

GOING TO THE BAU.

over the unsatisfactory past or the gloomy future. So he started away from Paris by the night mail, and arriving in London early in the morning, caught the train for Liverpool, and proceeded there direct. He thought it very likely that Wilbur Hoyt might be in London, but he would not see him or any other of his friends. The one sad experience by which his whole life had been changed, and as yet too heavily on his heart to allow him to make it a topic of conversation even with such an intimate friend as Hoyt; and with the others, who were ignorant of the relations in which he stood to Minnie Adams, the recent marriage would undoubtedly have been discussed in a manner which it would have been very painful for him to listen to. The Cunard steamer "Cuba" was to sail for New York at an early hour the next morning, and her officers, all good men and true, most of whom were slight acquaintances with Colonel Willamette, were pleased at the sight of his name on the passenger list, and greeted him with a hearty welcome when he stepped on board the next morning. But they were greatly astonished and not a little disappointed when in place of the bright, genial, jovial man of the world who had sailed with them before, they found that the Colonel, for the most part, secluded himself in the solitude of his state-room, and that when, as at meals and a few other occasions he did come among them, he was polite indeed, and courteous, but moody, silent and pre-occupied.

The ship had a capital run, and arrived at New York within ten days of her departure from England; but as they neared their destination, even Henry Willamette had again changed his intention. He could not make up his mind at once to encounter the dreary solitude of Crow Nest—his old home on the Hudson River. He thought it would be better for him first to spend a few days in New York, making an excuse to himself that there might be some business for him to attend to there, so he took up his quarters as usual at the Albemarle Hotel; and that evening the frequenters of the Union Club were surprised to see his well known face once more among them. All hailed him with delight, for Henry Willamette was a universal favorite, and many were the pleasure-plans, dinner parties, and social gatherings of all kinds at once proposed to him. He accepted them all with avidity; and those who had known him longest and best, were surprised to see the eagerness which he showed in pursuit of amusement of a kind which was formerly understood to be distasteful to him. He dined out constantly; at his dinner consumed great quantities of wine, and passed the greater portion of the night in the excitement of the gaming table. Not that Henry Willamette was ever to be found in any of the almost public gaming rooms with which that city of pleasure is infested, for he was by nature too sensitive to permit any open exhibition of his excitement; but in the private rooms of the clubs, and at the houses of some of the fastest young men of New York he was a constant attendant, and rumors of his varying success at play, and of the large amounts which he always staked found their way into some of the less scrupulous of the newspapers. The habits and actions of a young man of position, such as was Colonel Willamette, are not to be hidden under a bushel, in a city like New York; and before long the buzzing gossip was not confined to men of Henry's own set, but circulated freely among his elders. Many of these gentlemen of high commercial standing and social position, who had been for years intimate with the Willamette family, shook their heads gravely when they heard of the Colonel's proceedings, and expressed their wonder that a man who, for so many years had set such an admirable example to his contemporaries, and had achieved such distinction in his profession, should suddenly break out into the dissipation of gaming, with all the eagerness of the very best.

One of these old family friends, a certain Major General Barlow who, in early life had been intimate with Henry, had served, and who, during the war, had served in the same division of the army with the Colonel, though he was but slightly acquainted with him, hearing at his club some of the floating gossip about the young man, made it his business to inquire into the matter; and, having satisfied himself that there was some foundation for it, determined, if possible, to take measures for arresting Colonel Willamette in his downward career he was pursuing. General Barlow was a broad old man, with plenty of knowledge of the world. He reckoned that a young man discreetly brought up and hitherto excellently behaved, as Henry Willamette had been, would not suddenly have lapsed from the paths of propriety, without some strong prompting motive. That motive, the General's experience led him to look for in either the loss of money or the caprices of a woman. The General knew that Henry's fortune was ample, and that it was not for the vulgar sake of gain that he plunged into the excitement of play; but he was entirely ignorant of the young man's inner life, and though it unlikely that no so good-looking and agreeable should have suffered in his experience of the fair sex. Nevertheless, the old veteran, who could never have been a handsome man, recollected how well he had been treated by the ladies in his early days, and having a fair faith in the utter capriciousness of women, thought it possible that Willamette, with all his advantages might have been attacked with some symptoms of the universal heart disease. In such a case, according to the old general's idea, there was nothing like change of subject—of one man drives out another; "to use his homely phrase, and his notion was that if Henry Willamette was laboring under the effects of an unrequited attachment, his recovery would be most easily effected by giving him a new passion to dwell upon. Nor was the General quite unskillful in this matter. He was a widower, with an only daughter, whose beauty, liveliness, and accomplishments had all been obtained for her the first time she occupied the General's house, as an old soldier, had not had much opportunity of money-making, did not regard the possession of a fortune as a disqualifica-

tion for his intended son-in-law, but he looked for something beyond. It was his hope that one to be so nearly allied to him, and to whom he looked as a transmitter of his family honors, should be a man of some high and noble living representative of the powers of shoddy. Henry Willamette was the descendant of an old Knickerbocker family, and, in addition, to this inheritance, had won military rank and social distinction. There was no one in the entire list of young men of the day whose alliance could be more desirable; and the General determined to leave nothing undone towards bringing about a match between his daughter and Colonel Willamette.

Nor was Belle Barlow at all disinclined to accept the fate which her dotting father plotted for her. She had been an outrageous flirt, as all the man-nouring mothers and other pretty girls, who, during the past three seasons, had frequented the rocks at Newport, or the promenades at Saratoga, were ready to tender, and, most sentimental on occasions; she had a good stock of poetical reading, which she used judiciously; and could make herself, if she chose, agreeable to any style of man.

But Belle Barlow was somewhat tired of the eternal round of dance, dinner, picnic, and flirtation, so far as, at least, her position of unmarried girl was concerned; and she was not when she had changed her condition and was duly mated was a different thing. She by no means proposed to give up the enjoyments of life. No, she would apply herself to them with keener zest when she had taken rank as a married woman. A husband was in her eyes a necessity for every girl who had been a certain number of seasons before the world; and as her father had more than once mentioned to her his desire that she should show herself willing to receive any attentions which Colonel Willamette might make, she acted like a dutiful daughter, and consented. Nay, more, pleased with the Colonel's personal appearance, and proud of the distinguished character which she had heard given to him in all quarters, Belle Barlow rather laid herself open to attract his admiration and bring him a captive to her side.

And Henry Willamette, what were his feelings in the matter? Was the memory of that old love which he had cherished so long and so fondly, and for which he had been so often still strong enough to guard him from temptation, or did he suffer himself to succumb to the fascination of the beautiful girl, who showed herself so ready to receive his attentions?

True, he had led the life which the Colonel had been leading of late seemed somewhat to have impaired that keen sense of right and wrong, which was at one time his most distinguishing characteristic. His thoughts had fallen to Minnie so frequently as formerly; he seemed to have accomplished his object in temporarily banishing her from his mind; and when he saw Belle Barlow evidently inclined to receive with favor any advances he might make, a new idea took possession of him.

Why should he pine away longer in playing the despairing lover to one who had so decidedly rejected him, and who was then, probably, enjoying herself with the husband of her choice. Why should he not let Minnie Adams—why meant Lady Randall—and all the world see, that though refused by her, he could yet be accepted by a far more beautiful and standing light in the estimation of fashionable society. The delusive dream of pique, and slighted hopes had possession of Henry Willamette at that moment, and under its influence he had fallen beyond the possibility of recovery, but for an incident which occurred when he had been some two months in New York.

One night, or rather early one morning, after a grand ball at the close of which he had escorted Miss Barlow to her home, he returned to his rooms in the hotel, and putting on his dressing-gown, sat down before the fire to smoke a contemplative cigar before retiring to rest. He had not yet proposed to Miss Barlow; but during that whole evening he had found her so charming that he had almost made up his mind to pay her a formal call, and ask her hand on the morrow. Never before had he seen her so lovely, he thought; as he lay back in his chair, lazily puffing at his cigar, the recollection of her brilliant eyes sparkling with a thousand enchantments and provocations, and the low tremulous tones in which she had responded to his whispered words of complaint, filled him with soft, sensuous delight.

Once more she seemed to move around and about him—once more he seemed to perceive the subtle perfume peculiar to herself—once more he felt her warm breath on his face. He closed his eyes the better to realize the creation of his fancy, and immediately sunk into a deep slumber. Then there came to him a dream. He thought he was at home at Crow Nest, on the Hudson, lying in the nursery in his favorite position, stretched at his length before the hearth fire; on the family pictures on the walls, the firelight danced so lovingly, were all old, well-remembered friends. Presently, on looking up, he saw a girl, towards him, whence it came he knew not, a strange, vapory figure which, bit by bit, assimilated into human shape, and took upon itself the likeness of Minnie Adams. Her head was bowed, but as she freighted playfully upon her face, he saw that the expression was ghastly pale, and very, very sorrowful. He would have spoken to her, but she raised her hand, and shaking her head despairingly, said in mournful tones: "You to desert me, too! Were not your last words, on our parting, 'that whenever I wanted you, you would be near me'—how have you kept that promise!—God knows your aid is wanted now!" Then she faded from his sight. Henry Willamette sprang to his feet. It was broad daylight, and by his side was standing his servant, with a letter in his hand.

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