



UNITED AT LAST

BY
MISS M. E. BRADDOCK

CHAPTER V.

THE DREAM IS ENDED.

Mrs. Walsingham wrote to Gilbert Sinclair, immediately after Mr. Wyatt's departure, a few hasty lines begging him to come to her without delay.

"Something has occurred," she wrote, "an event of supreme importance. I will tell you nothing more till we meet."

She dispatched her groan to the Albany with this note, and then waited with intense impatience for Gilbert Sinclair's coming. If he were at home, it was scarcely possible he would refuse to come to her.

"I shall know the worst very soon," she said to herself, as she sat behind the flowers that shaded her window. "After to-day there shall be no uncertainty between us—no further reservation on my part—no more acting on his. He shall find that I am not his dupe, to be fooled to the last point, and to be taken by surprise some fine morning by the announcement of his marriage in the Times."

Mr. Sinclair was not at home when note was delivered, but between 2 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon his thundering knock震响ed the door, and he came into the room unannounced.

In spite of the previous night's ball he had ridden fifteen miles into the country that morning to attend a sale of hunters, and was looking flushed with his long ride.

"What on earth is the matter, Clara?" he asked. "I have been out since 8 o'clock. Poor Townley's stud was sold off this morning at a pretty little place he had beyond Barnet, and I rode down there to see if there was anything worth bidding for. I might have saved myself the trouble, for I never saw such a pack of screws. The ride was pleasant enough, however."

"I wonder you were out so early after last night's dance."

CHAPTER VI.

ARISE, BLACK VENGEANCE, FROM THY HOL-LOW CELL.

"Oh, you've seen my name down among the swells," he answered, with rather a forced laugh. "Yes, I was hard at it last night, no end of waltzes and galops. But, you know, late hours never much difference to me."

"Was it a very pleasant party?"

"The usual thing—too many people for the rooms."

"Your favorite, Miss Clanyarde, was there, I see."

"Yes; the Clanyardes were there. But I suppose you haven't sent for me to ask questions about Lady Deptford's ball? I thought by your letter something serious had happened."

"Something serious has happened. My husband is dead."

She said the words very slowly, with her eyes fixed on Gilbert Sinclair's face. The florid color faded suddenly out of his cheeks, and left him ghostly pale. Of all the events within the range of probability, this was the last he had expected to hear of, and the most unwelcome.

"Indeed," he stammered, after an awkward pause, "I suppose I ought to congratulate you on the recovery of your freedom?"

"I am very glad to be free."

"What did he die of—Colonel Walsingham? And how did you get the news?"

"Through a foreign paper. He was killed in a duel."

And then she repeated the contents of the paragraph James Wyatt had read to her.

"Is the news correct, do you think? No mistake about the identity of the person in question?"

"None whatever, I am convinced. However, I shall drive into the city presently and see the solicitor who arranged our separation. I know the Colonel was in the habit of corresponding with him, and no doubt he will be able to give official intelligence of the event."

After this there came another pause, more prolonged than the first. Gilbert sat with his eyes fixed upon the carpet, tracing out the figures in it meditatively with his stick; with an air of study as profound as if he had been a art designer bent upon achieving some novel combination of form and color. Clara Walsingham sat opposite to him, waiting for him to speak, with a pale, rigid face that grew more stone-like as the silence continued. That silence became at last quite unendurable, and Gilbert felt himself obliged to say something, no matter what.

"Does this business make any alteration in your circumstances?" Gilbert asked, with a faint show of interest.

"Only for the better. I surrendered to the Colonel the income of one of the estates my father left me, in order to bribe him into consenting to a separation. Henceforward the income will be mine. My poor father took pains to secure me from the possibility of being ruined by a husband. My fortune was wholly at my own disposal, but I was willing to make the surrender for the affection he was so good as to entertain for her. This was enough for Gilbert, who was won to win her for his wife in a headlong, reckless spirit, that made no count of the cost.

But as Miss Clanyarde sat by and by with her hand in his, and listened to his protestations of affection, there rose before her the vision of a face—not Gilbert Sinclair's—a darkly, splendid face, that had looked upon her with such unutterable love one summer day in the shadowy Kentish lane; and she wished that Cyprian Davenant had carried her off to some strange, desolate land, in which they might have lived and died together.

"What will he think of me when he hears that I have sold myself to this man for the sake of his fortune?" she asked herself. And then she looked up at Gilbert's face and wondered whether she could ever teach herself to love him, or be grateful to him for his love.

All this had happened within a week of Gilbert's first interview with Mrs. Walsingham, and in very short time the fact of Mr. Sinclair's engagement to Miss Clanyarde was pretty well known to all that gentlemanly friends and acquaintances. He was as proud of carrying off a girl whose beauty had made a considerable sensation in the past two seasons, and he talked of his matrimonial projects in

a swaggering, boastful way that was eminently distasteful to some of his acquaintances. Men who were familiar with Mr. Sinclair's antecedents shrugged their shoulders ominously when the marriage was discussed, and augured ill for the future happiness of Miss Clanyarde.

"Yes," answered Gilbert, "she's a lovely girl, isn't she? and of course I'm proud of her affection. It's to be a lovely wife, you know. I wouldn't marry the handsomest woman in the world if I were not secure on that point. I don't say the father hasn't an eye to my fortune. He's a thorough man of the world, and, of course, fully alive to that sort of thing, but Constance is superior to any such consideration. If I didn't believe that I would not be such a fool as to stake my happiness on the venture."

"I scarcely fancied you would look at matters from such a sentimental point of view," said Mr. Wyatt, thoughtfully, "especially as this is by no means your first love."

"It is the first love worth speaking of," answered the other. "Never knew what it was to be passionately in love till I met Constance Clanyarde."

"Not with Mrs. Walsingham?"

"No, Jim. I did care for her a good deal once upon a time, but never as I care for Constance. I think if that girl were to play me false I would kill myself. By the way, I'm sure you know more about Cyprian Davenant than you were inclined to confess the other night. I fancy there was some kind of a love affair—some youthful flirtation—between him and Constance. You might as well tell me everything you know about it."

"I know nothing about Miss Clanyarde, and I can tell you nothing about Davenant. He and I are old friends, and I am too truly in his confidence to talk of his sentiments or his affairs."

"What a confounded prig you are, Wyatt. But you can't deny that Davenant is in love with Constance. I don't believe she has ever cared a straw for him, however; and if he should live to come back to England I shall take good care he never darkens my doors. How about that place of his, by the by? Is it in the market?"

"Yes; I have received Sir Cyprian's instructions to sell whenever I see a favorable opportunity. He won't profit much by the sale, poor fellow, for it is most taggled up to the hilt."

"I'll go to the place while at Marchbrook, and if I like it I may make an offer. We shall want something nearer town than the place my father built in the north, but I shall not give up that, either."

"You have offered a couple of country seats, and you will have a house in town, of course?"

"Yes; I have been thinking of Park Lane, but it is so difficult to get anything there. I've told the agents what I want, however, and I dare say they'll find something before long."

"When are you to be married?"

"Not later than October, I hope. There is not the shadow of a reason for delay."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WORSE THAN COOLIES.

Frightful Condition of the Peasants of the Island of Sicily.

The condition of the peasants of Sicily, who mostly revolted against their oppressors and well nigh precipitated a general revolt against the Italian government, is perhaps more wretched than that of any other civilized people in the world. For ages the poorer classes have been the prey of the richer and have been burdened by the most exorbitant taxation, while the rich have generally escaped without any taxation at all. Corruption is rife in every office in the island and justice is a mere mockery, simply depending on who can give the largest bribe.

The land is owned by a few noblemen who live in Rome or Palermo and who lease their estates to capitalists known as "gabellotti," or tax extorters. These in their turn divide the estates and sublet them to "subgabellotti" who again lease the subdivided land piece-meal to the peasants, or, if you wish, farmers. These latter are most shamefully treated. They are permitted to retain but one-quarter of their crops, and nothing but the seed of the yield may be left. In addition to this they are compelled to pay an enormous tax to provide themselves with seed and the necessities of life. Reduced to the most abject poverty, the estate-owner "padrone" sometimes lends them money at 50 per cent. a year.

The day laborer's lot is even worse, if such a thing is possible. The lowest Chinese coolies lives in luxury compared with the Sicilian day laborer. The result of this is that agriculture, which is the chief support of Sicily, has been totally ruined. The petty farmers and peasantry are held in complete slavery by the capitalists and landowners.

Lucky Women Speculators.

"Lucky real-estate speculations are not confined to men in Pittsburg," he said as a confidential agent. "There is one lady in this city who has built and sold more houses in the last three or four years than any one else in the business. She seems most fortunate in her speculations, and often when others, who consider themselves better versed in property, have advised her not to make a venture, she has gone against them, following her own judgment, and, strangely enough, has always succeeded. She has never been known to make a losing deal, and her reputation for good, sound judgment has caused many persons anxious to invest in dirt and bricks about the city to consult her. I knew of another very lucky woman who is making much money in real-estate deals. She is a typewriter on Fourth avenue and started speculating by selling some lots which were left her by a relative. With this money she bought other property. This she sold at an increase, and so she went on buying and selling until to-day she has nearly \$10,000 to her credit. This sum she has amassed in three years, with no capital to start with but two lots, worth, possibly, \$200. There are many other like instances of lucky women in Pittsburg."—Pittsburg Dispatch.

A Laugh on the Girls.

A good joke was played on the girls of Marion recently by the young men of that town. The boys had been rather remiss in their attentions to the young ladies and had been "staggering" it to the theater, parties, etc., until the girls got tired of being left out in the cold and decided to show their independence. Consequently fifteen of the girls hired a box at the theater and made a very charming theater party. The play was "Wanted: A Husband," and the girls sat serenely through it all, never dreaming that the wicked boys had taken one of the largest flogging posters, "Wanted: A Husband," and fastened it around the box so that all the audience might read.

"There was a time when you would have said a great deal more."

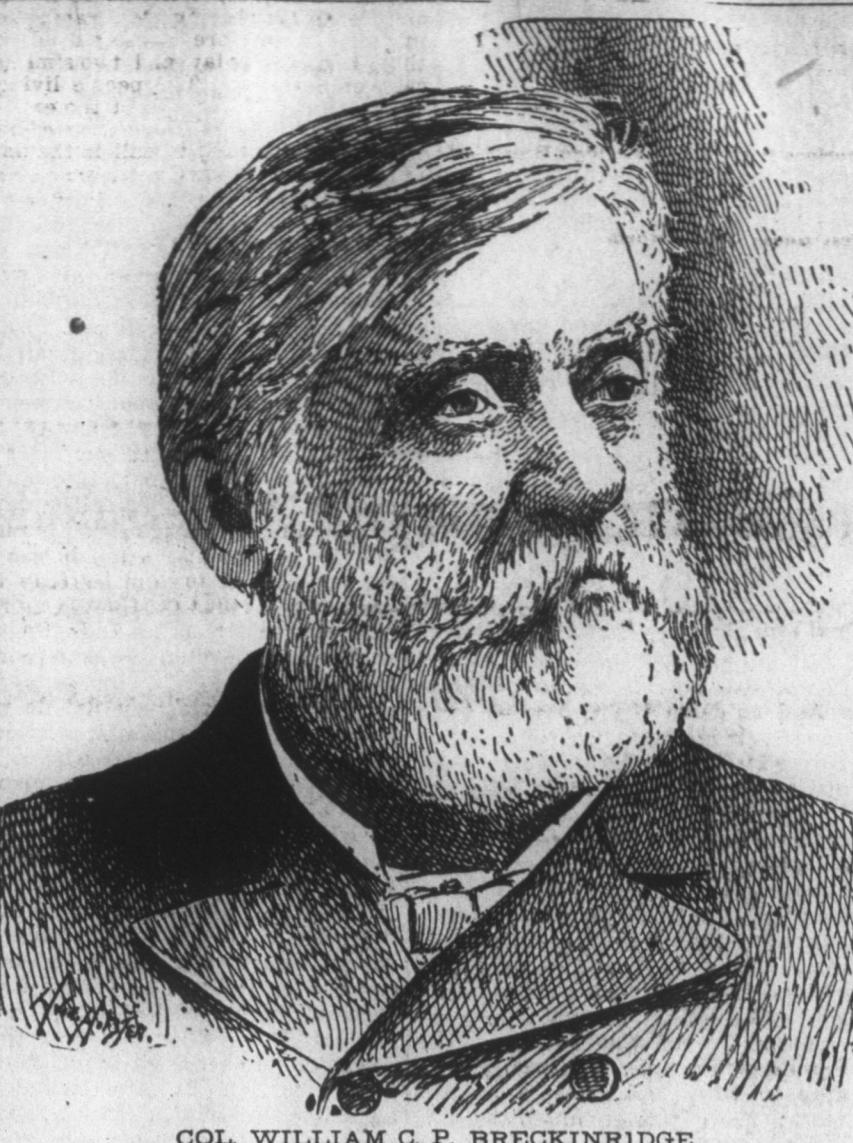
"Very likely," answered Gilbert, bluntly; "but then, you see, that time is past and gone. What is it Frier Bacon's brazen head said, 'Time is, time was, time's past?' Come, Clara, it is very little use for you and me to play at cross-purposes. Why did you send for me in such hot haste to tell me of your husband's death?"

"Because I had reason to consider the news would be as welcome to you as it was to me."

"That might have been so if the event had happened a year or two ago; unhappily your release comes too late for my welfare. You accused me the other day of intending to kill you. I think that was scarcely fair when it is known that you were as welcome to remain your devoted slave, patiently waiting for something better, than slavery. There is a limit to all things, however, and I confess the bondage became a little irksome at last, and I began to look in other directions for the happiness of my future life."

"Does that mean that you are going to be married?"

a swagging, boastful way that was eminently distasteful to some of his acquaintances. Men who were familiar with Mr. Sinclair's antecedents shrugged their shoulders ominously when the marriage was discussed, and augured ill for the future happiness of Miss Clanyarde.



COL. WILLIAM C. P. BRECKINRIDGE.
Defendant in the Pollard-Breckinridge Breach of Promise Case.

WEST AFRICAN CUSTOMS.

Some Interesting Features of Native Life Near Sierra Leone.

During recent years, owing partly to independent explorers and partly to the operations of European powers in Africa, we have learned much

about the customs and habits of the natives of the dark continent. Recently a territory east of Sierra Leone, where the English and the French forces came into accidental and fatal collision, was opened up by the former.

Yesterdays a couple of country seats, and you will have a house in town, of course?"

"Yes; I have been thinking of Park Lane, but it is so difficult to get anything there. I've told the agents what I want, however, and I dare say they'll find something before long."

"Not later than October, I hope. There is not the shadow of a reason for delay."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A BUNDU DEVIL.

land. Here there are some curious customs. The Poro bush is the name of the political meetings of the men, and here all matters relating to peace or war are deliberated. This place, which is merely an encampment in the woods, is sacred to the Poro people and none but a Poro can enter it. The opening leading to it through the woods is marked on either side by bunches of a kind of

front of the safe by means of a bit, a block is adjusted on the inside, and on this is placed the point of the screw, which is turned by a crank.

As the screw revolves it penetrates

further and further until the back is reached. Then, as the tremendous pressure continues, something has to give, the front generally being ripped out. This apparatus, in addition to its simplicity and quick work, has the advantage of being noiseless.

GO TO SLAVERY WILLINGLY.

To Enter a Harem Is the Height of a Circassian Girl's Ambition.

Far from dreading their sale, says a writer in the Popular Science Monthly, the girls of Circassia look forward to it as the greatest opportunity of their lives. They go to seek it as a conscious jewel might start in search of a costly setting. They show no more reluctance than Esther manifested when Mordecai delivered her over as one of the fair young virgins gathered from far and near to adorn the palace of Ahasuerus. Indeed, the history of Esther reveals the motives which probably animate each of the many maidens of Circassia, who to this day re-enact the old biblical story. Each believes that it is she who may find grace and favor in the royal crown, and thus control at will the rise or fall of the royal scepter. But even if not chosen by royalty, those who purchase the beautiful damsels of Circassia are the wealthy and titled; and not the slightest social degradation is attached to their position even if taken to harems wherein a Turkish wife may be installed as head of the household. The common dependence of all the inmates of a harem upon the favor of a lord who may at any time elevate a Circassian slave to the position of a lady fosters a spirit of equality, of pure practical democracy, that would be inconceivable under any other circumstances, and in our Southern slave relation to nominal mistress was totally undreamed of.

As a Turkish lady explained to an astonished English visitor, "A slave may become a lady any day, and in treating her as one beforehand we take off much of the awkwardness which would else ensue."

When we consider that all the children of slaves are acknowledged as the legitimate children of their father, we must confess in justice to the Turk that theirs is a condition in which the evils of slavery to the slave are reduced to a minimum.

PROMOTED BY HIS HORSE.

James Byrne is a Swede who has

been a burglar in all parts of the world for twenty-five years, and he landed at St. Louis the other day direct from a bombardment Rio.

The story of his life, however, occurred during the Franco-Prussian war. He was fighting on the German side as a cavalryman, says the Republic.

One day during a hot conflict the cavalry came to the top of a hill, and on the crest of another hill, across a deep ravine, the French had planted a battery.

Suddenly Byrne's horse reared and jumped and started down the hill toward the ravine on a dead run.

Byrne tried to check the frightened animal, but found that it had taken the bit in its mouth and was wholly unmanageable. Down the hill, across the ravine and up the hill on the opposite side the horse sped on like a streak of lightning. The French battery began belching out shot and shell, and Byrne then realized that a runaway horse was carrying him right into the mouth of hades. As the cannon boomed the screaming shells whizzed by the head of poor Byrne, but some unseen hand of fate, prevented them from harming either himself or his horse.

As the horse dashed up the hill to the mouth of a cannon Byrne concluded to make the best of a dangerous predicament, and drew his saber for self-defense.

He was surprised to see the Frenchmen leave their battery and flee like panic-stricken sheep.

But Byrne understood the situation when he looked backward and saw his comrade dashing up the hill on their horses.

Byrne dismounted and held one of the enemy's guns as the prize he had captured.

When the other came up he found that they did not know his horse had run away, but thought that it was personal bravery on his part, and that he had urged his horse to make this mad race into the "jaws of death."

Did Byrne tell them that this bravery had been forced upon him? Well, hardly. Byrne accepted congratulations and said nothing. He was promoted to a captaincy, and all because of his runaway horse.

If he had not made that ride the troops of cavalry

would never have attempted it.

SOLOMON SPEED, held for safe

robbery, with "Shanty" Hamilton, held for stealing a watch, and Charles Williams for highway robbery, escaped from the Logansport jail by filing open a scuttle-door