

"Why, you stupid lad, don't you see it is Charles Honeyman the girl's in love with?" cried Uncle James. "Rosey saw it in the very first instant we entered their drawing room three weeks ago."

"Indeed, and how?" asked Clive.

"By—by the way she looked at him," said little Rosey.

CHAPTER VII.

A STAG OF TEN.

The London season was very nearly come to an end, and Lord Farintosh had danced I don't know how many times with Miss Newcome, had drunk several bottles of the old Kew port, had been seen at numerous breakfasts, operas, races, and public places by the young lady's side, and had not as yet made any such proposal as Lady Kew expected for her granddaughter. Clive going to see his military friends in the Regent's Park once, and finish Captain Butts' portrait in barracks, heard two or three young men talking, and one say to another, "I bet you three to two Farintosh don't marry her, and I bet you even that he don't ask her." And as he entered Mr. Butts' room, where these gentlemen were conversing, there was a silence and an awkwardness. The young fellows were making an "event" out of Ethel's marriage, and sporting their money freely on it.

To have an old countess hunting a young marquis so resolutely that all the world should be able to look on and speculate whether her game would be run down by that staunch, toothless old pursuer—that is an amusing sport, isn't it? and affords plenty of fun and satisfaction to those who follow the hunt. But for a heroine of a story, be she ever so clever, handsome, and sarcastic, I don't think for my part, at this present stage of the tale, Miss Ethel Newcome occupies a very dignified position. To break her heart in silence for Tomkins, who is in love with another; to suffer no end of poverty, starvation, capture by ruffians, ill-treatment by a bullying husband, loss of beauty by the small-pox, death even at the end of the volume—all these mishaps a young heroine may endure (and has endured in romances over and over again), without losing the least dignity, or suffering any diminution of the

sentimental reader's esteem. But a girl of great beauty, high temper, and stronger natural intellect, who submits to be dragged hither and thither in an old grandmother's leash, and in pursuit of a husband who will run away from the couple—such a person, I say, is in a very awkward position as a heroine; and I declare if I had another ready to my hand (and unless there were extenuating circumstances), Ethel should be deposed at this very sentence.

But a novelist must go on with his heroine, as a man with his wife, for better or worse, and to the end. For how many years have the Spaniards borne with their gracious queen, not because she was faultless, but because she was there. So, Chambers and grandees cried, "God save her," Alabarderos turned out, drums beat, cannons fired, and the people saluted Isabella Segunda, who was no better than the humblest wash-woman of her subjects. Are we much better than our neighbors? Do we never yield to our peculiar temptation, our pride, or our avarice, or our vanity, or what not? Ethel is very wrong certainly. But recollect, she is very young. She is in other people's hands. She has been bred up and governed by a very worldly family, and taught their traditions. We would hardly, for instance—the staunchest Protestant in England would hardly be angry with poor Isabella Segunda for being a Catholic. So if Ethel worships at a certain image which a great number of good folks in England bow to, let us not be too angry with her idolatry, and bear with our queen a little longer before we make our pronunciamiento.

No, Miss Newcome, yours is not a dignified position in life, however you may argue that hundreds of people in the world are doing like you. Oh, me! what a confession it is, in the very outset of life and blushing brightness of youth's morning, to own that the aim with which a young girl sets out, and the object of her existence, is to marry a rich man; that she was endowed with beauty so that she might buy wealth, and a title with it; that, as sure as she has a soul to be saved, her business here on earth is to try and get a rich husband. That is the career for which many a woman is bred and trained. A young man begins the world with some aspirations at least; he will try to be good and follow the truth; he will strive to win honors for himself, and never do a base action; he will pass nights over his books, and forego ease and pleasure so that he may achieve a name. Many a poor wretch who is worn out now and old, and bankrupt of fame and money too, has com-

menced life at any rate with noble views and generous schemes, from which weakness, idleness, passion, or overpowering hostile fortune has turned him away. But a girl of the world, *bon Dieu!* the doctrine with which she begins is that she is to have a wealthy husband; the article of faith in her catechism is, "I believe in elder sons, and a house in town, and a house in the country!" They are mercenary as they step fresh and blooming into the world out of the nursery. They have been schooled there to keep their bright eyes to look only on the Prince and the Duke, Croesus and Dives. By long cramping and careful process, their little natural hearts have been squeezed up, like the feet of their fashionable little sisters in China. As you see a pauper's child, with an awful premature knowledge of the pawn shop, able to haggle at market with her wretched halfpence, and battle bargains at hucksters' stalls, you shall find a young beauty, who was a child in the schoolroom a year since, as wise and knowing as the old practitioners on that exchange; as economical of her smiles, as dexterous in keeping back or producing her beautiful wares, as skillful in setting one bidder against another, as keen as the smartest merchant in Vanity Fair.

If the young gentlemen of the Life Guards Green who were talking about Miss Newcome and her suitors were silent when Clive appeared among them, it was because they were aware not only of his relationship to the young lady, but his unhappy condition regarding her. Certain men there are who never tell their love, but let concealment, like a worm in the bud, feed on their damask cheeks; others again must be not always thinking, but talking about the darling object. So it was not very long before Captain Crackthorpe was taken into Clive's confidence, and through Crackthorpe very likely the whole mess became acquainted with his passion. These young fellows, who had been early introduced into the world, gave Clive small hopes of success, putting to him, in their downright phraseology, the point of which he was already aware, that Miss Newcome was intended for his superiors, and that he had best not make his mind uneasy by sighing for those beautiful grapes which were beyond his reach.

But the good-natured Crackthorpe, who had a pity for the young painter's condition, helped him so far (and gained Clive's warmest thanks for his good offices), by asking admission for Clive to certain evening parties of the beau-monde, where he had the gratification of meeting his charmer. Ethel

was surprised and pleased, and Lady Kew surprised and angry, at meeting Clive Newcome at these fashionable houses; the girl herself was touched very likely at his pertinacity in following her. As there was no actual feud between them, she could not refuse now and again to dance with her cousin; and thus he picked up such small crumbs of consolation as a youth in his state can get; lived upon six words vouchsafed to him in a quadrille, or brought home a glance of the eyes which she had presented to him in a waltz, or the remembrance of a squeeze of the hand on parting or meeting. How eager he was to get a card to this party or that! how attentive to the givers of such entertainments! Some friends of his accused him of being a tuft hunter and flatterer of the aristocracy, on account of his politeness to certain people; the truth was, he wanted to go wherever Miss Ethel was; and the ball was blank to him which she did not attend.

This business occupied not only one season, but two. By the time of the second season, Mr. Newcome had made so many acquaintances that he needed few more introductions into society. He was very well known as a good-natured, handsome young man, and a very good waltzer, the only son of an Indian officer of large wealth, who chose to devote himself to painting, and who was supposed to entertain an unhappy fondness for his cousin the beautiful Miss Newcome. Kind folks who had heard of this little *tendre*, and were sufficiently interested in Mr. Clive, asked him to their houses in consequence. I dare say those people who were good to him may have been themselves at one time unlucky in their own love affairs.

When the first season ended without a declaration from my lord, Lady Kew carried off her young lady to Scotland, where it also so happened that Lord Farintosh was going to shoot, and people made what surmises they chose upon this coincidence. Surmises, why not? You who know the world, know very well that if you see Mrs. So-and-so's name in the list of people at an entertainment, on looking down the list you will presently be sure to come on Mr. What-d'-you-call'em's. If Lord and Lady Blank of Such-and-such Castle received a distinguished circle (including Lady Dash), for Christmas or Easter, without reading farther the names of the guests you may venture on any wager that Captain Asterisk is one of the company. These coincidences happen every day; and some people are so anxious to meet other people, and so irresistible

is the magnetic sympathy I suppose, that they will travel hundreds of miles in the worst of weather to see their friends, and break your door open almost, provided the friend is inside it.

I am obliged to own the fact, that for many months Lady Kew hunted after Lord Farintosh. This rheumatic old woman went to Scotland, where, as he was pursuing the deer, she stalked his lordship; from Scotland she went to Paris, where he was taking lessons in dancing at the Chaumière; from Paris to an English country-house, for Christmas, where he was expected but didn't come—not being, his professor said, quite complete in the polka; and so on. If Ethel were privy to these maneuvers, or anything more than an unwittingly consenting party, I say we would depose her from her place of heroine at once. But she was acting under her grandmother's orders, a most imperious, irresistible, managing old woman, who exacted everybody's obedience, and managed everybody's business in her family. Lady Ann Newcome being in attendance on her sick husband, Ethel was consigned to the Countess of Kew, her grandmother, who hinted that she should leave Ethel her property when dead, and while alive expected the girl should go about with her. She had and wrote as many letters as a secretary of state almost. She was accustomed to set off without taking anybody's advice, or announcing her departure until within an hour or two of the event. In her train moved Ethel, against her own will, which would have led her to stay at home with her father, but at the special wish and order of her parents. Was such a sum as that of which Lady Kew had the disposal (Hobson Brothers knew the amount of it quite well) to be left out of the family? Forbid it all ye powers! Barnes—who would have liked the money himself, and said truly that he would live with his grandmother anywhere she liked if he could get it—Barnes joined most energetically with Sir Brian and Lady Ann in ordering Ethel's obedience to Lady Kew. You know how difficult it is for one young woman not to acquiesce when the family council strongly orders. In fine, I hope there was a good excuse for the queen of this history, and that it was her wicked, domineering old prime minister who led her wrong. Otherwise, I say, we would have another dynasty. Oh, to think of a generous nature, and the world, and nothing but the world to occupy it!—of a brave intellect, and the milliner's band-boxes, and the scandal of the coteries, and the fiddle-faddle etiquette of the court for its sole exercise; of the rush and

hurry from entertainment to entertainment; of the constant smiles and cares of representation; of the prayerless rest at night, and the awaking to a godless morrow! This was the course of life to which Fate, and not her own fault altogether, had for a while handed over Ethel Newcome. Let those pity her who can feel their own weakness and misgoing; let those punish her who are without fault themselves.

Clive did not offer to follow her to Scotland. He knew quite well that the encouragement he had had was only of the smallest; that as a relation she received him frankly and kindly enough, but checked him when he would have adopted another character. But it chanced that they met in Paris, whither he went in the Easter of the ensuing year, having worked to some good purpose through the winter, and dispatched, as on a former occasion, his three or four pictures to take their chance at the Exhibition.

Of these, it is our pleasing duty to be able to corroborate, to some extent, Mr. F. Bayham's favorable report. Fancy sketches and historical pieces our young man had eschewed; having convinced himself either that he had not an epic genius, or that to draw portraits of his friends was a much easier task than that which he had set himself formerly. While all the world was crowding round a pair of J. J.'s little pictures, a couple of chalk heads were admitted into the Exhibition (his great picture of Captain Crackthorpe on horseback, in full uniform, I must own, was ignominiously rejected), and the friends of the parties had the pleasure of recognizing, in the miniature room, No. 1246, "Portrait of an Officer," viz., Augustus Butts, Esq., of the Life Guards Green; and "Portrait of the Rev. Charles Honeyman," No. 1272. Miss Sherrick the hangers refused; Mr. Binnie, Clive had spoiled, as usual, in the painting; the chalk heads, however, before named, were voted to be faithful likenesses, and executed in a very agreeable and spirited manner. F. Bayham's criticism on these performances, it need not be said, was tremendous. Since the days of Michael Angelo, you would have thought there never had been such drawings. In fact F. B., as some other critics do, clapped his friends so boisterously on the back, and trumpeted their merits with such prodigious energy, as to make his friends themselves sometimes uneasy.

Mr. Clive, whose good father was writing home more and more wonderful accounts of the Bundelcund Bank in which he had engaged, and who was always pressing his son to draw for

more money, treated himself to comfortable rooms in Paris, at the very same hotel where the young Marquis of Farintosh occupied lodgings much more splendid, and where he lived, no doubt, so as to be near the professor who was still teaching his lordship the polka. Indeed it must be said that Lord Farintosh made great progress under this artist, and that he danced very much better in his third season than in the first and second years after he had come upon the town. From the same instructor the Marquis learned the latest novelties in French conversation, the choicest oaths and phrases (for which he was famous), so that, although his French grammar was naturally defective, he was enabled to order a dinner at Philippe's, and to bully a waiter or curse a hackney coachman with extreme volubility. A young nobleman of his rank was received with the distinction which was his due by the French sovereign at that period; and at the Tuileries, and the houses of the French nobility which he visited, M. le Marquis de Farintosh excited considerable remark by the use of some of the phrases which his young professor had taught to him. People even went so far as to say that the Marquis was an awkward and dull young man of the very worst manners.

Whereas the young Clive Newcome—and it comforted the poor fellow's heart somewhat, and, be sure, pleased Ethel, who was looking on at his triumphs—was voted the most charming young Englishman who had been seen for a long time in our salons. Mme. de Florac, who loved him as a son of her own, actually went once or twice into the world in order to see his début. Mme. de Montcontour inhabited a part of the Hôtel de Florac and received society there. The French people did not understand what bad English she talked, though they comprehended Lord Farintosh's French blunders. "M. Newcome is an artist! What a noble career!" cries a great French lady, the wife of a marshal, to the astonished Miss Newcome. "This young man is the cousin of the charming mees? You must be proud to possess such a nephew, madame!" says another French lady to the Countess of Kew—who, you may be sure, is delighted to have such a relative. And the French lady invites Clive to her reception, expressly in order to make herself agreeable to the old Comtesse. Before the cousins have been three minutes together in Mme. de Florac's salon, she sees that Clive is in love with Ethel Newcome. She takes the boy's hand and says, "*J'ai votre secret, mon ami*"; and her eyes regard him for a moment as

fondly, as tenderly, as ever they looked at his father. Oh, what tears have they shed, gentle eyes! Oh, what faith has it kept, tender heart! If love lives through all life; and survives through all sorrow; and remains steadfast with us through all changes; and in all darkness of spirit burns brightly; and if we die deplores us forever and loves still equally; and exists with the very last gasp and throb of the faithful bosom—whence it passes with the pure soul beyond death; surely it shall be immortal! Though we who remain are separated from it, is it not ours in heaven? If we love still those we lose, can we altogether lose those we love? Forty years have passed away. Youth and dearest memories revisit her, and hope almost wakes up again out of its grave, as the constant lady holds the young man's hand and looks at the son of Thomas Newcome.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HOTEL DE FLORAC.

Since the death of the Duc d'Ivry, the husband of Mary Queen of Scots, the Comte de Florac, who is now the legitimate owner of the ducal title, does not choose to bear it, but continues to be known in the world by his old name. The old Count's world is very small. His doctor, and his director, who comes daily to play his game of piquet; his daughter's children, who amuse him by their laughter, and play round his chair in the garden of his hotel; his faithful wife and one or two friends as old as himself form his society. His son, the Abbé, is with them but seldom. The austerity of his manners frightens his old father, who can little comprehend the religionism of the new school. After going to hear his son preach through Lent at Notre Dame, where the Abbé de Florac gathered a great congregation, the old Count came away quite puzzled at his son's declamations. "I do not understand your new priests," he says; "I knew my son had become a Cordelier; I went to hear him, and found he was a Jacobin. Let me make my salut in quiet, my good Léonore. My director answers for me, and plays a game of trictrac into the bargain with me." Our history has but little to do with this venerable nobleman. He has his chamber looking out into the garden