



CHAPTER XIV.—Continued.

He had despatched to visit Davenant with Lord Clanyarde, owning frankly that there was no friendly feeling between Gilbert Sheldair and himself. Lord Clanyarde perfectly understood the state of the case, but affected to be supremely ignorant. He was a gentleman whose philosophy was to take things easy. "Not to disturb Camerina, or any other social lake beneath whose tranquil water there might lurk a foul and muddy bottom, was a principle with Lord Clanyarde. But the nobleman, though philosophic and easy-tempered, was not without a heart. There was a strain of humanity in the Sybarite and worldling, and when at a great dinner at Davenant he saw the impress of a broken heart upon the statuesque beauty of his daughter's face, he was touched with pity and alarm. "Then set his daughter to the highest bidder and offered to him in any wise a crime; but he would not have sold her to age or deformity, or to a man of notoriously evil life. Gilbert had appeared to him a very fair sample of the average young Englishman. Not stainless, perhaps. Lord Clanyarde did not inquire too closely into details. The suitor was good-looking, good-natured, open-handed and rich. What more could any dowerless young woman require? Thus had Lord Clanyarde reasoned with himself when he hurried on his youngest daughter's marriage; and having secured for her this handsome establishment, he had given himself no further concern about her destiny. No daughter of the house of Clanyarde had ever appeared in the divorce court. Constance was a girl of high principles, always went to church on saint's days, abstained in Lent, and would be the first to go all right.

But at Davenant, on this particular evening, Lord Clanyarde saw a change in his daughter that chilled his heart.

He talked to her, and she answered him absently, with the air of one who only half understands. Surely this argued something more than grief for her dead child.

He spoke to Gilbert Sinclair, and gave frank utterance to his alarm.

"Yes, she is very low-spirited," answered Gilbert, carelessly; "still fretting for the little girl. I thought it would cheer her to have people about her—prevent her dwelling too much upon that unfortunate event. But I really think she gets worse. It's rather hard upon me. I didn't marry to be miserable."

"Have you had a medical opinion about her?" asked Lord Clanyarde, anxiously.

"Oh, yes, she has her own doctor. The little old man who used to attend her at Marchbrook. He knows her constitution, no doubt. He prescribes tonics, and so on, and recommends change of scene by and by, when she gets a little stronger; but my own opinion is that if she would only make an effort, and not brood upon the past, she'd soon get round again. Oh, by the way, I hear she has Sir Cyprian Davenant staying with you."

"Yes, he has come down to shoot some of my pheasants."

"I didn't know you and he were so thick."

"I have known him ever since he was a boy, and knew his father before him."

"I wonder as your estates joined, you did not keep it a match between him and Constance."

"That would not have been much good, as he couldn't keep his estate."

"No. It's a pity that old man in Lincolndale didn't take it into his head to die a little sooner."

"I find no fault with destiny for giving me you a son-in-law, and I hope you are not tired of the position," said Lord Clanyarde, with a look that showed Gilbert that he must pursue his insinuations no further.

Lord Clanyarde went home and told Sir Cyprian what he had seen, and his fears about Constance. He reproached himself bitterly for his share in bringing about the marriage, being all the more induced to regret that act now that change of fortune had made Cyprian as good a part as Gilbert Sinclair.

"How short-sighted we mortals are!" thought the anxious father. "I did not even know that Cyprian had a rich bachelor uncle."

Sir Cyprian heard Lord Clanyarde's account in grave silence.

"What do you mean to do?" he asked.

"What can I do? Poor child, she is alone and must bear her burden unaided. I cannot come between her and her husband. It would take very little to make me quarrel with Sinclair, and then where should we be? If she had a mother living it would be different."

"She has sisters," suggested Cyprian. "Yes, women who are absorbed by the care of their own families, and who would not go very far out of the way to help her. With pragmatical husbands, too, who would make no end of mischief if they were allowed to interfere."

"No; we must not make a family row of it. After all, there is no specific ground for complaint. She does not complain, poor child. I'll go to Davenant early to-morrow and see her alone. Perhaps I can persuade her to be frank with me."

"You might see the doctor, and hear his account of her," said Cyprian.

"Yes, by the way, little Dr. Webb, who attended my girls from their cradles. An excellent little man. I'll send for him to-morrow and consult him about my rheumatism. He must know a good deal about my poor child."

Lord Clanyarde was with his daughter soon after breakfast next morning.

Constance received her father with affection, but he could not win her confidence. It might be that she had nothing to confide. She made no complaint against her husband.

This summer-house had always been a favorite resort of Mrs. Sinclair's. It overlooked the home of her youth, and she liked it on that account, for although Davenant was by far the more beautiful estate, she loved Marchbrook best.

UNITED AT LAST

BY MISS M. E. BRADDON

"That does not sound like a happy union, pet," said her father. "Did you expect me to be happy with Gilbert Sinclair?"

"Yes, my love, or I would never have asked you to marry him. No, Constance. Of course, it was an understood thing with me that you must marry well, as your sisters had done before you; but I meant you to marry a man who would make you happy; and if I find that Sinclair ill-uses you or slight you, ergo, he shall have no easy reckoning with me."

"My dear father, pray be calm. He is very good to me. I have never complained—I never shall complain. I try to do my duty, for I know that I have done him a wrong for which a life of duty and obedience can hardly atone."

"Wronged him, child? How have you wronged him?"

"By carrying him when my heart was given to another."

"Nonsense, pet, mere school-girl penchant. If that kind of thing were to count, there's hardly a wife living who has not wronged her husband. Every romantic girl begins by falling in love with a detrimental; but the memory of that juvenile attachment has no more influence on her married life than the recollection of her favorite doll. You must get such silly notions out of your head. And you should try to be a little more lively; John Sinclair's amusements. No man likes a gloomy wife. And remember, love, the past is past—no tears can bring back our losses. If they could, hope would prevent our crying, as somebody judiciously observes."

Constance sighed and was silent, whereupon Lord Clanyarde embraced his daughter tenderly and departed, feeling that he had done his duty. She was now a depressed, poor child, but no doubt she would set things right; and as to Sinclair's ill-treatment of her, that was out of the question. No man above the working classes ill-treats his wife nowadays. Lord Clanyarde made quite light of his daughter's troubles when he met Sir Cyprian at lunch.

Sinclair was a good fellow at bottom, he assured Sir Cyprian; a little too fond of pleasure, perhaps, but with no harm in him, and Constance was inclined to make rather too much fuss about the loss of her little girl.

Sir Cyprian heard this change of tones in silence, and was not convinced. He contrived to see Dr. Webb, the Maidstone surgeon, that afternoon. He remembered the good-natured little doctor as his attendant in many a child's ailment, and was not afraid of asking him a question or two. From him he heard a very bad account of Constance Sinclair. Dr. Webb pronounced her as fairly baffled. There was no bodily ailment, except want of strength; but there was a settled melancholy, a deep and growing depression for which medicine was of no avail.

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"Have you had a medical opinion about her?" asked Lord Clanyarde, anxiously.

"There is no immediate cause for fear. But if this melancholy continues, if the nervousness increases, I cannot answer for the result."

"You have told Mr. Sinclair as much as this?"

"Yes, I have spoken to him very frankly."

It would have been difficult to imagine a life more solitary than that which Constance Sinclair contrived to lead in a house full of guests. For the first two weeks she had bravely tried to sustain her part as hostess; she had pretended to be amused by the amusements of others, or, when unable to support even that poor simulation, had sat at her embroidery frame and given the place of her presence to the assembly.

But now she was fain to hide herself all day long in her own rooms, or to walk alone in the fine old park, restricting her public life to the evening, when she took her place at the head of the dinner-table, and endured the frivolities of the drawing-room after dinner. Gilbert secretly resented this withdrawal, and refused to believe that the death of Baby Christabel was his wife's soul cause of grief. There was something deeper, a sorrow for the past—a regret that was intensified by Sir Cyprian's presence in the neighborhood.

"She knows of his being at Marchbrook, of course," he told himself. "How do I know they have not met. She lives her own life, almost as much apart from me as if we were in separate houses. She has had time and opportunity for seeing him, and in all probability he is at Marchbrook for the sake of being near her."

Every flower had been nipped from the plants, not even a half-opened bud remaining to mourn for its companion.

She went into the house much perplexed and distressed, for she knew how grieved her little girl would be when she was told of her great loss.

While she sat wondering who could be so cruel as to rob her pet, in came Bertha, shouting:

"Oh, mamma, I've got all my flowers, every one, made into bunches to sell; taus I'm a 'Tin's Daughter, and I'm doing to drive the money all to the poor people."

"Bless your precious heart," cried her mother, as she held the little girl close in her arms, while tears filled her eyes, "you are a King's Daughter indeed."

Never were flowers more readily sold, and better prices were never paid than were given to this dear worker for the King's poor.

The little King's Daughter never regretted the loss of her flowers, for the lesson learned so early in life resulted in many noble deeds in later years.

She is the only feature of Marchbrook Park was its monasteries. One of these, known as the March's Avenue, and supposed to have been planted in the days when Marchbrook was the site of a Benedictine monastery, was a noble arcade of tall elms planted sixteen feet apart, with a grassy road between them. The monastery had long vanished, leaving not a wreath behind, and the avenue now led only from wall to wall.

The owners of Davenant had built a classic temple or summer-house close against the boundary wall between the two estates, in order to secure the enjoyment of this vista, as it was called in the days of Horace Walpole. The windows of this summer-house looked down the wide avenue to the high-road, a distance of a little more than a quarter of a mile.

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TO BE CONTINUED.

ADVERSITY is the first path to truth.

—Byron.

A TRAGEDY OF THE AWFUL BRITISH COLUMBIA FLOOD.



[An entire family found dead upon a raft, where they had perished from starvation, floating in the wilderness of waters.]

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

A DEPARTMENT FOR LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS.

Something that WILL Interest the Juvenile Members of Every Household—Quaint Actions and Bright Sayings of Many Cute and Cunning Children.

The Runaway Boy.

Wun I sassied my pa, an he won't stand 'at, and he punished me. Wen when he wuz gon that day I slipped out an runned away.

I took my copper cents

An climbed over our back fence

In the jimson, and I got wed

Ever where all down the road.

I nent out there an ne

I runned—some—and runned again.

When I met a man 'at led

A big dog, he looked her head.

I went down a long, long lane.

Where was little pigs a playin'

An jumped up an skeered me, too.

Non I scampered past, an they

Wuz somebody hollered "Hey!"

An I looked everywhere.

An they was nobody there.

I want to, but I'm afraid to try

To go back. * * * An up by

Somep hurt my th' inside—

An I want my ma—ah, cried

Non my ma big dog, he

Went through my clothes, through

Where's my ma, an I told me who

Am I, an of I tellled where

My home is at she'll show me there.

But I couldn't 'st but tell

What's my ma, and she says "Well,"

An I told my ma, "I'm gon."

She knew where I live, she guess.

Non she tellled my huz wife close

Round her neck—on she goes

Skippin up the street! Ah non

An my ma home again.

An my ma home again.

Kissed the big girl, too, an she

Kissed me—me! I p'omise more

I won't run away no more!

—James Whitcomb Riley.

A Little King's Daughter.

Perhaps the finest doll's house in England is that ordered by the Duchess of Portland for her little daughter, Lady Victoria Bentinck.

The reception rooms are hung with brocade, the stairs carpeted, the doors open and shut, and the bedrooms are beautifully furnished.

SERGT. PURCELL'S INVENTION.

The Police Officer's Safety Scheme for Elevator Hatchways.

Police Sergeant Thomas Purcell, New York City, has invented an automatic door for elevator hatchways which is valuable and practical as a preventive of accidents and an obstruction to the spread of fire. The illustration shows that the doors part from the central line and retire within horizontal recesses as the cage approaches. When the cage has passed the hatches are automatically drawn

cheers and laughter that effectively interrupted him. Of course the young speaker did not mean to imply that every one of his listeners was in danger of being hanged or electrocuted, but what he said sounded like it, and so they laughed. Another boy speaker at another class debating society got himself laughed at, too, once when he stood up to talk about Gen. Grant. He was very much embarrassed and frankly confessed that he was able to say very little. "But," he added, "if I were to say but three words, I should wish to make them a continuous eulogy upon General Grant." That boy is a gray-haired man now, but he and his friends still laugh at his continuous three word eulogy.

Somewhat Lacking.

A certain doctor living in the upper part of the city has a bright and ever-growing 4-year-old daughter. She has a brother a few years older, of whom she is very fond, and who for her amusement sometimes draws pictures on slate or paper. A few evenings ago he was thus engaged and essayed to draw an elephant. He shaped the body, head and legs, and before adding the proboscis stopped a moment to look at it. The little girl had been watching every stroke of the pencil with great interest, waiting patiently for him to finish, and when he stopped and she thought he was done exclaimed, "Why, Johnnie, you forgot to put on his sachel!" For the moment she couldn't think of the word trunk and evidently concluded the other word would do as well.—Utica Observer.

For a Duchess Doll.

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