



CHAPTER XX.—(Continued.)

Vanity did not care for the soldier's admiration, which she had soon enough perceived; but the cause of her complete indifference was beyond Maud Neville's ken. Vanity was infatuated about Willie Snow; in spite of his misconduct toward him more than ever. This silly and weak of Vanity, to consider, reader, how few words could be written if a few people were not silly and weak; and remember how frail is the heart of woman. Her madness was at least sincere. Vanity thought nothing of the handsome draughts for whose admiration several girls of rank and fortune were sighing, all because her heart was full of Willie Snow, weak Willie Snow, the man whom she still called her own, and whom she believed had been given to her in a solemn and tender hour beneath the saffron skies, and to the music of the dying evening wind.

Mistress Maud Neville was prompted by a humane desire to keep the heart of her brother in safety and to guide his affections aright. This desire frequently possesses active and high-minded matrons, and from it unspeakable benefits accrue to humanity. After one of these morning encounters between grassplot and balcony, when Vanity had retired—

Sit down here, Tom," said Maud, indicating a garden seat; "what a pleasant cigar you are smoking this morning! Now, Maud, have you counted upon the hearts you have broken since you came down here?"

"Oh, I don't know about that!" the dragoon replied. "I really don't give my mind to it—not much, you know, Maud."

"I suppose you will marry, Tom, and I suppose," Maud went on, "Arabella Hardcastle will be the woman?"

"Can't say," Tom replied diffidently.

"But, Tom," Maud said, with an admirable air of surprise, "have you and the Hardcastles fallen out? You did not speak in this way a few days ago."

At which our dragon's blush, just reddening, broke out most visibly.

"In one word," Maud said, looking him full in the face, "there is a newcomer. I think I can guess."

In this way Maud contrived so skillfully that there and then her brother confessed that he admired Vanity Hardcastle, and she, like the tactician she was, received the intelligence with perfect composure, not protesting. This only she said:

"She is very handsome, good, kind; but then Tom—"

"I know what you mean," Tom remarked, seeing she hesitated. "Ought we to visit her?"

"Well, you see, Tom, we have to ask such questions."

"If you had to choose for me, and the choice is between Arabella and my new-comer—"

"Really, Tom, I should not know what to do."

That may seem strange enough, but Maud could not bear the idea of having Arabella Hardcastle for sister-in-law. Her dislike was not a recent affair. Mrs. Hardcastle had brought her up from infancy, and had managed to make her, as child, girl and young woman, cordially abhor her guardian. Arabella, too, had always been pitied against Maud. But that potent old lady had managed to ~~neglect~~ Tom Pembroke, for Tom was easily injured.

Accordingly, when Tom told his sister that he had really taken a fancy to Vanity Hardcastle, that sensible and straightforward young woman was in a fix. Perhaps the two she might have preferred—Vanity; but all lady readers will see that there were very grave objections to a marriage with this brave, beautiful, but certainly most neglected blonde.

"Which of the two would it be, Maud?" Tom saw his advantage, and pressed his question. Maud traced a pattern on the gravel with her foot, raised her eyebrows, as if to signify that she was put in an unfair position; but she made no answer.

"Of course," said Tom, "I am now talking on the supposition that I felt such a step to be desirable, and also that—Miss Hardware would have me."

"Oh, Tom, ridiculous! Of course she would!"

"How do you know?" he rejoined. "I am not so sure of that."

And he spoke so seriously that Maud felt he must have some reason for his thought, and she was greatly astonished. Fancy wealthy, handsome, dashing, good-humored Tom Pembroke, the prize for an earl's daughter, asking poor and pretty and helpless Vanity Hardcastle to be his wife! And fancy her saying No! Here would be materials for a novel indeed!

CHAPTER XXI.

At last the little patient was discharged from her hospital, and all the fresh infection being over, so the doctor said—Maud Neville was able to thank her benefactress in person. That energetic young matron could not but feel that Tom needed no excuse for being admitted by Vanity Hardcastle. Maud felt a secret respect for the young actress, and could not utter her thanks with the sisterly warmth which she desired to express.

And yet could Maud have read Vanity's secret! The actress was possessed with an idea which Maud would certainly have called wicked, if not mean. Her soul was concentrated upon her purpose of wayward affection and merciless revenge. Her calculation was that Nancy's attractions would be used up by this time. Vanity judged her just the woman to fall in a man's arms. Willie had known her spell once. She knew exactly how to captivate him. This wicked, reckless purpose made Vanity grave and calm and superior as she talked with Maud Neville.

Maud poured out her thanks, praised Vanity's bravery, and said whatever the occasion suggested. Vanity heard her with an air of condescending interest, as one listens to the thanks of a grateful child.

"I am glad I risked it," she said, speaking to her own heart while appearing to answer Maud. "If I had died I should not have cared. But I am alive!"

"Alive!" repeated Maud Neville. "But suppose your beauty had gone!"

Vanity shuddered. Then she remembered her own former thought.

"If God or Fate had wanted my beauty, it would have been taken. Now I am twice my own."

This was Greek to Maud; but she had something to say herself. Vanity was standing at the window, looking into the garden. At a sight of the soldier outside Maud saw a sarcastic smile upon the

country, and one Sunday morning I went out for an early walk. Since my sorrows I had never gone to church, and I heard the bells ringing in the village for an early service. The idea struck me that I would go in and see if there I could calm my mind. As I entered the clergyman was reading the sentence, 'Come unto Me, all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

"Now, let me tell you a fact. As I knelt there it seemed to me that an invisible hand was put into mine. I did truly and actually feel as if a hand clasped me. I looked up. No one was near me. The clergyman was some way off. Then I seemed to hear a voice saying: 'Are there no sorrows beside your own? No breaking hearts but yours? No sickness? No hunger? No nakedness? Then for the first time I realized that I was only one in a great fellowship of grief. I was overwhelmed, but with a blessed terror. When the time came to me I could scarcely hold it. The clergyman saw my agitation, and kindly clasped my trembling hand, and I saw my own feet running down into the wine I tasted. But from that moment there was a new life before me. And I have been happy ever since in my own way. People say all sorts of things about religion; I only know what religion has been to me. A new life—a new life when the old one was withered and blasted and dead! All that was twenty years ago."

"What became of him?" Vanity asked. "He went his way and prospered. He is married now, with a large and happy family."

Courage, energy, tenderness, and rare knowledge of the heart were shown by Sister Catherine. She never lost patience with Vanity; she never shrank from reproving her reckless notions; and she never lost sight of the method by which she must lead this wandering child of Nature into the way of peace.

Sister Catherine gradually gained ground. She never lost an opportunity, and she read Vanity's character with rare insight. In spite of all the sick actress could pour forth in her passionate broken-life talk, the sister kept repeating that life was love, and that there was a life outside of Vanity. At times, with accents of scorn, she would say, "You are the old ideal; and at last Vanity fairly confessed that the sister's conception of life was higher than her own.

Vanity's full heart emptied itself now. "I have been so wild and sinful, and my life is so broken up, and everything has gone to pieces, and there is nothing left! But if you will help me, I will live as you tell me, and not be afraid, and try to do the best I can!"

A little incident then sealed Vanity's remorse. She felt her hand drawn gently toward the sister, who clasped it fast, after which the sick girl felt tears falling upon her. And Vanity knew that these were tears of love and joy, and all that the sister had said to her about goodness became a reality in a moment; and from that hour her feet were set upon the way to life.

(To be continued.)

Flowers in the Philippines.

Nearly every traveler in the Philippines finds much interest in the prodigious growth of flowers. There are over thirty varieties of orchids in the forests, and dozens of lilies of mammoth proportions that are never seen outside of the tropics. The Malapati lily is the largest. Its leaves are often six feet long and two feet wide, while its stems are three inches in diameter. It is in bloom five months in the year, and its blossoms are as large as a peacock's eye.

Carnations grow in phenomenal variety all over the rural districts, and frequently cover an acre or more, while geraniums, whose luxuriance excites exclamations of surprise from nearly every beholder for the first time, grow like trees and great clumps of bushes.

Geraniums that have grown up the trunk and along the limbs of immense forest trees are to be seen frequently. The lazy, indifferent natives seldom touch them, and they grow on and on for years. Along the rural roads there are everywhere wild poppies of the most delicate yellow flowers and large stems. From the trees in the forest there are hundreds of vines and parasites of the most brilliant blossoms, and in the spring season the air over all the several islands is for time fairly heavy with floral fragrance.

Both the Tagals and the Bocals have no taste for the superb flora of the Philippines, and one seldom sees any kind of a flower or vine cultivated at the home of a native. The tropical luxuriance sometimes causes a beautiful wild geranium or a species of chrysanthemum to spring up at the side of a bamboo hut, and, because the natives are too lazy to do what is not absolutely necessary to comfort or life, it will not be torn up or molested.

As the malady progressed Vanity grew delirious.

"Willie, Willie!" she murmured, in a voice deep as the note of a nightingale, and just as though she were breathing the words on his breast, "we will be so happy—far away—over the sea, living and dying together. Away, away from this horrid England! Oh, how I hate England!"

Sister Catherine knew a great deal of Vanity's former history. Listening to these wanderings, which were repeated with a significant persistency, she gradually discerned the filament of real feeling and intention on which the whole was based.

"If you live," she said, speaking aloud, "poor, wandering child, I will try to teach you that there is another love than this."

Vanity heard the words, and answered, still, wondering:

"O, Willie, it is too late now, I here import Death awhile, until Of many thousand kisses, the poor last I lay upon thy lips."

"O, Father!" the Sister cried, "say this child's beauty, and then raise her up to be Thine for evermore!"

CHAPTER XXII.

Vanity's illness might be compared to the course of a river. There was the snatches of delirium when the patient was impetuous and fitful; then came the period of blindness and silence, as if the stream, sinking down between deep banks, rolled on dark and noiseless to the sea.

"Tell me," she moaned to Sister Catherine one day, after the doctor had gone, "you have any hope?"

"Yes, of course," she answered soothingly; "with care you will recover."

"I don't mean that," she replied. "Shall I mark?"

"He fears you will. I don't wonder if you grieve over that pretty sweet face. But listen, child; you have to learn to say, 'Not my will, but Thine, be done.'

"And you will learn to say it."

"Never," cried Vanity—never!

Later, there is a man whom I loved, and who loved me. We had promised ourselves to each other, and a woman came and stole his heart."

"Then it is hers—not yours."

"I meant to win him back," Vanity continued; "I knew he could not resist me. But now my face is destroyed, and all is over, and I want to die."

"Thank God, who has given you time for repentance," the Sister said gravely.

"These ways are not our ways. He is leading you by paths you know not."

Two or three hours later Sister Catherine, finding her a little easier, said to

"Would you like me to tell about a man who—once—wanted to marry me?"

"There was a strange tremor in the usually calm voice of the Sister spoke.

"Do let me hear it," Vanity said.

"Met when he was twenty-five and I twenty-one, and we both were poor. We fell in love. I think he really loved me. I know I really loved him. The story is commonplace enough—at least to the ear. After we had waited five years for fortune to enable us to marry, he secured a good appointment. My heart was throbbed with bliss when I received a letter from him, written in a style of cold justice and formal honor, which stabbed me to the heart. He had ceased to care for me. I wrote and released him, and when I closed the letter I looked up, and there was my life around me, a desolate wilderness. My strength failed, my face grew wan with anguish, my hair turned white. I watched the signs, and was glad of them. I had been well taught, or I might have killed myself. We were living in the

Fruit Aids Digestion.

Fruit is not a complete dietary in itself, but it is excellent to accompany a meat diet. The acid contained in the fruits assists digestion, and it is for this reason that apple sauce should be served with roast pork or goose, the fat of which is rendered more assimilable by it.

In a recent magazine article John Morley says: "There are probably not six Englishmen over fifty whose lives need to be written or should be written."

THE BAROMETER FROG.

A Creature Which Tells You What the Weather Will Be.

New York has a frog that is a weather prophet, and he follows the ups and downs of the mercury with unfailing regularity.

This frog, which is probably the only one of its kind in America, was recently imported from Germany. It is known commonly as the "barometer frog." Its present home is in the office of Dr. W. S. Berkman, on Third avenue. This peculiar faculty for forecasting the weather is an accredited scientific fact. The encyclopedia defines this curious visitor as a "batrachian reptile of the tailless order, embracing the group of phanero-glosses found in Central Germany."

The weather frog has been comfortably installed for the last two weeks in a glass globe. There is a rocky island in the midst of the watery ocean contained in the glass globe. When the barometer is set fair, the frog swims himself upon this rock. He devours enormous quantities of roaches, purchased by the bagful and fed to him by his owner. When the small boys in the neighborhood fail to collect a sufficient number of these delicate and toothsome morsels, which the batrachian declares to be superior in quality to anything in his native swamps, a large beefsteak, chopped fine, keeps his nest-jestive alive. So far, his digestion has not been known to interfere with the prompt performance of his duties as weather prophet to the population of Southern Third avenue.

The weather frog is a comparatively rare animal. It has not taken long for him to spread, and a great number of visitors have found it necessary to pay a visit to the dentist for the pleasure of listening to the mournful voice which comes in soul-stirring chords from the deep, solid red chest.

If that green-backed, red-chested and brown-throated batrachian is fanning himself on the summit of the island upon a fine Saturday afternoon, visitors go away rejoicing. It will be a fine and perhaps hot Sunday. On the other hand, should the frog slide into the water and begin to sink, though the sun may be shining that day, they know it will rain ere morning. If the frog drops quickly, they look out for squalls. If he remains persistently at the bottom, it is an angry or long-continued rain or disagreeable weather. The movements of this long-legged reptile are so carefully adjusted to the small variations of the weather that it has been suggested to its owner that a graduated glass introduced into the globe would give daily readings which might be posted outside the building for the public benefit.

Dr. Berkman has watched his movements very closely during the past fortnight, and is prepared to say that he compares more favorably with the man on Broadway. It has been suggested to him that it is not right to keep his weather prophet hidden at the bottom of a tank in a dentist's office, but should request the government to appoint the frog to the Weather Bureau as an adjunct to the present official staff.

The weather frog is valued at \$25—a price at which it is not likely to become popular in this country. His hind legs are abnormally long, and his front legs exceedingly short. He is slow in motion, but makes up for any deficiency in this way by being extremely sensitive to sound. He can hear the approach of an enemy even if he has not the ability to get out of the way very quickly. As for his voice, it is unlikely anything heard even in the bullfrog region, and must be listened to carefully before a musician can form any estimate of its beauty.

Small Fruit Farms Pay.

"Contrary to the general opinion," said Mr. Russell Stephens, one of the largest fruit growers of the Sacramento valley, "it is the small fruit farms in California which pay the best. The big fruit farms are very expensive to manage, and as every person about them as to be hired, there are many leaks and weak points.

The transportation feature is, perhaps, more important than all things else combined, for unless the fruit can be shipped, and properly shipped, there is no money in the business. In the end the big farms will pay, but at present the small growers have the best of it, for they can handle as they raise. It is strange to us that people in the east pay twenty-five cents per pound for Malaga or Tokay grapes, when out there we are glad to sell them for from \$15 to \$17 per ton, or less than one cent per pound. The railroads and middle men get all the money, and what is worse, the consumer has to pay such high prices that he does not feel able to buy all the fruit he should."

Experiments in Flying.

The first experiments of Herr Otto Lilienthal in flying were made with a single cloth-covered, wing-shaped framework, which, after a run from the top of a hill, supported him in the air for perhaps a quarter of a mile as he gently slid down the slope. He has since made it easier to keep his equilibrium by using two smaller frameworks, placed one above the other.

This apparatus can be kept in position in a wind of twenty miles an hour, and with a total wing surface of eighteen square meters he has sailed in a nearly horizontal direction against a wind of fifteen miles or more without the run at the start, even being lifted by the stronger winds higher than the starting point, and sometimes coming to a standstill in the air. Such experiments convince him of the possibility of sailing in a circle. As the apparatus on coming into the wind, it must have sufficient height to complete the turn before landing, and the flapping of small wings may help to gain this.

A Marvel in Railroading.

A problem in railroading that has received considerable attention from a certain class of inventors has been to devise a scheme whereby two trains may pass each other, going in the same or opposite directions, upon a single track, and thus save half of the expense now necessary to lay a double track.

"Less than a year ago patent No. 535,360 was granted for a method of accomplishing this result without the usual sanguinary circumstances that accompany it. The proposed plan is to place a long inclined plane car at each end of one of the trains. Upon these inclined cars and along the roofs of the other cars is laid an ordinary track of standard gauge.

When a second train desires to pass all it has to do is to crowd on steam and climb over it. This can be done with equal facility in either direction and whether the first train is stationary or moving at a high rate of speed.

The Gregorian Calendar.

The Gregorian calendar, first substituted for the Julian calendar in 1582, allows the ordinary year 365 days, the leap year 366 days, and drops three leap years in every four centuries, only those centennial years which are divisible by 400 being leap years. The mean year of our time-reckoning by this system, while sufficiently accurate to satisfy most individuals, is still twenty-six seconds longer than the true astronomical year. This has led a learned member of the French Academy of Sciences to propose a further correction of the calendar by considering