

Literature, &c.

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LIZZIE CARRINGTON;

OR, THE COQUETTE'S FIRST LESSON.

By Lilla Herbert.

[Continued from our last.]

Chapter V.

THE FAREWELL.

The following afternoon Lizzie Carrington was sitting in the parlour. Her sisters had gone out with Mrs Carrington, and the young girl was stationed by the table with a book in her hand, when the door was opened and Sinclair entered. Lizzie thought that there was something unusual in his appearance, and as he advanced toward her he said in a tone of sadness—'Lizzie, I have come to bid you good bye.'

'Good bye!' she exclaimed, starting up in surprise—'where are you going cousin Ernest?'

'Lizzie have I not, often asked you not to call me cousin Ernest?'

'Yes, but I will though, for all that—why shouldn't I,' she replied, pettishly.

'You are very unkind, Lizzie, aye, and cruel too.'

'I unkind—I cruel!' she repeated, holding up her hands in pretended amazement, 'you have lost your manners, sir, and I will not be either so unkind or cruel as to listen to you till you regain them; and as she spoke she was about to leave the room, when Ernest caught her hand.

'Lizzie, dear Lizzie, he said, stay but for a few minutes for I have much to say to you.'

'Well then,' she said, reseating herself and looking in his face with a most provoking smile, 'let us sit down and talk politeness to each other.'

'Do not trifle thus, Lizzie!' exclaimed Sinclair, as he rose and paced the room with hasty steps. For a few moments he continued to do so, and then turning to his young companion he said, in a voice full of emotion, 'Lizzie, listen to me: Since I first beheld you I have loved you—'

'Oh, Ernest!' exclaimed Lizzie, who at the mention of the word 'loved,' had sprung toward the window—'do come and see this Highland soldier, he is something worth looking at. Come, Ernest, pray come!'

'Lizzie Carrington!' and for the first time the young girl was startled at his tones; 'I came here to bid you farewell. I shall depart in a few days for Europe, yet one word from your lips might alter my purpose. Shall I go or stay?'

Her lip curled saucily, and she replied in a tone of perfect indifference—

'Pray do as you please, sir.'

Alas, poor Lizzie! She was not an adept in the art she had chosen to meddle with, and had not therefore wisdom enough to perceive that she had gone too far.

Ernest Sinclair's cheek was very pale as he now stood beside her, and taking her hand he said, falteringly—

'I leave you, Lizzie. Be kind enough to present my adieux to your family. I cannot do it myself. Farewell!'

He turned away—a light laugh broke from Lizzie's lips, and she exclaimed—

'Farewell, cousin Ernest.'

Another instant and he was gone.

Five minutes afterward and Lizzie Carrington left the parlor, singing 'I'd be a butterfly,' as unconcernedly as though nothing had happened.

'He will come again,' murmured Lizzie, as she thought over the affair that night, and her heart reproached her for the part she had acted. 'Of course, he will come again.' But when three days past away and he came not, she began to lose her accustomed cheerfulness and to wish most earnestly that he would return.

'Mary,' said Mr Carrington to his wife on the evening of the fourth day, 'I met my friend Sinclair this afternoon. He seemed to be in great haste, and when I inquired the reason of it, he replied that he was to sail in an hour for Europe.'

At this announcement the color left Lizzie's cheeks and she became deadly pale, but no one noticed her emotion.

'Gone to Europe!' exclaimed Mrs Carrington in surprise.

'Gone to Europe!' repeated Miss Jane.

'Gone to Europe!' ejaculated Miss Chloe, with a start of amazement, 'Gone! and without bidding any of us farewell!'

'Yes, he has indeed gone, and for some years too! But surely some of you were aware of his intended departure! He intimated to me that he had bid farewell to all of you.'

Lizzie who by this time had regained her composure, found it necessary to speak.

'Mr Sinclair was here four days since, she said, in a low voice. 'He told me he was going to Europe, and as no one was at home but myself he bade me good bye and requested me to deliver his farewell to my sisters. But I had quite forgotten to do so.'

Mrs Carrington fixed her eyes searchingly upon Lizzie's face, but the latter did not observe the close scrutiny to which she was subjected, while Miss Chloe said, as she sailed with a highly offended air toward the door—

'Very well, Miss Lizzie, I shall remember this thoughtlessness of yours. You need not think that others care as little for their friends as you do. The door was slammed violently so, and the wretched maiden disappeared.

'What's the matter with Chloe?' asked her

brother, with a smile; 'Has she given Ernest the mitten, or has he given it to her?—which is it, Lizzie?'

But Lizzie did not reply. She, too, had moved toward the door, and in another instant had left the room.

Chapter VI.

THE LESSON.

'Mary, dear, what has happened to distress you thus?' asked Lizzie, in a tone of alarm, as one morning about a month after Sinclair's departure, her sister returned from a walk and entering the sitting room, seated herself upon a sofa, and burst into tears. For some moments Mrs Carrington was unable to reply, but when she became calmer, she said—

'Lizzie, Mrs Hamilton is dead!'

'Dead! That beautiful lady, dead—oh Mary!'

Lizzie's soft eyes filled with tears, and for a few seconds there was silence in the room. At length she again spoke.

'When did she die, Mary, and how? I knew not that she was even ill.'

'I will tell you all, dearest Lizzie, and may her sad fate be a warning to you. You know how very beautiful she was, Lizzie. Well that beauty was destined to be her bane. It gave her a strange power over the hearts of others, and she used that power in a way which her Maker had never intended her to. She was a coquette, Lizzie, and the same manners and actions that daily brought new admirers to her feet, also broke a noble heart: a heart that idolized her and whose affection she in secret returned. He died and she was miserably ever after; and, though at the earnest request of her family, she gave her hand to the wealthy Mr Hamilton, her heart was with him who slept in the grave. I had always been her most intimate friend, and to me all her thoughts were confided. And it was thus that I became acquainted with her mournful history. A few days ago I visited her, and she told me then, with tears in her eyes, that she most bitterly repented her youthful error, and that if years of heart-rending agony could atone for the past, her sin would be forgiven. For three years she has been the wife of Mr Hamilton, yet during that time, she assured me, she has never known a happy moment! She then betrayed to me her conviction that she was not long for earth, and bade me, in a hoarse voice, for her sake, warn all just treading the paths of life to avoid the dangerous way she had once entered. This morning she was found still and cold upon her couch, and a sweet smile—the first one that had dwelt there for a long, long time, rested upon her lips. They called her name and tried to rouse her, but the death dew was already upon her brow. The death spirit had been there to set his signet upon that beautiful face!'

'Oh, Lizzie, if ever you feel a disposition to turn from the heart that loves you, I bid you in her name, beware! Rather assume a crown of thorns than wear on your brow the wreath of homage offered to the coquette, for there is not a flower composing it that does not contain poison in its bud and an asp in its foliage!'

Heart-stricken, and trembling in every limb, the young girl turned from her sister, and any one who had beheld her at that moment, would have been alarmed at the ghastly paleness of that youthful face.

Lizzie Carrington had learned a lesson!

Chapter VII.

AN OLD FRIEND—THE YELLOW ROSE.

Just five years after the event recorded in the last chapter, all the family of Mr Carrington save one were assembled in the parlor to welcome a stranger, even Ernest Sinclair! More than one well known voice gave him a kindly greeting, but he missed her whose smile was the brightest, and whom he feared yet longed to behold.

Suddenly the door was unclosed and Lizzie Carrington appeared. How beautiful she was! No longer was she the childlike girl but the lovely woman, there was a graceful dignity in her step that she had not possessed when Ernest Sinclair had last gazed upon her, and as she advanced toward him, and he once more held that little hand within his own, his heart beat wildly, though his countenance betrayed not the emotions that were inwardly at work. Lizzie's bright face showed not the least semblance of agitation; she, too, had mixed much with the world since they had last met. If she had felt anything she had learned concealment, and she now stood with the coldness and apparent indifference of a perfect stranger. With a chilled heart Ernest Sinclair turned from the lovely vision, for he was convinced that he had never been beloved by her.

A few minutes after at the request of her brother, Lizzie was seated at the piano, and her fingers moved lightly and feelingly over the keys as, to a plaintive melody she sang the following—

Forgive me, forgive me, the error is past,
Oh, say that thine anger for aye will not last,
And breathe forth the strains of affection once more,
That beautiful heart-dream, oh, let me live o'er!

Forgive me, forgive me, and never again,
Will I cause thee a moment of grief or of pain,
I know I have wounded, I suffer, forgive,
And let not my words on thy memory live.

Forgive me, forgive me, nay turn not away,
Can my lip wear a smile, can my heart o'er be gay,

If so cold is thy glance, if so stern is thine eye?
Forgive me, forgive me, forgive or I die.

Why did Sinclair start and gaze so eagerly

upon the face of the singer? Could it be? But no! Not the least trace of emotion was visible there, and he again turned from her in disappointment as he said to himself, 'she is still a coquette, and yet she might have chosen a more appropriate song, if it were only in consideration of the feelings of one who has loved her too well.' And Ernest strove, but in vain, to still the throbbings of a heart that yet worshipped her, when that worship was a source of naught but misery.

'An now, Ernest, it is your turn to favour us with a little music;' and Henry Carrington handed his friend a guitar, his favorite instrument. Sinclair hesitated a single instant, and then he took the guitar. His hand swept with spirit over the chords—in a fit of pique he sang—

Your coldness I heed not,
Your frowns I defy,
Your affections I need not,
The time has gone by
When a flush or a smile on that cheek could beguile
My soul from its safety with witchery's wile.

Then, lady, look kindly,
Or frown on me still,
No longer all blindly,
I yield to thy will,
Too tightly you drew the light reins of command,
And your victim is free for they broke in your hand.'

He ceased—and loud applause was showered upon him by every voice but one. Lizzie alone was silent, and Ernest did not raise his eyes to her face, or he would be struck with the expression of deep suffering that rested upon it.

During the evening the conversation turned upon flowers, and Harry Carrington, eager to let Sinclair view some exotics that he had lately purchased, commissioned his sister Lizzie as the young man's guide.

Silently she led the way—she would have given worlds to have escaped, but fate had ordained it otherwise. They entered the conservatory, and Lizzie pointed out the flowers to which her brother had referred, leaving Sinclair to inspect them while she proceeded to collect for him a small bouquet, for which he had expressed a wish.

'I must examine my bouquet and interpret its language if it be possible,' said Ernest, as she presented it to him. As he spoke he held up a book which he found lying upon a stand near. Its title was, 'The language of flowers.' 'Ah!' he exclaimed, 'here are some of my floral favorites: heliotrope, which signifies 'I trust in thee; myrtle, 'love; white-rosebud, 'the heart that knows not change; rose geranium, 'preference; yellow rose—what is a yellow rose the emblem of? let me discover,' and he turned over the leaves of the book. At length he paused and read—

'The yellow rose—the symbol of coquetry. Here are some lines beneath,' and he read them also—

Heed not her sigh
'Tis falsehood's breath!
Trust not her eye—
Belief is death!
A serpent's coil
Thy strength may burst,
No power can foil
Her snares accurst!

'Nay!' he exclaimed, 'were the flower a thousand times fairer, I would not care to possess it.' In another instant he had thrown the rose upon the floor placed his foot upon it and crushed it; and as he did so, Lizzie Carrington fell lifeless at his feet!

'Lizzie, dearest Lizzie, forgive me!' exclaimed Sinclair, as he knelt down and raised her in his arms. But she answered not, her eyes were closed and her cheek was ashy pale.

Wildly he bent over that drooping form, murmuring broken words of love and pressing passionate kisses upon her cold forehead. At length the color came slowly back to her cheek; she opened her eyes and, leaning her head upon her companions shoulder, burst into tears.

'Look up, sweet Lizzie, look up, beloved,' said Sinclair in a voice of extreme tenderness, 'and say that you forgive me for being so cruel.'

'Oh, Ernest! rather let me ask your pardon for all that have passed between us years ago. Forgive me, dearest Ernest, and if a heart that has ever been devoted to you can atone for the past, it is yours.'

At that moment the door was softly unclosed and sister Chloe peeped in! One glance was sufficient. The door was closed as silently as it had been opened, and Miss Chloe walked away, muttering as she went, sundry observations upon decorum, which had they reached the ears of those for whom they were intended, would undoubtedly have stricken them with remorse.

There was a wedding a few months after at the house of our friend Henry Carrington. The bride was his sister Lizzie, and the bridegroom—guess who it was, dear reader.

THE PUNJAB.

THE TERRITORY, PEOPLE, ARMY, AND HISTORY.

Concluded.

DEATH OF RUNJEET SINGH.

The obsequies of Runjeet were celebrated with extraordinary splendour, and with them the glory of his kingdom may be said to have departed. We follow again the work of Colonel Steinbach—

'From the death of the Maharajah Singh may be dated the commencement of the scenes of anarchy and confusion which to this moment have existed in the Punjab. For some months previous to his demise, from his extreme debility and loss of speech by paralysis, public business had been almost entirely neglected, the revenue misapplied, and order and method nearly annihilated. A few days previous to the event, the 29th June, 1839, the Maharajah, conscious of his approaching end, ordered the whole of his superior officers, European and Native, to be assembled in his presence, and caused them to take the oath of allegiance to the heir apparent, his son, the Koonwar, Kuruck Singh; the consequences of which were, that, contrary to the general expectation, he succeeded to the throne of his father without the slightest tumult or opposition. Runjeet Singh was surrounded in his last moments by his favourite minister, the Rajah Dhyun Singh, the chief officers of his household, and the principal ecclesiastics of the kingdom, upon which latter he bestowed the most extravagant donations. Amongst other bequests, he directed that the far-famed Koh-i-Noor diamond, valued at a million sterling, which he had so disgracefully obtained possession of from Shah Soojah, should be given to the high priests of the celebrated temple of Juggernaut, a place of great sanctity, situated in the south of Bengal, whither religious fanatics, at a certain season, annually, are in the habit of making a pilgrimage from the remotest parts of India; but the intention of the latter bequest was not fulfilled, and from recent accounts, the Koh-i-Moor is still in the Lahore Treasury. For many years towards the latter period of his life, Runjeet Singh had been hoarding treasure, which may be estimated to have amounted at his decease to about 8 crores of rupees in cash, or the same number of millions of pound sterling, with jewels, shawls, horses, elephants, &c. to several millions more. Even at the present time, although much has been abstracted from the royal treasury, during the constant succession of troubles, it is doubtful if any court in Europe possessed such valuable jewels as the court of Lahore. Some idea of the vast property accumulated by Runjeet Singh may be formed from the circumstance of no less than 1,300 various kinds of bridles, massively ornamented with gold and silver, some of them even with diamonds, being found in the royal treasury.

'The funeral obsequies of this extraordinary man were too remarkable not to be mentioned here. Upon his death being made public, the whole of the Sikh sirdars at Lahore assembled to do honor to his suttee, and four of his favourite queens, together with seven female slaves, having, in conformity with the horrible practice of the country, expressed their intention of burning themselves upon his funeral pile, preparations were immediately made for the solemnity. It is said that much dissuasion is exercised in cases of suttee; ostensibly such may be the case; but in private every argument to the contrary is made use of by the relations of the wretched victim, and the promise once given cannot be retracted. A street of a double line of infantry having been formed, the procession proceeded at a slow pace to its destination, only a quarter of a mile distant, and within the precincts of the palace. The corpse of the late Maharajah, placed upon a splendidly gilt car, constructed in the form of a ship, with sails of gilt cloth to waft him (according to native superstition) into paradise, was borne upon the shoulders of soldiers, preceded by a body of native musicians, playing their wild and melancholy airs. His four queens dressed in their most sumptuous apparel, then followed, each in a separate gilt chair, borne upon the shoulders of their attendants; the female slaves followed on foot. Before each of the queens was carried a large mirror and gilt parasol, the emblems of their rank. After them came the successor to the throne, the Maharajah Kuruck Singh, attended by the whole of the Sikh sirdars, barefooted, and clothed in white; none but persons of noble rank being permitted to join in the procession. To the last moment of this terrible sacrifice, the Queen exhibited the most perfect equanimity; far from evincing any dread of the terrible death which awaited them, they appeared in a high state of excitement, and ascended the funeral pile with alacrity. The slaves also appeared perfectly resigned, but less enthusiastic. The body of the Maharajah having been placed upon the pile, his queens seated themselves around it, when the whole were covered over with a canopy of the most costly Kashmir shawls. The Maharajah Kuruck Singh, then taking a lighted torch in his hand, pronounced a short prayer, set fire to the pile, and in an instant the whole mass, being composed of very ignitable material, was in flames. The noise from the tom toms (drums) and shouts of the spectators, immediately drowned any exclamation from the wretched victims. The ashes of the founder of the Sikh dynasty were afterwards collected together and thrown into the Ganges, in conformity with the religious custom of the country.

INTRIGUES AND REVOLUTIONS AFTER RUNJEET'S DEATH.

Kuruck Singh, who had quietly succeeded to the supreme authority, was not long allowed to retain undisputed possession of it. The weakness and vice of his character soon appeared. He neglected Dhyun Singh, the confidential minister of his father; gave himself up to debauchery, and choosing his own favourites intrusted the direction of his affairs to one of them, Cheyt Singh. Dhyun Singh was not a man to be braved with impunity. Originally a soldier in one of Runjeet's troops, his talents and activity had recommended him to the favour of the Maharajah, and, together with his