

A DYING PROMISE

OR, THE MISSING
WILL

CHAPTER XIV.

Philip sat smoking his hubble-bubble by lamp-light that evening, pondering ways and means of returning to Lucknow when he should be well enough, and penetrating the rebel lines to the relieving force, which as he now learned, was closely besieged and in its turn awaiting relief, he wondered what Jessie would think if she could but peep through the latticed window upon him. This amused him so much that he laughed and swallowed some of the rose-water through the tube, half choking himself, this reminded him that the art of smoking the native pipe was not to be learnt in a moment, any more than the native fashion of sitting which he was practising, with his turban on, his slippers off, and an expression of profound gravity upon his face. Jessie would not recognize her brother in this dignified young Hindoo. How amused Campbell would be! Ah, no, he remembered, Campbell, the bright boy ensign who had joined a few weeks before they came out, and whom Philip had taken into his heart of hearts, would never more be amusing or amused. Tears filled his eyes and he laid the pipe aside, recalling his last sight of Charlie Campbell, cut almost in two by a round shot, as they passed the dead-liey Kaiser Bagh. Then he thought mournfully of others, officers and men, whom he had seen fall in the fierce rush to the Residency.

As he was thus sadly musing and listening to a subdued chanting, which sounded pleasantly through the house, a low knock was heard at his door.

"Come in," he said, in the faltering Hindostance, of which he had of course picked up a few words before his arrival at Beclampore.

The door opened quickly and softly, and as quickly and softly closed again behind a vision that struck him dumb with amazement. It was the figure of a tall, slim Hindoo girl, dressed in gay hued silk, with a brilliant silken sari thrown gracefully over her head and shoulders, and with golden ornaments upon her round, brown arms, and slender ankles. Gossamjee's lesson on Hindoo manners not having included the etiquette proper to the reception of an uninvited lady in his private apartments, Philip was embarrassed as to what he ought to do. He had only time, in his first startled gaze at her, to observe that dark as she was her features were refined and intelligent, and that something in her sorrowful dark eyes not only entranced him, but evoked a tumult of memory and feeling, before he rose, and making his newly learnt salaam, stood with folded arms and bent head as if awaiting commands. This was indeed an unexpected and agreeable excitement in the monotony of his honorable captivity. A strange combination of feelings thrilled him, and made him wonder that the sight of a pretty Hindoo woman should so stir him.

"Mr. Randal," said the lady, in a low, thrilling voice which set his heart beating; "you do not, of course, remember me?"

The English accent was perfect, and Philip, in bewilderment, raised his downcast head and looked earnestly into the dark, beautiful face.

"Gossamjee Bhoose is watching lest the servants should know I am here," she said, in her low, clear voice; "speak softly, we have but a few minutes. I danced with you last winter at a ball given by the—th Dragons. You had a telegram—"

"I danced with Miss Maynard," he faltered.

"I am now called Malwai Bhoose, Gossamjee's orphan niece. He is hiding me. I am the only survivor of Jellapore," she replied, "my brother was deputy commissioner there he and his wife and children—no European was spared. My ayah concealed me in a stack of firewood, she had persuaded me first to stain myself and masquerade in native dress—Ah! Mr. Randal, I cannot speak of it—that time of suspense—my brother would have sent us away, but that might have precipitated things and the country was not safe. I did not think it was so near when I first put on the ayah's dress. But I must make haste. You come from Lucknow. My brother Arthur, Captain Arthur Maynard, is there, have you seen him?"

"I never reached the position, Miss Maynard. I fell in the last rush and was taken prisoner," he replied, "but when my wound is healed I must get there somehow, when I may see your brother."

He said may advisedly, for he knew that the loss during the siege must have been great.

"You will tell him my story, Mr. Randal," she continued, "it was for this I wished to speak with you, and prevailed upon Rukhsbai to persuade Gossamjee to permit this hurried visit. He—and indeed my poor mother and all my people—will have heard of the disaster at Jellapore, and suppose me to have perished."

Philip listened to this recital, his hair torn by pity, admiration,

surprise, fear, he knew not what. He could scarcely identify the pretty, light-hearted girl with whom he had danced but a few months before, and whom he had half despised, in spite of the spell she had cast upon him, with this stately Hindoo in her picturesque dress, with the look of tragic endurance stamped upon her face, and depths of thought and suffering in her eyes. The lamp-light shone directly upon her, playing upon the dark hair half concealed by the crimson and gold sari, and on the mournful dignity of the face, which looked as if the light of mirth could never move it from its deep sorrowful repose. She had developed rapidly during the last few months; experiences that would have crushed some natures, had ripened hers. She had been called upon to endure physically and mentally; mind and body had equally responded to the sudden strain; her stature had increased, and the girlish outlines of her figure had rounded themselves to noble proportions. Her air and gestures were carefully studied and formed in the Hindoo mould; she dared not be herself one moment in the house of Gossamjee Bhoose, where her assumed character needed most careful preservation, for his sake as well as her own. But though Ada Maynard was so changed and developed, and partially disguised, there was a nameless something, the spell of an ineffable charm, which identified her with the gay hearted girl of the ball-room, and thrilled Philip's heart to its depths. Some idea of the difficulty and desolation of her position amongst this strange heathen people, with their complicated caste prejudices, and their iron code of female subjection and restriction flashed upon him as he questioned her rapidly and incoherently, with exclamations of wonder, sympathy, and desire to help, scarcely knowing what he said in the tumult of his feelings, and half maddened by his impotence to help her, wounded, honorably imprisoned, and alone among unknown enemies and doubtful friends as he was.

"Tell my brother that I am here, alive and safe," she said, at the close of the hurried, half-whispered interview.

"Tell him I never part with this," she added, quietly drawing a keen, quaintly fashioned dagger from her clothing, and letting the light flash upon the damascened blade, before she again concealed it. "I know exactly where to strike fatally." She paused, listened, and then bidding him a hasty good-night and drawing the silken sari more closely about her, vanished as suddenly and silently as she had appeared, leaving Philip gazing with a dazed, incredulous look on the space she had just occupied, before he sank on the edge of the low bedstead and buried his face in his hands, striving to shut out from his vision the baleful flash of the dagger which haunted him long after, most eloquently speaking of the perils women have to face in times of anarchy and tumult, and recalling the many terrible and sometimes untrue stories he had heard of the horrors of the last few months. She knew where to strike fatally! How calmly she had spoken, as if assuring him of the most ordinary fact. And he was powerless to help her. The hubble-bubble and the Hindoo posture were alike forgotten, the turban was pushed farther back from the brow damp with horror and Philip sat, a very European picture of trouble and dismay, feeling the full tragedy of the mutiny as he had never done before. He had heard of Jellapore, where Ada Maynard's own sister-in-law had been flung alive into the flames of a burning building before her husband's eyes, and thrust back with bayonets till she died. Was it all a dream? He rose and looked round the little room with its swinging lamp and scanty foreign furniture; he looked out of the open bay window shaded by its sun-lattice, and saw the moonlight sleeping peacefully on the housetops, and scarcely penetrating the narrow streets, touching a gilded cupola with burning silver upon gracefully swaying palms and dark masses of unfamiliar foliage in the distance, and bringing out the bastioned walls and turrets of a castle upon a hill—the architecture of which was like a confused dream of feudalism and Gothic Middle Ages blended fantastically with oriental splendor and despotism, the whole touched with the peculiar glamour of the East and the deep enchantment of the days of chivalry.

The magic of that rich and splendid Eastern land had scarcely affected him in the constant succession of adventures and dangers; he could even look unmoved upon the grace of the slender symbolic palms, the very name of which has a charm, calling up a thousand associations. He had first seen these "palms and temples of the south" through a medium of bloodshed and horror, but to-night the domes of burning silver, the light soaring grace of the minarets rising above them, the dark, rich, foreign foliage, and the castle on the hillside, all sleeping in the clear

moonlight, woke in him a feeling of beauty and romance to be remembered forever.

Chunia had told him the name of the owner of that castle, a native nobleman neutral in the present strife. What if he should prove a friend, as more than one rajah had been to fugitive English that summer.

Gossamjee Bhoose soon dissipated that illusion; he held up a bamboo, split and tied together at the ends. "Do you see this, Randal Sahib?" he asked, "whoever leans upon the aid of the Rajah Mohun Singh, leans upon this bamboo;" here he cut the binding string, while placing his hand on the top of the cane, which gave way in half a dozen directions and fell on the floor. "Mohun Singh would give you fair words and lodge you in his castle one day, and the next he would betray you. As the reeds by the river side, so is he, blown this way and that by all the winds of heaven."

This description of the rajah tallied only too well with Philip's conceptions of the native character as formed by the experiences of fugitive English and public report, and when he looked into the keen face of his host and benefactor, and listened to his smooth and honeyed words, and observed the obsequious politeness of his manner, being yet new to Asiatic ways, he wondered if it were wise to trust Gossamjee any further than he could see him. He thought not, and yet he and Ada Maynard were completely at his mercy.

Philip guarded his words and narrowly watched Gossamjee Bhoose whenever they were together, and sometimes at chess, which the hospitable Hindoo played to beguile the time for his wounded guest, fancied that he detected double meanings in the remarks he made on the game, which always terminated in victory for the Hindoo. Nor did Gossamjee's frequent observation, as he left the apartment, to the effect that Philip was his father, and that his house and all he possessed belonged absolutely and exclusively to Randal Sahib, reassure him in the last degree. Therefore he did not entrust Ada's precious ruby to him, forgetting that Gossamjee had already resisted one favorable opportunity of keeping it; nor did he tell him of the treasure Ada Maynard had left with him on her hurried visit. This was a tracing on tissue paper, so small that it could be concealed in a quill, of a plan of Lucknow, its environs and the various roads leading to it; which she herself had made from a plan found among one of the murdered European officer's effects by the friendly ayah, to whose husband the spoil had fallen. This Philip pondered over until it was traced upon the yet finer tissue of his brain.

His wounds were healing rapidly, and the repose after the tremendous exertions of the last few weeks before Lucknow was most welcome and refreshing. Gossamjee remarked on his improvement, but besought him not to leave him until he was quite recovered; reminding him that sick and wounded are more hindrance than help in the field; until Philip began to wonder if he had some sinister purpose in retaining him beneath his roof. It was true that he need not have succored him in the first instance, much less have taken him to his house as he had done; but the actions of natives during the rebellion had shown such a want of consistency, and such a purposeless tortuousness, they had been so unsteady alike in their loyalty and their hostility in many cases, that it was no wonder if plain Englishmen feared to trust any dark faces in those days.

The weather was still very hot, and he had found much refreshment in sleeping in the veranda after the first few nights. Perhaps he had some vague notion that he would be better able to penetrate to the women's apartments to help Ada, perhaps, also, he felt freer and more capable of self-defence in the open court than shut up in his room.

He had passed three or four days beneath Gossamjee's roof; it was now October, he little knew what magnificent chances of distinction he was losing in the first terrible week after the storming of the English position. He slept tranquilly on his mat, dreaming of the great willow by the mill stream, the pleasant, cool sound of the turning mill-wheel, the familiar faces in the firelight, his father and mother given back to him, as the dead so often are in dreams, and Jessie a child again, light-hearted, spoilt, and happy. Perhaps Jessie, safe beneath Miss Blushford's prim guardianship, was even then dreaming the same dream, on her white curtained, lavender-scented pillow, seeing Philip again with his manhood and his Crimean laurels fresh upon him. Perhaps she started from her tranquil sleep, thought of her poor boy fighting in distant India, and said a prayer for him before turning again to her rest.

Philip's dream suddenly changed to the dim and tumult of battle, he was before Sebastopol again, entering to replace some shattered gabions under heavy fire, when a musket ball again struck him in the shoulder; again he clenched his teeth with pain, and went on adjusting the gabions with the uninjured arm; but the pain of the wound grew and grew beyond all bearing till with, what he thought, a loud cry he awoke.

The moonlight lay upon the courtyard, a palm-tree standing motionless in the centre traced its plumed crown blackly against the deep sky, and cast its elongated shadow right athwart the court towards him; another, a human shadow, fell across his recumbent form; instead of a

gun-shot wound a dark, light hand was grasping his shoulder, a dark turbaned face came between him and the moonlight, a Hindoo youth was bending over him, dimly seen against the strong moonlight.

"Chunia!" he exclaimed, starting up.

"Hush!" whispered the lad, in a voice which stirred him, "keep in the shadow and follow me."

He rose without hesitation or question and catching up such clothes as he had laid aside, followed the slim and graceful figure, wondering if this might be some fresh scene from dreamland, or the sweet madness of a fairy tale, and filled with a vague delight in the mystery, romance, and probable danger of following his fugitive countrywoman in her fresh disguise. He was bound to be her knight, his life was at her service; as she explained nothing she had doubtless good reason for her silence. Noiselessly gliding into the shadow she flitted round the veranda, passing close to the sleeping forms of Gossamjee and Chunia, each on his purdah, till she reached a door, in the lock of which she placed a key which turned without sound.

She unlocked the door while Philip waited, silent and almost breathless in the absolute darkness; then with a whispered "Come," led him along a dark passage until they emerged into the narrow street of Beclampore; Ada softly locking the last door behind her. Then she paused a moment, pushing him back into the shadow, from which he had incautiously escaped, placed a parcel in his hands, and after listening intently and looking, as if in doubt, this way and that, started again, still barefoot and noiseless, as was Philip.

They passed the bazaar, which he had been able to watch from his window when it was filled with busy, chattering trade people, then an amusing and picturesque scene, but now silent as a tomb; they passed the Hindoo temple, recently defiled by order of the despotic moulvie, and unmolested, save by a growl or snap from the curs prowling the town for offal, left the houses behind them. Ada then stopped a moment to put on her shoes, and Philip was too glad to follow her example, for their feet were already wounded by stones, and then, silent and ghost-like in their white dresses, by which each could faintly distinguish the other even in the darkness, they sped onward and now upward till the road led them beneath the embattled walls of Mehun Singh's castle.

The moonlight smiled broadly upon the castle walls, showing a beautiful arcade of pointed arches and slender pillars fashioned in the wall above, from which, for all they knew, a sentry might be watching; they crept along past the lofty wall on the opposite side in the shadow cast by some trees, Philip all the time keeping one hand on the long, sharp, dagger-like knife that Gossamjee had given him with his native dress, and remembering the dagger Ada flashed in the lamplight on the night of her visit to him. No sound came from the sleeping castle, nothing molested them, they reached the crest of the hill and looked back upon Beclampore lying far below them in the magical light. Then his guide slackened her hitherto rapid pace, and at last broke silence.

(To be Continued.)



HOLSTEIN CATTLE.

In the course of an address before the Holstein-Friesian Association of America, Prof. H. H. Dean, of the Ontario Agricultural College, spoke as follows:

"First we have found them" (the Holstein-Friesians) "in our experience at the College, where we keep six or seven breeds for instructional purposes for our students, a healthy and a thrifty breed of cattle. We are required, owing to our peculiar circumstances, to keep representatives of the different breeds, and we find the Holsteins a healthy, thrifty breed, and I consider that a very strong point. Now, we find that some breeds do not seem to have that strong constitution, that thrift, that inherent quality which always makes them ready for their meals, and ready for almost anything which may come up; and I consider that a very strong point, and I believe that the breeders of Holstein cattle would be making a most serious mistake if they lost sight of that vigor and thrift and health and constitution which is now so important a point among this famous breed of cattle.

"Then we find in our experience that the calves are strong, and good doers. I have never known in my experience with them a calf to come weak, and a calf that required nursing, and required coddling, and required any extra attention. Without exception they come strong and are good doers, and in two or three weeks we can put them on skim milk and soon begin to feed them bran and oats, and they begin to thrive right from the start. Now, other calves do not seem to thrive in the same way, and that is why I like the Holstein cattle, because their calves are thrifty right from the start.

"Then, another strong point of the Holsteins is their size. They are of good size. Now, some people say that size is a detriment in the dairy business; that if you can get a small

cow to do a given amount of work, that she does not require so much food, and that she will produce milk or butter or cheese more economically, because she is of smaller size. Now, I will tell you; we have looked into that matter pretty carefully, and we find that the difference in the feed which is consumed by a large cow and a small one, for the production of a given quantity of milk or butter, is largely in the rough food, the cheap food, and whether a cow be a large one or a small one, she will require just about a certain amount of concentrated feed, and that the difference in the food which is eaten by large and small cows is in the cheap, rough, bulky food, and not in the concentrates. We find that a cow requires about eight pounds of meal for each pound of fat she produces in the milk.

"The next strong point of the Holsteins is that they are regular breeders. We have found in our experience very much less trouble in getting cows to breed regularly, cows of this breed, than cows belonging to other breeds, and we very seldom have any difficulty in that respect (with Holsteins), a trouble which sometimes gives the dairymen a great deal of annoyance."

CORN CULTURE.

I usually select sod land for corn and plow it in the fall, writes Mr. C. F. Fuller. Barnyard and general farm manure is spread broadcast over the land. Corn is planted in hills about 42 inches apart. The seed is first rolled in tar and ashes to prevent the crows from destroying it. We have found this method very successful. I always select a good, slow, steady horse for cultivating, and go twice in the row close to each hill. I cultivate both ways so that the work is thoroughly done. There are usually no weeds left except an occasional one in the hill, which is pulled out. I usually cultivate about three times during the season. Last year after the corn was planted, I put in Hubbard squash seed. The crop was a very good one. I skipped a few rows and planted pumpkins in the same field. I put two seeds in every third hill in every third row.

Although last season was a very severe one, we got fairly good crops, the field averaging about 67 bushels of shelled corn per acre. I planted about one quart of squash seed, from which I got a large double box wagon load of good sized squashes and pumpkins. They were disposed of at a local hotel. Squashes were retailing at 3 cents per pound, while pumpkins were selling at \$3 per ton at the canning factory. The field of corn shown in the picture was, with out doubt, the best grown in this vicinity last year.

The variety was Pride of the North but I believe Yellow Dent on the same soil would do better, at the same time making better fodder and general feed. Pride of the North grew so large we could not cut it with a corn harvester. Being planted in hills, it all came in at once and swamped our machine. It is my experience that White and Yellow Dent corn will do better here on good, rich soil, while the Eight Row is, perhaps, best on poor soils.

BUYING A COW.

A man in buying a cow may be greatly deceived by a large udder. A cow may have a large udder and yet give little milk. A cow with a deep, narrow udder ending in large teats is seldom a good milker. Such an udder has coarse hair and abundance of it. It is but little reduced in size by the milking process. A heavy milker must have a large udder, but it is rather broad than long, and to carry it well without bruising or chafing the hind feet should be well apart. Such an udder should have short hair and when milked should be shrunken in size and the skin should hang loosely over its surface.

The shape and set of the teats is one important consideration in buying a cow. The teats should be placed well apart so that there will be plenty of room for the hands of the milker. This feature indicates great milking capacity. All great milking cows have a wide spread of teats. The shape of the teats adds to or subtracts from the value of a cow. An ideal shaped is long and rather slim. Every one who has milked cows knows how much short teats increase the labor of milking. There is a class of teats known among milkers as india-rubber teats, so that when you press on them with the hand they give no milk or only a small stream comes. Such cows are the dread of all dairies, and although they are often good milkers their owners are willing to pass them on when a cow-buyer appears. The heifer calves of such mothers are apt to inherit the milking qualities of their mothers and it will do no harm to veal them by breeding from dairy cows with desirable milk receptacles and the task of milking in the future will be materially lightened. There are a few cows that milk so easy that they leak their milk and much of it is lost, besides giving the cow unsightly appearance and encouraging a swarm of flies. This habit is apt to be transmitted to their offspring, so when you buy a cow if possible find which her mother was.

A girl tries to judge the quality of a man's love by the stone in the engagement ring.