

D A W N.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Pigott Angela's old nurse was by no means sorry to hear of Arthur's visit to the Abbey House, though, having in her youth been a servant in good houses, she was distressed at the nature of his reception. But putting this aside, she thought it high time that her darling should see a young man or two, that she might "learn what the world was like." Pigott was no believer in female celibacy, and Angela's future was a frequent subject of meditation with her, for she knew very well that her present mode of life was scarcely suited either to her birth, her beauty, or her capabilities. Not that she ever in her highest flights, imagined Angela as a great lady, or one of society's shining stars; she loved to picture her in some quiet, happy home, beloved by her husband, and surrounded by children as beautiful as herself. It was but a moderate ambition for one so peerlessly endowed, but she would have been glad to see it fulfilled. For of late years there had sprung up in nurse Pigott's mind an increasing dislike of her surroundings, which sometimes almost amounted to a feeling of horror. Philip she had always detested, with his preoccupied air and uncanny ways.

"There must," she would say, "be something wicked about a man as is afraid to have his own bonny daughter look him in the face, to say nothing of his being that mean as to grudge her the clothes on her back, and make her live worse nor a servant-girl." Having, therefore, by a quiet peep through the curtains ascertained that he was nice-looking and about the right age, Pigott confessed to herself that she was heartily glad of Arthur's arrival, and determined that, should she take to him on further acquaintance, he should find a warm ally in her in any advances he might choose to make on the fortress of Angela's affections.

"I do so hope that you don't mind dining at half-past twelve, and with my old nurse," Angela said, as they went together up the stairs to the room they used as a dining-room.

"Of course I don't—I like it, really I do."

Angela shook her head, and, looking but partially convinced, led the way down the passage and into the room, where, to her astonishment, she perceived that the dinner-table was furnished with a more sumptuous meal than she had seen upon it for years, the fact being that Pigott had received orders from Philip which she did not know of, not to spare expense whilst Arthur was his guest.

"What waste," reflected Angela, in whom the pressure of circumstances had developed an economical turn of mind, as she glanced at the unaccustomed jug of beer. "He said he was a teetotaler."

A loud "hem!" from Pigott arresting her attention, stopped all further consideration of the matter. That good lady, who, in honor of the occasion, was dressed in a black gown of a formidable character, and a many-ribbed cap, was standing behind her chair waiting to be introduced to the visitor. Angela proceeded to go through the ceremony which Pigott's straight-up-and-down attitude rendered rather trying.

"Nurse, this is the gentleman that my father has asked to stay with us. Mr. Heigham, let me introduce you to my old nurse, Pigott."

Arthur bowed politely, whilst Pigott made two elaborate courtesies, retiring a step backward after each, as though to make room for another. Her speech too, carefully prepared for the occasion is worthy of transcription.

"Hem!" she said, "this, sir, is a pleasure as I little expected, and I well know that it is not what you or the likes is accustomed to, a-eating of dinners and teas with old women; which I hope, sir, how as you will put up with it, seeing how as the habits of this house is what might, without mistake, be called peculiar, which I says without any offense to Miss Angela, 'cause though her bringing up has been what I call odd, she knows it as well as I do, which, indeed, is the only consolation I has to offer, being right sure, as indeed I am, how as any young gentleman as ever breathed would sit in a pool of water to dine along with Miss Angela, let alone an old nurse. I ain't such a fool as I may look; no need for you to go a-bushing of, Miss Angela. And now, sir, if you please, we will sit down, for fear lest the gravy should begin to grease;" and, utterly exhausted by the exuberance of her own verbosity, she plunged into her chair—an example which Arthur bowing his acknowledgments of her opening address, was not slow to follow.

One of his first acts was, at Pigott's invitation, to help himself to a glass of beer, of which, to speak truth, he drank a good deal.

Angela watched the proceeding with interest.

"What," she asked, presently, "is a teetotaler?"

The recollection of his statement of the previous day flashed into his mind. He was, however, equal to the occasion.

"A teetotaler," he replied, with gravity, "is a person who only drinks beer," and Angela, the apparent displeasure explained, retired satisfied.

That was a very pleasant dinner.

What a thing it is to be young and in love! How it gilds the dull ginger-bread of life; what new capacities of enjoyment it opens up in us, and, for the matter of that, of pain also; and oh! what stupendous fools it makes of us in everybody else's eyes except our own, and if we are lucky, those of our adored!

The afternoon and evening passed much as the morning had done. Angela took Arthur round the place, and showed him all the spots connected with her strange and lonely childhood, of which she told him many a curious story. In fact, before the day was over, he knew all the history of her innocent life, and was struck with amazement at the variety and depth of her scholastic acquirements and the extraordinary power of her mind, which, combined with her simplicity and total ignorance of the ways of the world, produced an effect as charming as it was unusual. Needless to say that every hour he knew her he fell more deeply in love with her.

At length about eight o'clock, just as it was beginning to get dark, she suggested that he should go and sit awhile with her father.

"And what are you going to do?" asked Arthur.

"Oh! I am going to read a little, then go to bed; I always go to bed about nine;" and she held out her hand to say good-night. He took it and said:

"Good-night, then; I wish it were to-morrow."

"Why?"

"Because then I should be saying, 'Good-morning, Angela,' instead of 'Good-night, Angela.' May I call you Angela? We seem to know each other so well, you see."

"Yes, of course," she laughed back; "everybody I know calls me Angela, so why shouldn't you?"

"And will you call me Arthur? Everybody I know calls me Arthur."

Angela hesitated, and Angela blushed, though why she hesitated and why she blushed was perhaps more than she could have exactly said.

"Y-es, I suppose so—that is, if you like it. It is a pretty name, Arthur. Good-night, Arthur," and she was gone.

His companion gone, Arthur turned and entered the house. The study door was open, so he went straight in. Philip who was sitting and staring in an abstracted way at the empty fireplace, with a light behind him, turned quickly round as he heard his footsteps.

"Oh, it's you, is it, Heigham? I suppose Angela has gone up-stairs; she goes to roost very early. I hope that she has not bored you, and that old Pigott hasn't talked your head off. I told you that we were an odd lot, you know; but, if you find us odder than you bargained for, I should advise you to clear out."

"Thank you, I have spent a very happy day."

"Indeed, I am glad to hear it. You must be easily satisfied, have an Arcadian mind, and that sort of thing. Take some whisky, and light your pipe."

Arthur did so, and presently Philip in that tone of gentlemanly ease which distinguished him from his cousin, led the conversation round to this guest's prospects and affairs, more especially his money affairs. Arthur answered him frankly enough but this money talk had not the same charms for him that it had for his host. Indeed, a marked repugnance to everything that had to do with money was one of his characteristics; and, wearied out at length with pecuniary details and endless researches into the mysteries of investment, he took advantage of a pause to attempt to change the subject.

"Well," he said, "I am much obliged to you for your advice for I am very ignorant myself and hate anything to do with money. I go back to first principles and believe that we should all be better 'without it.'"

"I always thought," answered Philip with a semi-contemptuous smile, "that the desire of money, or, among savages races, its equivalent shells or what not, was the first principle of human nature."

"Perhaps it is—I really don't know; but I heartily wish that it could be eliminated off the face of the earth."

"Forgive me," laughed Philip, "but that is the speech of a very young man. Why, eliminate money, and you take away the principal interest of life, and destroy the social fabric of the world. What is power but money, comfort—money, social consideration—money, ay, and love, and health, and happiness itself? Money, money, money. Tell me," he went on, rising and addressing him with a curious earnestness, "what god is there more worthy of our adoration than Plutus, seeing that, if we worship him enough, he alone of the idols we set in high places, will never fail us in need?"

"It is a worship that rarely brings lasting happiness with it. In our greed to collect the means of enjoyment, surely we lose the power to enjoy."

"Fshaw! that is the cant of fools, of those who do not know, of those who cannot feel. But I know and I feel, and I tell you that it is not so. The collection of those means is in itself a pleasure, because it gives a consciousness of power. Don't talk to me of Fate; that sovereign," throwing a coin on the table, "is Fate's own seal. You see me, for instance, apparently poor and helpless, a social pariah, one to be avoided and even insulted. Good; before long these will right all that for me. Ay, believe me, Heigham, money is a living, moving force; leave it still, and it accumulates; expend it, and it gratifies every wish; save it, and that is the best of all, and you hold in your hand a lever that will lift the world. I tell you that there is no height to which it cannot bring you, no gulf it will not bridge you."

"Except," soliloquized Arthur, "the cliffs of the hereafter and—the grave."

His words produced a curious effect. Philip's eloquence broke off short,

and, for a moment, a great fear crept into his eyes.

Silence ensued which neither of them seemed to care to break. Meanwhile the wind suddenly sprang up, and began to moan and sigh among the half-clad boughs of the trees outside—making, Arthur thought to himself, very melancholy music. Presently Philip laid his hand upon his guest's arm, and he felt that it shook like an aspen-leaf.

"Tell me," he said in a hoarse whisper, "what do you see there?"

Arthur started, and followed the direction of his eyes to the bare wall opposite the window, at that end of the room through which the door was made.

"I see," he said "some moving shadows."

"What do they resemble?"

"I don't know; nothing in particular. What are they?"

"What are they?" hissed Philip, whose face was livid with terror, "they are the shades of the dead sent here to torture me. Look she goes to meet him; the old man is telling her. Now she will wring her hands."

"Nonsense, Mr. Carefoot, nonsense," said Arthur, shaking himself together; "I see nothing of the sort. Why, it is only the shadows flung by the moonlight through the swinging boughs of that tree. Cut it down, and you will have no more writing upon your wall."

"Ah! of course you are right, Heigham, quite right," ejaculated his host, faintly wiping the cold sweat from his brow; "it is nothing but the moonlight. How ridiculous of me! I suppose I am a little out of sorts—liver wrong. Give me some whisky, there's a good fellow, and I'll drink damnation to all shadows, and the trees that throw them. Ha, ha, ha!"

There was something so excessively uncanny about his hosts manner and his evident conviction of the origin of the wavering figures on the wall, which had now disappeared, that Arthur felt had it not been for Angela, he would not be sorry to get clear of him and his shadows, as soon as possible, for superstition, he knew, is as contagious as small-pox. When at length he reached his great, bare bed-chamber, not, by the way, a comfortable sort of place to sleep in after such an experience, it was only after some hours in the excited state of his imagination, that, tired though he was he could get the rest he needed.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Next morning when they met at their eight o'clock breakfast, Arthur noticed that Angela was distressed about something.

"There is bad news," she said, almost before he greeted her; "my cousin George is very ill with typhus fever."

"Indeed!" remarked Arthur, rather coolly.

"Well, I must say it does not appear to distress you very much."

"No, I can't say it does. To be honest, I detest your cousin, and I don't care if he is ill or not; there."

As she appeared to have no reply ready the subject dropped.

After breakfast Angela proposed that they should walk—for the day was again fine—to the top of a hill about a mile away, whence a view of the surrounding country could be obtained. He consented, and on the way told her of his curious experience with her father on the previous night. She listened attentively, and, when he had finished, shook her head.

"There is," she said, "something about my father that separates him from everybody else. His life never comes out into the sunlight of the passing day, it always gropes along in the shadow of some gloomy past. What the mystery is that envelops him I neither know nor care to inquire; but I am sure that there is one."

"How do you explain the shadow?"

"I believe your explanation is right, they are, under certain conditions of light, thrown by a tree that grows some distance off. I have seen something that looks like figures on that wall myself in full daylight. That he should interpret such a simple thing as he does shows a curious state of mind."

"You do not think, then," said Arthur, in order to draw her out, "that it is possible, after all, he was right, and that they were something from another place? The reality of his terror was almost enough to make one believe in them, I can tell you."

"No, I do not," answered Angela, after a minute's thought. "I have no doubt that the veil between ourselves and the unseen world is thinner than we think. I believe, too, that communication, and even warnings sometimes, under favorable conditions, or when the veil is worn thin by trouble or prayer, can pass from the other world to ourselves. But the very fact of my father's terror proves to me that his shadows are nothing of the sort, for it is hardly possible that spirits can be permitted to come to terrify us poor mortals; if they come at all, it is in love and gentleness, to comfort or to warn, and not to work upon our superstitions."

"You speak as though you knew all about it; you should join the new Ghost Society," he answered irreverently, sitting himself down on a fallen tree, an example that she followed.

"I have thought about it sometimes, that is all, and, so far as I have read, I think my belief is a common one, and what the Bible teaches us; but, if you will not think me foolish, I will tell you something that confirms me in it. You know my mother died when I was born; well, it may seem strange to you, but I am convinced that she is sometimes very near me."

"Do you mean that you see or hear her?"

"No, I only feel her presence; more rarely now, I am sorry to say, as I grow older."

"How do you mean?"

"I can hardly explain what I mean, but sometimes—it may be at night, or when I am sitting alone in the daytime—a great calm comes upon me, and I am a changed woman. All my thoughts rise into a higher, purer air, and are, as it were, tinged with a reflected light; everything earthly seems



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to pass away from me, and I feel as though fetters had fallen from my soul, and I know that I am near my mother. Then everything passes, and I am left myself again."

"And what are the thoughts you have at these times?"

"Ah! I wish I could tell you; they pass away with her who brought them, leaving nothing but a vague after-glow in my mind like that in the sky after the sun has set. But now look at the view; is it not beautiful in the sunlight? All the world seems to be rejoicing."

Angela was right; the view was charming. Below lay the thatched roofs of the little village of Bratham, and to the right the waters of the lake shone like silver in the glancing sunlight, while the gables of the old house, peeping out from among the budding foliage, looked very picturesque. The spring had cast her green garment over the land; from every copse rang out the melody of birds, and the gentle breeze was heavy with the scent of the unnumbered violets that starred the mossy carpet at their feet. In the fields where grew the wheat and clover, now springing into lusty life, the busy weavers were at work, and on the warm brown fallows the sower went forth to sow. From the airy pastures beneath, where purled a little brook, there came a pleasant lowing of kine, well-contented with the new grass, and a cheerful bleating of lambs, to whom as yet life was nothing but one long skip. It was a charming scene, and its influence sunk deep into the gazers' hearts.

"It is depressing to think," said Arthur, rather sententiously, but really chiefly with the object of getting at his companion's views, "that all this cannot last, but is, as it were, like ourselves, under sentence of death."

"It rose and fell and fled
Upon earth's troubled sea,
A wave that swells to vanish
Into eternity.
Oh, mystery and wonder
Of wings that cannot fly,
Of ears that cannot hearken,
Of life that lives—to die!"

quoth Angela, by way of comment.

"Whose lines are those?" asked Arthur. "I don't know them."

"My own," she said, shyly; "that is, they are a translation of a verse of a Greek ode I wrote for Mr. Fraser. I will say to you the original, if you like; I think it better than the translation, and I believe that it is fair Greek."

"Thank you, thank you, Miss Blue-stocking; I am quite satisfied with the English version. You positively alarm me, Angela. Most people are quite content if they can put a poem written in English into Greek; you reverse the process, and, having coolly given expression to your thoughts in Greek, condescend to translate them into your native tongue. I only wish you had been at Cambridge, or—what do they call the place?—Girton. It would have been a joke to see you come out double-first."

"Ah!" she broke in, blushing, "you acquirements. I am sorry to say I am not the perfect scholar you think me, and about most things I am shockingly ignorant. I should indeed be silly if, after ten years' patient work under such a scholar as Mr. Fraser, I did not know some classics and mathematics. Why, do you know, for the last three years that we worked together, we used as a rule to carry on our ordinary conversations during work in Latin and Greek, month and month about, sometimes with the funniest results. One never knows how little one does know of a dead language till one tries to talk it. Just try to speak in Latin for the next five minutes, and you will see."

"Thank you, I am not going to expose my ignorance for your amusement, Angela."

She laughed.

"No," she said, "it is you who wish to amuse yourself at my expense by trying to make me believe that I am a great scholar. But what I was going to say, before you attacked me about my fancied acquirements, was

that, in my opinion, your remark about the whole world being under sentence of death was rather a morbid one."

"Why? It is obviously true."

"Yes, in a sense; but to my mind this scene speaks more of resurrection than of death. Look at the earth pushing up her flowers, and the dead trees breaking into beauty. There is no sign of death there, but rather of a renewed and glorified life."

"Yes, but there is still the awful fact of death to face; nature herself has been temporarily dead before she blooms into beauty; she dies every autumn, to rise again in the same form every spring. But how do we know in what form we shall emerge from the chrysalis? As soon as a man begins to think at all, he stands face to face with this hideous problem, to the solution of which he knows himself to be drawing daily nearer. His position, I often think, is worse than that of a criminal under sentence, because the criminal is only deprived of the enjoyment of a term, indefinite, indeed, but absolutely limited; but man at large does not know of what he is deprived, and what he must inherit in the aeons that await him. It is the uncertainty of death that is its most dreadful part, and, with that hanging over our race, the wonder to me is not only that we, for the most part, put the subject entirely out of mind, but that we can ever think seriously of anything else."

"I remember," answered Angela, "once thinking very much in the same way, and I went to Mr. Fraser for advice. 'The Bible,' he said, 'will satisfy your doubts and fears, if only you will read it in a right spirit. And indeed, more or less, it did. I cannot, of course, venture to advise you, but I pass his advice on; it is that of a very good man.'"

"Have you, then, no dread of death, or, rather, of what lies beyond it?"

She turned her eyes upon him with something of wonder in them.

"And why," she said, "should I, who am immortal, fear a change that I know has no power to harm me, that can, on the contrary, only bring me nearer to the purpose of my being? Certainly I shrink from death itself, as we all must, but of the dangers beyond I have no fear. Pleasant as this world is at times, there is something in us all that strives to rise above it, and, if I knew that I must die within this hour, I believe that I could meet my fate without a quail. I am sure that when our trembling hands have drawn the veil from Death, we shall find His features, passionless indeed, but very beautiful."

Arthur looked at her with astonishment, wondering what manner of woman this could be, who in the first flush of youth and beauty, could face the great unknown without a tremor. When he spoke again, it was with something of envious bitterness.

(To Be Continued.)

A CHINESE WRINKLE.

How the Celestials Have Named the Nations of the Earth.

When the Chinese first knew the Japanese they named them "Wa," meaning "submissive" people. By the change of a vowel in 2,000 years, Wa became Wo. In the Chinese declaration of war of 1894 this is the term used, and it is brief and sufficient. The Chinese like monosyllabic names for countries. The various foreign nations have, when making treaties, usually chosen the monosyllables which form their names. England is Ying kwo, meaning "the flourishing country" for ying, the treaty character for Great Britain, has that sense. Fa means law, and France, Fa kwo, is the "law abiding country." Germany, known as the Twa kwo, is the "virtuous country." The United States republic is the Mel kwo, or "beautiful country." Italy is the "country of justice"—I kwo.

Each treaty nation has chosen its own name for moral effect. It has been a matter for international diplomacy, and the Chinese government has invariably given way to the wishes of each of the treaty powers as represented by its ministers and his Chinese secretary. From the time that the ministers of the treaty nations first had residences in Peking the name of each country made use of in diplomatic correspondence has been, of course, that which was satisfactory to the treaty power. The same was the case with Japan. Japan, there can be no doubt, prefers Ji pen, whence Japan, the land of the Rising Sun, because it is more poetical than the name Wo. On the whole, Japan is willing to be known as the land of the sun, Ji kwo, though she has never made the use of the term Wo a matter of complaint.

MATCHES MADE OF PAPER.

It is predicted that paper is the coming material for matches. The prospect of the wooden match industry being appreciably affected by a new process for manufacturing matches of paper is held to be extremely probable, particularly as the best wood for this purpose is constantly growing scarcer and more costly. The new matches are considerably cheaper than the wooden product, and weigh much less, which counts for much in exportation. The sticks of the matches consist of paper rolled together on the bias. The paper is rather strong and porous, and when immersed in a solution of wax, sticks well together, and burns with a bright, smokeless and odorless flame. Stripes one-half inch in width are first drawn through the combustible mass and then turned by machinery into long, thin tubes, pieces of the ordinary length of wood or wax matches being cut off automatically by the machine. When the sticks are cut to size they are dipped into phosphorus, also by machinery, and the dried head easily ignites by friction on any surface.