

from his back. "Confound you, Jack, hold your tongue," roars out Kew. Clive runs for a chair, and a dozen were forthcoming. Florae skips back with a glass of water. Belsize runs toward the awaking girl; and the father, for an instant, losing all patience and self-command, trembling in every limb, lifts his stick, and says again, "Leave her, you ruffian." "Lady Clara has fainted again, sir," says Captain Belsize. "I am staying at the Hôtel de France. If you touch me, old man" (this in a very low voice), "by Heaven I shall kill you. I wish you good-morning;" and taking a last long look at the lifeless girl, he lifts his hat and walks away. Lord Dorking mechanically takes his hat off, and stands stupidly gazing after him. He beckoned Clive to follow him, and a crowd of the frequenters of the place are by this time closed round the fainting young lady.

Here was a pretty incident in the Congress of Baden!

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### IN WHICH BARNES COMES A-WOOING.

Ethel had all along known that her holiday was to be a short one, and that, her papa and Barnes arrived, there was to be no more laughing and fun, and sketching and walking with Clive; so she took the sunshine while it lasted, determined to bear with a stout heart the bad weather.

Sir Brian Newcome and his eldest born arrived at Baden on the very night of Jack Belsize's performance upon the promenade; of course it was necessary to inform the young bridegroom of the facts. His acquaintances of the public, who by this time know his temper, and are acquainted with his language, can imagine the explosions of the one and the vehemence of the other; it was a perfect *feu d'artifice* of oaths which he sent up. Mr. Newcome only fired off these volleys of curses when he was in a passion, but then he was in a passion very frequently.

As for Lady Clara's little accident, he was disposed to treat that very lightly. "Poor dear Clara, of course, of course," he said, "she's been accustomed to fainting fits; no wonder she was agitated on the sight of that villain, after his infernal treatment of her. If I had been there" (a volley of oaths

comes here along the whole line) "I should have strangled the scoundrel; I should have murdered him."

"Mercy, Barnes," cries Lady Ann.

"It was a mercy Barnes was not there," says Ethel gravely; "a fight between him and Captain Belsize would have been awful indeed."

"I am afraid of no man, Ethel," says Barnes fiercely, with another oath.

"Hit one of your own size, Barnes," says Miss Ethel (who had a number of school-phrases from her little brothers, and used them on occasions skillfully). "Hit Captain Belsize, he has got no friends."

As Jack Belsize from his height and strength was fitted to be not only an officer but actually a private in his former gallant regiment, and brother Barnes was but a puny young gentleman, the idea of a personal conflict between them was rather ridiculous. Some notion of this sort may have passed through Sir Brian's mind, for the baronet said with his usual solemnity, "It is the cause, Ethel, it is the cause, my dear, which gives strength. In such a cause as Barnes', with a beautiful young creature to protect from a villain, any man would be strong, any man would be strong." "Since his last attack," Barnes used to say, "my poor old governor is exceedingly shaky, very groggy about the head," which was the fact. Barnes was already master at Newcome and the bank, and awaiting with perfect composure the event which was to place the blood-red hand of the Newcome baronetcy on his own brougham.

Casting his eyes about the room, a heap of drawings, the work of a well-known hand which he hated, met his eye; there were a half-dozen sketches of Baden; Ethel on horseback again; the children and dogs just in the old way. "D— him, is he here?" screams out Barnes. "Is that young pothouse villain here? and hasn't Kew knocked his head off? Clive Newcome is here, sir!" he cries out to his father. "The Colonel's son. I have no doubt they met by—"

"By what, Barnes?" says Ethel.

"Clive is here, is he?" says the Baronet; "making caricatures, hey? You did not mention him in your letters, Lady Ann."

Sir Brian was evidently very much touched by his last attack.

Ethel blushed; it was a curious fact, but there had been no mention of Clive in the ladies' letters to Sir Brian.



"My dear, we met him by the merest chance, at Bonn, traveling with a friend of his; and he speaks a little German, and was very useful to us, and took one of the boys in his britzka the whole way."

"Boys always crowd in a carriage," says Sir Brian; "kick your shins; always in the way. I remember, when we used to come in the carriage from Clapham, when we were boys, I used to kick my brother Tom's shins. Poor Tom, he was a devilish wild fellow in those days. You don't recollect Tom, my Lady Ann?"

Farther anecdotes from Sir Brian are interrupted by Lord Kew's arrival. "How d'ye do, Kew?" cries Barnes. "How's Clara?" and Lord Kew, walking up with great respect to shake hands with Sir Brian, says, "I am glad to see you looking so well, sir," and scarcely takes any notice of Barnes. That Mr. Barnes Newcome was an individual not universally beloved, is a point of history of which there can be no doubt.

"You have not told me how Clara is, my good fellow," continues Barnes. "I have heard all about her meeting with that villain, Jack Belsize."

"Don't call names, my good fellow," says Lord Kew. "It strikes me you don't know Belsize well enough to call him by nicknames or by other names. Lady Clara Pulleyn, I believe, is very unwell indeed."

"Confound the fellow! How dared he to come here?" cries Barnes, backing from this little rebuff.

"Dare is another ugly word. I would advise you not to use it to the fellow himself."

"What do you mean?" says Barnes, looking very serious in an instant.

"Easy, my good friend. Not so very loud. It appears, Ethel, that Jack—I know him pretty well, you see, Barnes, and may call him by what names I like—had been dining to-day with Cousin Clive; he and M. de Florac; and that they went with Jack to the promenade, not in the least aware of Mr. Jack Belsize's private affairs, or of the shindy that was going to happen."

"By Jove, he shall answer for it," cries out Barnes in a loud voice.

"I dare say he will, if you ask him," says the other dryly; "but not before ladies. He'd be afraid of frightening them. Poor Jack was always as gentle as a lamb before women. I had some talk with the Frenchman just now," continued Lord

Kew gayly, as if wishing to pass over this side of the subject. "Mi Lord Kiou," says he, "we have made your friend Jack to hear reason. He is a little *fou*, your friend Jack. He drank champagne at dinner like an ogre. How is the *charmante* Miss Clara?" Florac, you see, calls her Miss Clara, Barnes; the world calls her Lady Clara. You call her Clara. You happy dog, you."

"I don't see why that infernal young cub of a Clive is always meddling in our affairs," cries out Barnes, whose rage was perpetually being whipped into new outeries. "Why has he been about this house? Why is he here?"

"It is very well for you that he was, Barnes," Lord Kew said. "The young fellow showed great temper and spirit. There has been a famous row, but don't be alarmed, it is all over. It is all over, everybody may go to bed and sleep comfortably. Barnes need not get up in the morning to punch Jack Belsize's head. I'm sorry for your disappointment, you Fenchurch Street fire-eater. Come away. It will be but proper, you know, for a bridegroom elect to go and ask news of *la charmante* Miss Clara."

"As we went out of the house," Lord Kew told Clive, "I said to Barnes that every word I had uttered upstairs with regard to the reconciliation was a lie. That Jack Belsize was determined to have his blood, and was walking under the lime trees by which we had to pass with a thundering big stick. You should have seen the state the fellow was in, sir. The sweet youth started back, and turned as yellow as a cream cheese. Then he made a pretext to go into his room, and said it was for his pocket-handkerchief, but I know it was for a pistol; for he dropped his hand from my arm into his pocket, every time I said, 'Here's Jack,' as we walked down the avenue to Lord Dorking's apartment."

A great deal of animated business had been transacted during two hours subsequent to poor Lady Clara's mishap. Clive and Belsize had returned to the former's quarters, while gentle J. J. was utilizing the last rays of the sun to tint a sketch which he had made during the morning. He fled to his own apartment on the arrival of the fierce-looking stranger, whose glaring eyes, pallid looks, shaggy beard, clutched hands, and incessant gasps and mutterings as he strode up and down, might well scare a peaceable person. Very terrible must Jack have looked as he trampled on those boards in the growing twilight, anon stopping to drink another tumbler of cham-



pagne, then groaning expressions of inarticulate wrath, and again sinking down on Clive's bed with a drooping head and breaking voice, crying, "Poor little thing; poor little devil."

"If the old man sends me a message, you will stand by me, won't you, Newcome? He was a fierce old fellow in his time, and I have seen him shoot straight enough at Chanticlere. I suppose you know what the affair is about?"

"I never heard of it before, but I think I understand," says Clive gravely.

"I can't ask Kew, he is one of the family; he is going to marry Miss Newcome. It is no use asking him."

All Clive's blood tingled at the idea that any man was going to marry Miss Newcome. He knew it before—a fortnight since, and it was nothing to him to hear it. He was glad that the growing darkness prevented his face from being seen. "I am of the family, too," said Clive, "and Barnes Newcome and I had the same grandfather."

"Oh, yes, old boy—old banker, the weaver, what was he? I forgot," says poor Jack, kicking on Clive's bed, "in that family the Newcomes don't count. I beg your pardon," groans poor Jack.

They lapse into silence, during which Jack's cigar glimmers from the twilight corner where Clive's bed is; while Clive wafts his fragrance out of the window where he sits, and whence he has a view of Lady Ann Newcome's windows to the right, over the bridge across the little rushing river, at the Hôtel de Hollande hard by. The lights twinkle in the booths under the pretty lime avenues. The hum of distant voices is heard; the gambling palace is all in a blaze; it is an assembly night, and from the doors of the conversation rooms, as they open and close, escape gusts of harmony. Behind, on the little hill, the darkling woods lie calm, the edges of the fir trees cut sharp against the sky, which is clear with a crescent moon and the lambent lights of the starry hosts of Heaven. Clive does not see pine-robed hills and shining stars, nor think of pleasure in its palace yonder, nor of pain writhing on his own bed within a few feet of him, where poor Belsize was groaning. His eyes are fixed upon a window whence comes the red light of a lamp, across which shadows float now and again. So every light in every booth yonder has a scheme of its own; every star above shines by itself; and each individual heart of ours goes on brightening with its own hopes, burning with its own desires, and quivering with its own pain.

The reverie is interrupted by the waiter, who announces M. le Vicomte de Florac, and a third cigar is added to the other two smoky lights. Belsize is glad to see Florac, whom he has known in a thousand haunts. "He will do my business for me. He has been out half a dozen times," thinks Jack. It would relieve the poor fellow's boiling blood that someone would let a little out. He lays his affair before Florac; he expects a message from Lord Dorking.

"Comment donc?" cries Florac; "il y avait donc quelque chose! Cette pauvre petite Miss! Vous voulez tuer le père, après avoir délaissé la fille? Cherchez d'autres témoins, monsieur. Le Vicomte de Florac ne se fait pas complice de telles lâchetés."

"By Heaven," says Jack, sitting up on the bed, with his eyes glaring, "I have a great mind, Florac, to wring your infernal little neck and to fling you out of the window. Is all the world going to turn against me? I am half mad as it is. If any man dares to think anything wrong regarding that little angel, or to fancy that she is not as pure, and as good, and as gentle, and as innocent, by Heaven, as any angel there—if any man thinks I'd be the villain to hurt her, I should just like to see him," says Jack. "By the Lord, sir, just bring him to me. Just tell the waiter to send him upstairs. Hurt her! I hurt her! Oh, I'm a fool! a fool! a d—d fool! Who's that?"

"It's Kew," says a voice out of the darkness from behind cigar No. 4, and Clive now, having a party assembled, scrapes a match and lights his candles.

"I heard your last words, Jack," Lord Kew says bluntly, "and you never spoke more truth in your life. Why did you come here? What right had you to stab that poor little heart over again, and frighten Lady Clara with your confounded hairy face? You promised me you would never see her. You gave your word of honor you wouldn't when I gave you the money to go abroad. Hang the money, I don't mind that; it was on your promise that you would prowl about her no more. The Dorkings left London before you came there; they gave you your innings. They have behaved kindly and fairly enough to that poor girl. How was she to marry such a bankrupt beggar as you are? What you have done is a shame, Charley Belsize. I tell you it is unmanly and cowardly."

"Pst," says Florac, "numero deux, voila le mot lâche."

"Don't bite your thumb at me," Kew went on. "I know



you could thrash me, if that's what you mean by shaking your fists; so could most men. I tell you again—you have done a bad deed; you have broken your word of honor, and you knocked down Clara Pulleyn to-day as cruelly as if you had done it with your hand."

With this rush upon him, and fiery assault of Kew, Belsize was quite bewildered. The huge man flung up his great arms, and let them drop at his side as a gladiator that surrenders, and asks for pity. He sank down once more on the iron bed.

"I don't know," says he, rolling and rolling round, in one of his great hands, one of the brass knobs of the bed by which he was seated. "I don't know, Frank," says he, "what the world is coming to, or me either; here is twice in one night I have been called a coward by you, and by that little what'd-you-call-'m. I beg your pardon, Florac. I don't know whether it is very brave in you to hit a chap when he is down; hit again, I have no friends. I have acted like a blackguard, I own that; I did break my promise; you had that safe enough, Frank, my boy; but I did not think it would hurt her to see me," says he, with a dreadful sob in his voice. "By—I would have given ten years of my life to look at her. I was going mad without her. I tried every place, everything; went to Ems, to Wiesbaden, to Hombourg, and played like hell. It used to excite me once, and now I don't care for it. I won no end of money—no end for a poor beggar like me, that is; but I couldn't keep away. I couldn't, and if she had been at the North Pole, by heavens I would have followed her."

"And so just to look at her, just to give your confounded stupid eyes two minutes' pleasure, you must bring about all this pain, you great baby," cries Kew, who was very soft-hearted, and in truth quite torn himself by the sight of poor Jack's agony.

"Get me to see her for five minutes, Kew," cries the other, griping his comrade's hand in his; "but for five minutes."

"For shame," cries Lord Kew, shaking away his hand; "be a man, Jack, and have no more of this puling. It's not a baby, that must have its toy, and cries because it can't get it. Spare the poor girl this pain, for her own sake, and balk yourself of the pleasure of bullying and making her unhappy."

Belsize started up with looks that were by no means pleasant. "There's enough of this chaff. I have been called names, and blackguarded quite sufficiently for one sitting. I shall act as I please. I choose to take my own way, and if any gentle-

man stops me he has full warning." And he fell to tugging his mustaches, which were of a dark tawny hue, and looked as warlike as he had ever done on any field-day.

"I take the warning!" said Lord Kew. "And if I know the way you are going, as I think I do, I will do my best to stop you, madman as you are! You can hardly propose to follow her to her own doorway and pose yourself before your mistress as the murderer of her father, like Rodrigue in the French play. If Rooster were here it would be his business to defend his sister; in his absence I will take the duty on myself, and I say to you, Charles Belsize, in the presence of these gentlemen, that any man who insults this young lady, who persecutes her with his presence, knowing it can but pain her, who persists in following her when he has given his word of honor to avoid her, that such a man is——"

"What, my Lord Kew?" cries Belsize, whose chest began to heave.

"You know what," answers the other. "You know what a man is who insults a poor woman, and breaks his word of honor. Consider the word said, and act upon it as you think fit."

"I owe you four thousand pounds, Kew," says Belsize, "and I have got four thousand on the bills, besides four hundred when I came out of that place."

"You insult me the more," cries Kew, flashing out, "by alluding to the money. If you will leave this place to-morrow, well and good; if not, you will please to give me a meeting. Mr. Newcome, will you be so kind as to act as my friend? We are connections, you know, and this gentleman chooses to insult a lady who is about to become one of our family."

"C'est bien, milord. Ma foi! c'est d'agir en vrai gentil-homme," says Florac, delighted. "Touchez-là, mon petit Kiou. Tu as du coeur. Godam! you are a brave! A brave fellow!" and the Viscount reached out his hand cordially to Lord Kew.

His purpose was evidently pacific. From Kew he turned to the great guardsman, and taking him by the coat began to apostrophize him. "And you, mon gros," says he, "is there no way of calming this hot blood without a saignée? Have you a penny to the world? Can you hope to carry off your Chimène, O Rodrigue, and live by robbing afterward on the great way? Suppose you kill ze Fazér, you kill Kiou, you kill Roostere, your Chimène will have a pretty moon of honey."

"What the devil do you mean about your Chimène and



your Rodrigue? What do you mean, Viscount?" says Belsize, Jack Belsize once more, and he dashed his hand across his eyes. "Kew has riled me and he drove me half wild. I ain't much of a Frenchman, but I know enough of what you said, to say it's true, by Jove, and that Frank Kew's a trump. That's what you mean. Give us your hand, Frank. God bless you, old boy; don't be too hard upon me, you know I'm d—d miserable, that I am. Hullo. What's this?" Jack's pathetic speech was interrupted at this instant, for the Vicomte de Florac in his enthusiasm rushed into his arms, and jumped up toward his face and proceeded to kiss Jack. A roar of immense laughter, as he shook the little Viscount off, cleared the air and ended this quarrel.

Everybody joined in this chorus, the Frenchman with the rest, who said, "he loved to laugh *même* when he did not know why." And now came the moment of the evening, when Clive, according to Lord Kew's saying, behaved so well and prevented Barnes from incurring a great danger. In truth, what Mr. Clive did or said amounted exactly to nothing. What moments can we not all remember in our lives when it would have been so much wittier and wiser to say and do nothing?

Florac, a very sober drinker like most of his nation, was blessed with a very fine appetite, which, as he said, renewed itself thrice a day at least. He now proposed supper, and poor Jack was for supper too, and especially more drink, champagne and seltzer water; "bring champagne and seltzer water, there is nothing like it." Clive could not object to this entertainment, which was ordered forthwith, and the four young men sat down to share it.

While Florac was partaking of his favorite *écrevisses*, giving not only his palate but his hands, his beard, his mustaches and cheeks a full enjoyment of the sauce which he found so delicious, he chose to revert now and again to the occurrences which had just passed, and which had better perhaps have been forgotten, and gayly rallied Belsize upon his warlike humor. "If *ze petit prétendu* was here, what would you have done wiz him, Jac? You would croquer 'im, like *zis écrevisse*, hein? You would mache his bones, hein?"

Jack, who had forgotten to put the seltzer water into his champagne, writhed at the idea of having Barnes Newcome before him, and swore, could he but see Barnes, he would take the little villain's life.

And but for Clive, Jack might actually have beheld his

enemy. Young Clive after the meal went to the window with his eternal cigar, and of course began to look at That Other window. Here, as he looked, a carriage had at the moment driven up. He saw two servants descend, then two gentlemen, and then he heard a well-known voice swearing at the couriers. To his credit be it said he checked the exclamation which was on his lips, and when he came back to the table did not announce to Kew or his right-hand neighbor Belsize that his uncle and Barnes had arrived. Belsize, by this time, had had quite too much wine; when the Viscount went away, poor Jack's head was nodding; he had been awake all the night before; sleepless for how many nights previous. He scarce took any notice of the Frenchman's departure.

Lord Kew remained. He was for taking Jack to walk, and for reasoning with him farther, and for entering more at large than perhaps he chose to do before the two others upon this family dispute. Clive took a moment to whisper to Lord Kew, "My uncle and Barnes are arrived, don't let Belsize go out; for goodness' sake let us get him to bed."

And, lest the poor fellow should take a fancy to visit his mistress by moonlight, when he was safe in his room Lord Kew softly turned the key in Mr. Jack's door.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### A RETREAT.

As Clive lay awake, revolving the strange incidents of the day, and speculating upon the tragedy in which he had been suddenly called to take a certain part, a sure presentiment told him that his own happy holiday was come to an end, and that the clouds and storm which he had always somehow foreboded, were about to break and obscure this brief pleasant period of sunshine. He rose at a very early hour, flung his windows open, looked out no doubt toward those other windows in the neighboring hotel, where he may have fancied he saw a curtain stirring, drawn by a hand that every hour now he longed more to press. He turned back into his chamber with a sort of groan, and surveyed some of the relics of the last night's little feast, which still remained on the table. There were the champagne flasks which poor Jack Belsize had emp-