



CHAPTER XVI.

Everything was dark and strange to Paul Lowther, coming in as he did from the glaring tropic sunshine, but he rushed forward excitedly at Aube's cry, and finally made out a figure in white, whose hands were eagerly stretched out to him, and, obeying the natural instinct of the moment, he clasped that figure in his arms.

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peculiar and well understood import to all this.

"I am one of you now," he continued in the same tone, "and I am not going to be cast aside like this."

CHAPTER XVII.

Back in the evening, through the dark shadows of the great leaves, where great moths flitted over the cloying scented flowers, and the fireflies scintillated among the bushes as if there had been a shower of tiny stars.

"It's maddening, I tell you, maddening!" cried Paul, hoarsely. "Oh, I don't know," replied Bart. "Rather warm though, here, Paul, old chap, if we stop here long I shall take to collecting. Look at that moth. Why, he's big as a bat."

"Are you listening to what I say?" cried Paul, angrily. "My poor darling! It is horrible. The woman deserves—"

"What woman? That black servant?" "No, man, no; the mother."

"Oh, come, I say, don't speak like that of our kind hostess."

"But to send for that poor girl home from such a life as hers to a common pot-house frequented by a pack of niggers—"

"I'm afraid this delicious night air is exciting you, Paul, old man. It isn't a low pot-house, but a pleasant roadside cabaret or cabaret, kept by a very sweet pleasant woman."

"Bart, you're mad."

"Not quite, old fellow; but you are getting on. Now be reasonable, and put the case fairly. Here's a nice sweet creature left a widow: she has a dear little child—a girl, and she says to herself, 'This place is not good enough. I'll send my darling to Paris to be well taught and brought up. Never mind the expense! Well, she does this, and at last thinks—small blame to her—that she should like to have her daughter back, and she sends for her. Here's the history in a nutshell—a cherry-blossom if you like.'"

"But, Bart, my darling Aube. Man, man, would you like to see Lucie there?" "Honestly, no. But if Fate had placed her there, she would be Lucie still, and I should not howl about it."

"You'd be mad as I am."

"Not I, dear, but not half. I know what I should do."

"Yes; what? Don't talk so slowly."

"Marry her, and get her away as soon as I could."

"Of course, yes. She must be got away at once. There was that black-looking fellow there, too. It's of no use for you to contradict me; he's in love with her, and as jealous of me as can be."

"I'm not going to contradict you. I should say he is that way. Well, no blame to him. Any fellow would fall in love with her. I should if there was no Lucie in the world."

"She must be got away at once, and as for that half-nigger fellow, he had better mind."

"So had you," said Bart.

"But if that man goes to the house I shall shoot him."

"Mind he don't have the first pop at you, old man. Recollect that the nigger is lord paramount here; he ruled by me, and don't do anything rash. If you get showing fight our lives will not be worth an hour's purchase."

"That aroused her just as Paul said again rather sternly."

"Is it your servant? Am I wrong in asking what I did?"

"No," said Aube, simply, as she passed her arm round Nonsie's waist. "Mr. Lowther, this is my dear mother, Madame Dulau. Mammy," she continued, quietly, "this is Mr. Paul Lowther; dear Lucie's brother; and his friend."

"She held out her hand to Bart, who drew a long breath after watching her keenly."

"You brave little darling," he said to himself, as he took her hands, and then aloud, "I bring you dear Lucie's love. My dear Miss Dulau, I am glad to see you again. Madame Dulau, I am afraid we have taken you by surprise."

"He held out his hand now to Nonsie, who drew a long breath, too, and caught it eagerly, and held it for a few moments, smiling pleasantly in a face whose frank honesty impressed her."

"Yes," she said, quietly, "it is a great surprise to us both. Lucie's brother and his friend. You are very welcome to my poor home."

"Paul seemed dumfounded, but at last, evidently suffering painfully, he held out his hand to Nonsie, conscious that under her mask of calmness, Aube was suffering agony, and watching her, wondering what she would say or do."

"Nonsie's brow wrinkled and her face puckered a little with a deprecating smile as she looked at the extended hand, but she did not take it. It was not from dislike, but Paul's words had cut deeply, and she could not help saying with a slight shrug of her shoulders:

"You wish to shake hands with me?" "Yes," stammered Paul. "With Aube's mother. I beg your pardon. I did not know."

"No," she said, simply, "how could you? I am not a lady. Only the keeper of this poor place."

"She laid her hand in his for a moment, and as his own was once more free, Paul looked confusedly from one to the other."

"His eyes lit last upon Saintone, who stood watching them savagely, and as the young man's gaze encountered Paul's confusion passed away, for instinctively he knew that he was face to face with a rival."

"Will you come in, gentlemen?" said Nonsie, quietly. "Mademoiselle Lucie's friends are very welcome here. Aube, dear, show the way. Monsieur Saintone," she continued, "I will not ask you to join us, after what has passed."

"I understand," said Saintone, speaking to Nonsie, but with his eyes fixed on Paul in an insolent-looking stare. "I'm going now, Nonsie, but I shall come again."

"He nodded at Aube, who looked at him calmly, and walked toward the door, but turned back directly."

"Ah," he said, "I really forgot. Did I have anything to drink?"

"As he spoke he threw a coin on the front of the buffet."

"No, Monsieur Saintone," said Nonsie, calmly, and she took up and held out the piece."

"Keep it," he said, contemptuously, and the blood flushed in Aube's cheeks at his manner toward her mother. Then in a whisper Saintone continued: "Send those men away while their lives are safe."

"Nonsie looked up at him sharply, and he returned the look as if there were a

lably from one side, till getting into an easier position, he lay watching the stars through the open window, and thinking of the events of the day.

"It was horrible! That sweet, gentle girl, brought up as a lady, fresh from the seclusion of the convent, to be suddenly brought to such a home as that, and evidently persecuted by the man he had encountered there."

"I've made an enemy already," thought Paul, and he began thinking of their walk back to the town, past houses, dotted here and there among unobtrusive foliage, which offered plenty of concealment for any one who chose to dog their steps. And it was not fancy, he knew, for he was convinced that the glance he had seen when the match was struck was from a man's eye. Bart had seen a face, and it was evident that they had been followed. But for what?

"He had just reached this point in his musings when he held his breath, for there was a faint rustling sound beneath the window."

"It ceased directly, and Paul breathed freely again, attributing the sound to some nocturnal animal—a rat perhaps. Then he thought of the position of the house where they were staying—a large two-floored building nearly covered with luxuriant creepers that would form a harbor for wild creatures such as were probably about there among unobtrusive foliage, which offered plenty of concealment for any one who chose to dog their steps. And it was not fancy, he knew, for he was convinced that the glance he had seen when the match was struck was from a man's eye. Bart had seen a face, and it was evident that they had been followed. But for what?

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"Just then the rustling sound was repeated, and it struck him that it was like a hand grasping and shaking a stem of the tree trained all over the house."

"The sound ceased again, but he lay listening to be quite startled, for the noise came again, accompanied by a faint breathing, and as he lay on his side watching the window, something darker than the darkness appeared in the opening, and he knew that a hand and arm had been passed in to grasp the window sill. The noise which followed was undoubtedly caused by the foot seeking for a resting place, and as this rustling ceased, something dark and round slowly eclipsed a star on the horizon and he dimly made out the contour of a head."

"Paul's hand stole beneath his pillow, where he had intended to place his revolver, but he remembered now that with his thoughts on Aube he had forgotten it, and it lay on the table."

"Without a moment's hesitation he sprang out of bed, seized it, making directly after for the window, but on reaching it all was perfectly still below; and though he peered into the garden, and tried to distinguish the paths and shrubs, all was black there; and at last contenting himself with closing the window, he was about to return to his couch when Bart spoke."

"What's the matter?" he said. "Paul told him."

"Shouldn't wonder, old man," said Bart. "We dropped into a nice place; but we can prove it as soon as it's light."

"It was nearly morning when Paul fell asleep, and not much after sunrise when he started into wakefulness, to find the window open and Bart peering out."

"Hullo! Awake!" said the latter. "I say, you were right. Someone climbed up here last night. The creeper's torn just below, and there are the marks of two wide-toed feet on the soft earth."

"What do you think it means?" "Don't know. Perhaps, perhaps. I hope it does not mean the knife. I say, old chap, I'd have practiced for this at a pistol gallery if I had known."

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

In round numbers the United States has produced \$2,000,000,000 of gold since the discovery of the precious metal in California.

Official reports show that drunkenness in the army was a good deal less prevalent last year than ever before. But as even now 31 per cent. of the admissions to army hospitals are for alcoholism, there is evidently plenty of room for more improvement.

The ex-Empress Eugenie has made her will, and a pleasant excitement among her numerous godsons in France is the result. She constituted herself godmother of all male children born in France on the birthday of her son. The number amounts to three thousand eight hundred and thirty-four, each of whom she has remembered in her will.

The latest medical returns from hospitals in London, Paris and Berlin show that the serum treatment of diphtheria has cut down by one-half the number of deaths of children from this disease. The complete success of the treatment is still far off, but the best experts count upon eliminating the terror of this scourge of childhood. What makes the treatment more noteworthy is that no evil effects follow the use of the serum. Its main effects seem to be the clearing of the pharynx and the reduction of fever.

Agriculture in England is only for the rich. Eighty-seven farmers in Norfolk gave up their holdings at Michaelmas, and in the last fourteen years nearly thirty-six thousand acres in that county have entirely gone out of tillage. It is calculated by experts that in the last twenty years the farmers of Norfolk have lost \$15,000,000 on crop alone. The land owners are in every bit as bad a position as their tenants. On one of the largest and best managed estates in the county the rental has fallen in twenty years from \$293,410 to \$143,500. The owner of the property needs nothing from his land, as the rents are swallowed up in estate expenses.

"Ouida," once the fad as a novelist, who has long lived in Rome, declares herself unable to see what need Italy can have for costly military possessions in Africa when it has within its own borders 100,000 persons dying of pellagra, 6,000,000 living on malarious land, 1700 communes in which grain is rare, 1400 communes with scanty and foul water supplies, 600 communes without doctors within reach, and over 300 communes which have no burial place. Of course, Italy does not look at it in that light. Charity begins at home; but missionary work is more popular when it is a long way off, and all nations seem to want a slice of Africa.

The American Society in London has decided this year to give a Thanksgiving dinner that will make their countrymen abroad weep that they ever left their native land. All the delicacies will be sent over from this side. Some will be raw, some cooked. In Washington, but all will be the best money can buy and have a genuine Yankee Doodle flavor. There will be, to give due place to the great American standard, fat turkey gobbles from Rhode Island, canvas-back duck and diamond-back terrapin from the waters of Chesapeake Bay, peerless Lynn Haven oysters, capons from Pennsylvania, juicy hams from old Virginia, the finest mutton from the Blue Grass State, and mince and pumpkin pies, the like of which no other cooks on earth can produce.

French engineers and railroad men are much interested in the fact that certain Russian railroads have ordered locomotives from an American firm. A leading engineering journal says: "That a new country, as North America must still be regarded from many points of view, should be able to supply its own needs in its self-sustainable fact. This, however, does not seem to satisfy the activity of its people, with which Europe will have to count in future on the battleground of industry. The news that comes to us from the United States of an order for forty locomotives for Russia, placed with the Baldwin Works of Philadelphia, will be received with a certain degree of surprise on this side of the Atlantic, especially if, as we are told, this order is to be followed by more important ones. Already in the matter of furnishing railroad material American constructors had taken possession of the South American market, and were carrying on a formidable competition against the English in their own colonies, especially in New Zealand and Australia, but it was hardly expected that they would be seen obtaining a foothold in Europe."

The most gratifying and the most suggestive public paper presented for many years to the American people is that just issued by the bureau of education of the country. It is headed, Dr. William T. Harris. The report confirms the title of the United States, the foremost among nations in popular education. The whole number of pupils enrolled in schools and colleges, public and private, exceeds 15,000,000, or more than 22 per cent. of the entire population. The highest figure attained by any other country in recent years is a fraction within 20 per cent., and the country presenting it was Ireland. After Ireland in rank as designated by ratio of enrollment to entire population came Prussia, England, Canada, Scotland, Belgium, France, Austria, Holland, and following these, but at a distance, Switzerland; still further back Spain, Italy, Mexico, the South and Central Americas, Russia and Turkey. The great stride forward was shown during the last twenty years in England, which, only in this generation, has enjoyed really free schools. It is to be observed that nearly every country has a compulsory school law now on its books, but in none is the law enforced rigorously.

It is proposed to introduce into the public schools of Canada regular inspection of the teeth of all pupils by experts appointed for the purpose. The plan is a good one and worthy to be followed elsewhere. Good teeth are as important to the scholar, not only during his pupillage, but in his after life, as a good education, and only early attention and care, not always given by parents nor always possible to them, can assure their preservation. It is not yet proposed to educate the

teachers in dentistry, so that they can personally inspect and operate on their charges, but it might not be a bad idea to do so. The modern missionary is instructed in medicine to the end that he may minister to the physical ills of his convert, and there is no reason why teachers, especially those whose fields of work are in remote and rustic districts where dentists are scarce, than rocs' eggs, should not be instructed in that branch of the preservative and healing art. Canada should try the experiment, and if it thrives in that cold country where teeth are urgently required to chatter with, it will be introduced to warmer ones where they have other uses, to the great advantage of all pupils, however much they may be against it.

The city electrician, according to the New York Post, is coming to be a very important functionary in a good many American municipalities, and the tendency to load upon him a variety of new and unrelated duties is viewed in electrical circles with some concern, as the whole drift in modern electricity is necessarily towards specialization. The office owes its creation usually to the existence of a city fire alarm bureau or a police-telephone system. The movement in favor of underground wires has in many places added the supervision of a subway system; and latterly the control of all the interior wiring has been entrusted to the same official, as in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Meanwhile, about 200 communities of all sizes have established municipal electric-light plants, and where possible, these are directed by the same city electrician, as in Chicago. In one or two States there is an agitation afoot for municipal telephone exchanges, and the overloaded official now has to deal with the problems of the intricate telephone art. Not only this, but in Detroit the electrical engineer of the City Lighting Commission has had to take the unruly and superabundant shade trees in hand; while in the same city the spirit of Progress has now gone so far as to demand the municipalization of the trolley-car tracks. Just where this will end no electrician can well foresee; but it is already obvious to the professors of electrical engineering in American colleges that their courses cannot be too comprehensive.

King Carlos, of Portugal, who is now in Paris, is one of the heaviest insured monarchs in Christendom, his insurance amounting to about \$3,000,000, which is spread among many English and French companies. The reigning families of Europe are clients of a very large scale of the life insurance companies, figuring among their biggest risks. In fact, there are only two sovereigns who are known to be uninsured, namely, the czar of Russia, who is probably regarded by the companies as too unsafe a risk; and Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, whose policies were canceled upon his Bulgarian venture. The late Emperor Frederick of Germany was insured in the neighborhood of \$4,000,000, and was regarded as a splendid risk until the sudden and startling discovery only two years before his death that he was afflicted with cancer inherited from his grandmother, the beautiful Queen Louise, of the Napoleonic era. The life of the queen regent of Spain is insured for a large amount in behalf of her two little daughters, she having followed therein the example of her husband, whose death mulcted the various English and French companies in which he was insured to the extent of some \$2,000,000. King Leopold of Belgium's life is heavily insured, as is also that of Queen Victoria for the special benefit of her younger children. It was the queen's husband, the late prince consort, who induced her to make provision for their youngest children in this form, and he himself was insured for close upon \$3,000,000. The income of which has been enjoyed by his widow since his death.

Senator Quay's Model Farm.

Senator Quay visited his Lancaster county farm on his return home to Beaver from the meeting of the State Republican Committee at Philadelphia. He had not seen the place since last fall, when he spent a day there in company with Senator Cameron. Since then it has been improved under the direction of Deputy Auditor General Friday, by the addition of a magnificent new barn, fences and outbuildings.

This is one of the finest farms in Lancaster county, says the Pittsburgh Commercial-Gazette. It consists of 135 acres and lies along the line of the Lancaster and Columbia Electric Railway, midway between Columbia and Mottville. It is bounded on the south by the Pennsylvania Railroad, which has built a small station near by, known as Glen Manor. The land was taken up in 1741 by Christian Garber. It remained in the family continuously until last October, when it was bought for Senator Quay by Mr. Friday. Shortly before the sale the large stone barn was destroyed by fire.

The new barn is the finest and most convenient in Pennsylvania. It has a frontage of ninety feet and a depth of ninety-three feet. The basement is used as a stable, and is so arranged that one can stand anywhere on the lower floor and see all the horses and cattle feeding. Each stall is automatically supplied with water from a large spring. The second floor is of sufficient depth to admit of three four-horse wagons being driven on the floor at the same time. Two immense corn-cris and an agricultural implement shed are built in the barn.

A Cyclopean Pig.

A one-eyed pig, which the Covington (Ala.) Times pronounces "the grandest curiosity ever presented in that part of the country," has been sent to the Atlantic Exposition by its owner, Mr. J. D. Mallot, Seabright, Ala. The creature's single eye is directly in the middle of its forehead. It has no nose, but a snout about two and one-half inches in length, which resembles an elephant's proboscis. Its head and ears are like those of a dog, and there are four tusks in the lower jaw. Its legs are like those of any other hog, but on its feet are claws.

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