properly, or is too careless and undestands too little the way to do it, had she all the time in the world. Some woman in every community might get a tolerable living, or at least add to a limited income, by preparing garments for remodelling.

A NEW METHOD.

A lady who is noted for the systematic orderliness of her home recently made a visit to a friend who lives in a large, old-fashioned, rambling mansion, in spacious grounds, in a suburban town. Mrs. Orderly was very careful about shutting doors, and frequently took herself to task after any of her outings because the doors of the closets in her rooms were open. She imagined she must have forgotten them, and felt some vexation on account of it. After a time she observed that almost all of the cupboard doors in the house stood open in the same way. From force of habit she closed one of them while her hostess was in the room, when that lady remarked:

"I wonder if you have observed that I am quite given to leaving my closet doors open. It may appear like carelessness, but I assure you there is a method in it. As long as the doors were slightly closed I was bothered to death by moths. They seemed to have an insane desire to eat up my best clothes and do what I could I found no remedy. At last an idea struck me, that as light was not favorable for their business I might gain a point by leaving everything exposed to the sun. Since that time I have purposely left every door open, and moths trouble me but little."

HAD BEEN THERE BEFORE.

In order to settle a little bet, the young man said, passing a ring over the showcase, please tell me whether the correct pronounciation of the name of the stone in that ring is turkeeze or turkwoize.

The jeweller inspected it and handed it back.

The correct pronounciation is glass, he said.

A Clergyman's Advice.

THE ALMOST MIRACULOUS CURE OF JOHN McDONALD, CAPE NORTH, N. S.

For Years He Was Afflicted With Spinal Trouble and Paralysis of the Legs—Was Treated by the Best Specialists in Victoria General Hospital, at Halifax, Without Benefit Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Have Restored Him.

Mr. John McDonald, a well known merchant at Cape North, N.S., was for many years a sufferer from spinal trouble, which eventually resulted in partial paralysis. Treatment of many kinds was resorted to, but without avail, until finally Dr. Williams' Pink Pills were used, with the result that Mr. McDonald is again enjoying almost perfect health. Mr. McDonald's story is given as follows in his own words:—"Almost thirteen years ago I caught a bad cold which lodged in my back, producing a terrible pain. Liniments were at first resorted to, but they had no effect, and the trouble be- and could not go out of doors after came so bad that I could hardly walk, dark, as I would be almost certain to fall if I attempted to walk. Medical treatment did me no good. I tried six different doctors, but the result was always the same. I spent $30 for an electric belt, but it was simply money wasted. Years went on and I was continually growing worse, until in the spring of 1895 my lower limbs would scarcely support me. In June of that year I went to the Victoria General Hospital, Halifax, where I remained for two months under the treatment of the best specialists, but when I returned home I was actually worse than when I entered the hospital. This thoroughly discouraged me, and I gave up all hope of ever getting better. I continued to grow worse until about the first of January, 1896, when I had become so bad that I could not stand alone, as my legs were like sticks under me. My only means of locomotion was crutches, and my legs dragged after me like useless pieces of timber; I could not raise them one inch from the floor. About the first of the following April, Rev. Mr. McLeod strongly urged me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I had tried so many things without benefit, that I did not think the pills could help me, but nevertheless decided to give them a trial. After using six boxes I could see that there was a slight improvement, and I continued using the pills until I had taken thirty boxes, and by that time new life and vigor and returned to my legs, and I have since been able to attend to my business behind the counter without the aid of crutches, or even a stick. Under God's blessing Dr. Williams Pink Pills have restored me to a new measure of health and energy, I never expected to again enjoy in this world.

My restoration has caused a great wonderment in this section, and as a result I have sold many gross of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in my store, and many of those who have bought them from me tell me they have cured them of their troubles.

Dr. Williams Pink Pills act directly on the blood and nerves. They do not purge, and therefore do not weaken like other medicines. They give strength from the first pill to the last used. There are many dealers who offer pink colored substitutes, because the substitute gives them a greater profit, but these should always be refused, as substitutes are either dangerous or absolutely worthless.

A SOLDIER SUPERSTITION.

"I'm sorry," said a London tattooist famous in the West End, "but I can only give you a few minutes, You see, the war has given an extraordinary impetus to our art. All the leading artists in our line are engaged night and day tattooing mottoes, arms, love tokens, and still stranger devices, on the arms, chests, and legs of departing officers and privates. A girl's portrait in the middle of a spider's web, is a favorite decoration. One titled Guardsman had two different portraits done, one on each arm; another a complete representation of the Guards' colors and motto. Several officers get their fiancees to write their names, or some little motto, and the tattooists reproduce the writing in facsimile.

"Nor can one smile at the tattoist as sentimental. Several officers and men who met death at Elandslaagte were recognized by mottoes and devices tattooed on their chests and arms when their faces were so shattered that identification would otherwise have been impossible.

THE ORGANIST AN ATOCRAT.

"If there ever is any trouble in the congregation about the music, and if the minister ever worries himself, it is admitted at once that the congregation and the minister are alone to blame," writes Ian Maclaren in the January Ladies' Home Journal. "But there are other difficulties, and they may be mentioned in a spirit of becoming humility. For one thing, the organist is an artist, and every artist has a nature of special refinement which cannot bear the rough-and-tumble ordinary methods of life. With a man of common clay you deal in a practical, straightforward and even brutal fashion, arguing with him, complaining to him, and putting him right when he is wrong. But no man must handle precious porcelain in such fashion, or the artist will be instantly wounded and will resign and carry his pathetic story to every quarter, for, as a rule the organist thinks that he is lifted above criticism and public opinion. It is impossible to teach him anything; it is an insult to suppose that anything could be better than the music he provides."