

(CONTINUED FROM TENTH PAGE.)

"And kiss you as frankly as she did when she was but sixteen! A girl gets shy of showing her feelings when they change character. That is why I wanted you to go away."

"And you think—" began Leonard eagerly, his face aglow with the hope her words had aroused. "Oh, mater! if she could only care for me like that, I'd be the happiest fellow alive!"

"And I believe she would be the happiest girl in the world, dear," his mother said fondly. "She is very young, and may not quite know her own mind yet, but I am certain she will not disappoint you."

The young man puffed away in silence for a while, looking rather sober.

Then he said—
"I don't want her to take me, mater, because she thinks she ought to, out of gratitude, deference to your wishes, and all that."

"That's like you, my boy," his mother answered, laying her hand on his, "but I think you need not fear. I should neither exercise coercion nor even influence her choice. She knows that, even though I were disappointed. So keep a brave heart, and remember the old adage, 'Faint heart never won fair lady.' Now I think I must turn you out, for you must be tired."

Nevertheless, they chatted a little longer, Leonard enlarging on his hopes, his wishes, and his plans for the future, his mother listening, well pleased and confident.

So, with a light heart he kissed her good-night at last, and went off to bed.

The slight constraint that had appeared in Vimer's manner to her 'cousin' on his arrival seemed to have almost worn off during the next day; only occasionally, when Leonard threw into voice or manner something of the devotion of the lover, did the girl lose her frank freedom of intercourse, and she certainly did not seek opportunities of tete-a-tetes with him.

But insensibly all the time she was placing him in another niche, trying to adjust him to a new point of view, and herself to that point also—Leonard as a dear brother, and Leonard as a husband!

The more love like grew his attention, the more perplexed became his feelings.

It was when she was alone that Vimer found herself appraising him.

With him, she seemed to float along on a stream of pleasure.

Who could be nobler, sweeter-tempered, more deferential to her, more eager to conform to her every fancy?

Who was a better rider, a better shot, if you came to physical prowess?

Of course, there might be many men more intellectual, and Leonard could by no means always follow her in her ideals, and not infrequently laughed at her for a 'little dreamer.'

She felt instinctively that for the existence of that chamber which she kept locked in the depths of her soul he would have an indulgent, half-amused toleration for 'a girl's poetic fancy,' 'a pretty, unreal romance.'

And perhaps it was; but all the same, a rude touch would have hurt her terribly, and Leonard did not know of the halo which she had woven about the memory of that noble Rhodorian horseman whom she had known for but the space of a few hours.

But she was so fond of Leonard; she missed him so when he was away.

His mother would be so pleased if—

Poor Vimer was too inexperienced to know that, when we come to arguing with ourselves on the excellent qualities possessed by a certain man, and on the reason why we should marry him, what we call 'being in love' is a state far from us. And so it came to pass, that when Leonard found his opportunity, and whispered those words which somehow Vimer had shrunk from hearing, the girl put her hand in his, and said simply, with a frank meeting of his eyes, which ought to have appeared a lover with more insight that Leonard possessed—

"It all seems so strange, Leonard. Must I give you an answer now?"

His face fell a little; then he remembered how young she was, she said tenderly—

"I have startled you my dear. I have no right to press for an answer. But you do care for me, Vimer, don't you?"

"We have always been like—like brother and sister," the girl said half timidly.

In truth, she could not have explained the feeling which held her back from this pledge, which told her that her fondness for Leonard was as the winter gleam to the tropical sunshine of what lay in her heart to give—if the pleader had been the man who was dead long ago.

"Mayn't we leave it?" she said pleadingly. "Indeed, dear Leonard, I don't want to play with you—to be unkind; but if we might go on as we are for a time—"

"It shall be as you wish, dear," the young man answered. "I will be content so that you are happy; only—"

He paused, and his eyes were downcast; then he lifted them and went on—

"Forgive me. I have, perhaps, no right to ask—but there is no one else, Vimer! You are heart free?"

She drew a silent breath.

Was she?

Was that shadowy past to stand between her and the happiness of those to whom she owed all?

"There is no one, Leonard," she answered truly, and he was satisfied.

He went away almost immediately.

His mother counselled this, and he saw the wisdom of the advice.

Vimer took herself to task for feeling his absence a relief.

She said it gave her leisure to think; but, in truth, this was not the real reason of her feeling, though she thought it was. She missed him as her brother; but in the new relationship, which was what she now had to look at, his presence would be like a burden to her.

He was more missed by Vimer's great friend, Meta Langden, who found the young fellow more charming than did Vimer, when considered as a marriageable man and not merely as a brother.

The things of this world go crooked indeed!

Poor Meta would have given all she had to have won Leonard's love, which Vimer scarce knew whether she wanted or not, and Leonard could have won easily what he did not care for.

"Have you sent Leonard away?" Meta asked her friend one day, for the young lady was shrewd, and guessed Leonard's secret.

Vimer's cheek flushed a little, but she answered, without any other change of countenance—
"Oh, no, Meta. He has gone to Paris for a week or two, that's all."

"Meta sighed."

"She guessed how it was, but pressed for no other answer; only, in her heart she wondered how Vimer should want to consider her decision."

In her heart of hearts she hoped the girl would refuse Leonard—they were not suited to each other, she thought.

But there was little chance of that. Vimer would follow the wishes of Mrs. Bertram, of course.

CHAPTER V.

The spring deepened into summer, and one soft, dusky evening the London train brought a passenger, at whom the country porters and the station loafers stared with a kind of dull curiosity, for he was quite unlike any type with which they were familiar.

Anyone, to be sure, might wear a light grey suit and soft felt hat; it was not the dress which marked him out, it was the whole personality.

He carried himself like a military man, but a keen observer would at once have said that no purely English regiment owned him as an officer.

There was a certain grace in his movements which, perhaps, resulted from the more free and easy methods of the colonial trooper.

He was deeply bronzed, and the eyes which looked out from under prominent brows, had that unmistakable light in them which marks out the dweller in tropical lands.

"He be a stranger," said one loafer to another, as the gentleman passed through the gate that led from the station to the roadway. "Maybe a visitor at the Nest, eh? though 'e do look furrin like."

If the gentleman were a stranger, he seemed to know his way fairly well, though his keen eyes had glanced, with the half-amused, half-questioning look of one who is confronted with changes, up at the little station buildings and the few houses clustering about the railway.

But, without asking his way, he turned at once to the left, in which direction lay the village and, some two miles beyond that, Rooknest.

So he seemed at no loss as to where he should go.

QUEEN VICTORIA SALUTED.

Stars and stripes (Specially Honored by Her in Switzerland).

A United States flag, to which Queen Victoria did especial homage several years ago in Switzerland, is now flying at half mast in Washington, U. S. A.

It is the only United States flag still in the position of mourning for the late Queen. The flag and its Washington owners have an interesting history.

The flag has travelled pretty much all over the world. It is the property of Mrs. Barringer, widow of Judge Barringer, who for thirty years lived abroad in a judicial capacity for this Government, spending most of the time in Egypt. Mrs. Barringer lives on Q street, between Seventeenth and Eighteenth streets.

Upon one notable occasion Judge and Mrs. Barringer having gone for a holiday to Switzerland, were present during a great festival, when the place was alive with bunting of every nationality. The Barringers as the possessors of the only American flag in the place, proudly unfurled the Stars and Stripes to the breeze.

The great feature of the festival was the presence of Queen Victoria, who, riding along, looking here and there, interested at the crowd and display generally, suddenly gave orders to her coachman to stop.

This was done just under the window from which floated the Barringer flag. Rising to her feet and formally saluting the Stars and Stripes, the Queen of England, who had accorded this honor to the insignia of no other nation, bowed her head and passed on her way.

It seems therefore most fitting that upon news of Her Majesty's death, this flag, so honored above all others by the dead Queen should have been placed at half mast in her honor, and should so remain until after her funeral.

A son of Judge Barringer is son of the leading professors at the University of Virginia.

SOLD A LAMB TO THE QUEEN.

An Aged Trenton Man's Happy Experience As a Boy.

Aged John Exton, who is one of the wealthiest citizens of Trenton, N. J., glories in the memory of having once upon a time sold a lamb to Queen Victoria.

Exton is an Englishman by birth, and spent his boyhood days in Britain. One day, away back in the thirties, he was playing by a brook with his brother Adam. They had with them a pet lamb, which put in its time gambolling on the green while the boys dammed the waters of the stream and imagined themselves the prosperous

manufacturers that they afterwards became.

While they were at play they were approached by two women of aristocratic bearing, who had been attracted by the beauty of the lamb's fleece, which, John Exton says, was as white as snow. One of the women asked Exton how much he would sell the lamb for.

"We don't want to sell it," replied John. "That lamb's name is Victoria. We named it after the Queen, and nobody but the Queen can have it."

"Would you sell it to the Queen?" asked the woman.

"Yes, ma'am," replied John.

The women appeared to be greatly pleased, and, slipping into the hands of each of the boys a coin the value of which made them think of more mills and more machinery, went their way.

A few days afterward a man came to the home of the Exton boys and told their father that the Queen had sent him for the lamb. He said that the Queen and her mother had talked with the boys about the animal a few days before, and were so well pleased with their loyalty that they wanted the lamb, and were willing to pay any price for it.

The boys wanted to make the Queen a present of their pet, but the man insisted on their taking a guinea each, which they finally consented to do.

"There is no use in denying that we sometimes entertain an angel unaware," says Mr. Exton in telling his strange experience.

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A Good Memory.

A bad memory, in most cases, might be more properly described as one rusting from sheer want of use. The fact is our brain cells are always 'ready to oblige,' but we do not give them sufficient encouragement in their well-meant efforts. Naturally, the individual may cultivate a memory for certain details more readily than for others, but the general basis of all recollective acts is the same, and there is no department of human mental activity in which the motto that 'practice makes perfect' holds more truly than in the science of mnemonics. The view may be expressed, indeed, that we never forget

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anything presented to our brain cells. When we say we have forgotten we really mean that we cannot find the mental photographic negative whence we can print off a positive reproduction.

TOLD BY THE OLD CIRCUS MAN.
Snow-Shovelling Feats of the Greatest of all Giants While in Winter Quarters.

"Whenever I see people shovelling snow off the sidewalk nowadays," said the old circus man, "it makes me think, always, of how the greatest of all giants used to shovel snow, in his day, round the house that he occupied, in the town where the show made its winter quarters."

"Every fall after the tenting season was over we used to go back to this town to lay up for the winter; and the giant always came back here with great pleasure. He liked the place, and he liked the place and he liked the change, and the rest, after the constant travel and the real labor of the tenting season. And then the giant was glad too, to get into a regular house again, in which there was room for him."

"On the road he was of course provided with suitable shelter, but this was necessarily in the form of a tent. Except in public places like halls, and so on, there was no roof shelter to be found under which the giant could have been made really comfortable; and so, sleeping under canvas throughout the season, as he was compelled to do, he looked forward with pleasure, naturally enough, to the house at the winter quarters. This house was especially designed for him; and so built that there was room in it for him in just the same measure and proportions for his convenience and comfort that there would be in an ordinary house with rooms of ordinary size and height, for us."

"This house that the old man had built for the giant was not ready for him until the second winter that he spent there; but it was a curious fact that right there in that very town we found, the first winter, a house that would do, and which the old man leased. This was a fine big house belonging to an old resident, a man of very comfortable means, who was devoted to music and who had had placed in his house a big organ."

"This organ was in a large music room that had been especially built to receive it, sufficient height having been gained by carrying the room up through two stories. The rooms in this house were all rather high studded, anyway, and when you came to open two up into one like that the owner of this house was going to Europe that winter and the old man leased it for the giant, and the giant took up his quarters in that music room, and got along through that winter in it very comfortably. The next winter when the show came back to go into winter quarters there, the giant's house was ready."

"It looked just like any other big comfortable house on the outside. We got the room for the giant inside simply by carrying the rooms made for his use up through two stories in height, which didn't show on the outside at all. Not even the giant's door which was about like the scenery door of a theatre, was ever seen by many people, because we cut that in the back of the house where you couldn't see it from the road. The regular front was just like any front door of a house of its size. But, gracious, goodness! how I am wandering on; what I set out to tell you about was the giant's shovelling snow."

"The house stood well back on a big lot, with a 150-foot front on the street, and the giant always used to shovel not only the sidewalk in front, but the long path back to the house and the path around it. He did this because he wanted to, he never need do anything that he didn't want to do but he loved to shovel snow, it was fun to him. And that long stretch of walk that he cleaned was to him really nothing."

"He had a snow shovel with a blade about as big as a cellar door, and a handle about 14 feet long. And he would shovel our front sidewalk off in just as many shovelfuls as 6 would ago into 150, the shovel

blade being about 6 feet square in size, and he taking out snow to the full size of he shovel every time.

"He'd just slice the snow down through on the walk, across feet ahead of him, and then slice down the sides, and then just lift that block of snow 6 feet square, and of whatever depth it might, in one shovelful; and do it you understand, easy. But easy as all this was to him, to see him do it was always a great delight to the neighbors, and folks that were strangers there in the town, and that happened to be passing when the giant was shovelling snow, used to pause and look on in wonder."

"When the giant had finished the front walk he'd shovel the path up to the front door, and then around the back, and these none of your squiggly little narrow paths like you often see when you get away from the front, but broad 6 foot lanes through the snow. He'd have gone down then to where the show was quartered and shovelled all the paths for them there if they'd have let him, but the old man put his foot down on that—he was afraid the giant might overdo it and hurt himself."

"But around his own house, after every snowfall, you'd see the giant out cleaning the paths, and tossing out snow by the cartload with every shovelful."

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Mascagni's Love of Jewelry

Mascagni, whose latest opera, 'La Mascagere,' has just been produced in six cities at once, is one of the men who wear bracelets, and they are not confined to his arms, but ornament his ankles as well. The idea is rather suggestive of the galleys, but music composers have queer fancies sometimes. The maker of the 'Cavalleria Rusticana' is said to be passionately fond of jewelry, and numbers very splendid and valuable rings, given to him as well as bought by his own money, among his personal effects. The gold anklets, however, are of his own design. So sweet!

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