

ners, I am sure, are excellent, and your child, madam, is as healthy as it possibly can be."

"Blessed darling! Yes!" (Blessed darling crows, moos, jumps in his nurse's arms, and holds out a little mottled hand for a biscuit of Savoy, which mamma supplies.) "I can't help thinking, Arthur, that Rosey would have been much happier as Mrs. Hoby than she will be as Mrs. Newcome."

"Who thinks of her being Mrs. Newcome?"

"Her mother, her uncle, and Clive's father. Since the Colonel has been so rich, I think Mrs. Mackenzie sees a great deal of merit in Clive. Rosey will do anything her mother bids her. If Clive can be brought to the same obedience, Uncle James and the Colonel will be delighted. Uncle James has set his heart on this marriage. (He and his sister agree upon this point.) He told me last night that he would sing '*Nunc dimittis*,' could he but see the two children happy; and that he should lie easier in purgatory if that could be brought about."

"And what did you say, Laura?"

"I laughed, and told Uncle James I was of the Hoby faction. He is very good-natured, frank, honest, and gentleman-like, Mr. Hoby. But Uncle James said he thought Mr. Hoby was so—well, so stupid, that his Rosey would be thrown away upon the poor Captain. So I did not tell Uncle James that before Clive's arrival Rosey had found Captain Hoby far from stupid. He used to sing duets with her, he used to ride with her, before Clive came. Last winter, when they were at Pau, I feel certain Miss Rosey thought Captain Hoby very pleasant indeed. She thinks she was attached to Clive formerly, and now she admires him, and is dreadfully afraid of him. He is taller and handsomer, and richer and cleverer than Captain Hoby, certainly."

"I should think so, indeed," breaks out Mr. Pendennis. "Why, my dear, Clive is as fine a fellow as one can see on a summer's day. It does one good to look at him. What a pair of frank, bright blue eyes he has, or used to have, till this mishap overclouded them! What a pleasant laugh he has! What a well-built, agile figure it is—what pluck, and spirit, and honor there is about my young chap! I don't say he is a genius of the highest order, but he is the stanchest, the bravest, the cheeriest, the most truth-telling, the kindest heart. Compare him and Hoby! Why, Clive is an eagle, and yonder little creature a mousing owl!"

"I like to hear you speak so," cries Mrs. Laura very tenderly. "People say that you are always sneering, Arthur, but I know my husband better. We know papa better, don't we, baby?" (Here my wife kisses the infant Pendennis with great effusion, who has come up dancing in his nurse's arms.) "But," says she, coming back and snuggling by her husband's side again—"But suppose your favorite Clive is an eagle, Arthur, don't you think he had better have an eagle for a mate? If he were to marry little Rosey, I dare say he would be very good to her; but I think neither he nor she would be very happy. My dear, she does not care for his pursuits; she does not understand him when he talks. The two captains, and Rosey and I, and the campaigner, as you call her, laugh, and talk, and prattle, and have the merriest little jokes with one another, and we all are as quiet as mice when you and Clive come in."

"What, am I an eagle too? I have no aquiline pretensions at all, Mrs. Pendennis."

"No. Well, we are not afraid of you. We are not afraid of papa; are we, darling?" this young woman now calls out to the other member of her family; who, if you will calculate, has just had time to be walked twice up and down the deck of the steamer, while Laura has been making her speech about eagles. And soon the mother, child, and attendant descend into the lower cabins; and then dinner is announced, and Captain Jackson treats us to champagne from his end of the table; and yet a short while, and we are at sea, and conversation becomes impossible; and morning sees us under the gray London sky, and amid the million of masts in the Thames.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### ROSEBURY AND NEWCOME.

The friends to whom we were engaged in England were Florac and his wife, Mme. la Princesse de Montcontour, who were determined to spend the Christmas holidays at the Princess' country seat. It was for the first time since their reconciliation that the Prince and Princess dispensed their hospitalities at the latter's château. It is situated, as the reader has already been informed, at some five miles from the town

of Newcome; away from the chimneys and smoky atmosphere of that place, in a sweet country of rural woodlands; over which quiet villages, gray church spires, and ancient gabled farmhouses are scattered; still wearing the peaceful aspect which belonged to them when Newcome was as yet but an antiquated country town, before mills were erected on its river banks, and dyes and cinders blackened its stream. Twenty years since, Newcome Park was the only great house in that district; now scores of fine villas have sprung up in the suburb lying between the town and park. Newcome New Town, as everybody knows, has grown round the park-gates, and the new Town Hotel (where the railway station is) is a splendid structure in the Tudor style, more ancient in appearance than the park itself; surrounded by little antique villas with spiked gables, stacks of crooked chimneys, and plate glass windows looking upon trim lawns; with glistening hedges of ever-greens, spotless gravel walks, and Elizabethan gig houses. Under the great railway viaduct of the New Town goes the old, tranquil, winding London highroad, once busy with a score of gay coaches and ground by innumerable wheels; but at a few miles from the New Town Station the road has become so moldy that the grass actually grows on it; and Rosebury, Mme. de Montcontour's house, stands at one end of a village green, which is even more quiet now than it was a hundred years ago.

When first Mme. de Florac bought the place, it scarcely ranked among the county houses; and she, the sister of manufacturers at Newcome and Manchester, did not, of course, visit the county families. A homely little body, married to a Frenchman, from whom she was separated, may or may not have done a great deal of good in her village, have had pretty gardens, and won prizes at the Newcome flower and fruit shows; but, of course, she was nobody in such an aristocratic county as we all know — shire is. She had her friends and relatives from Newcome. Many of them were Quakers — many were retail shopkeepers. She even frequented the little branch Ebenezer on Rosebury Green; and it was only by her charities and kindness at Christmas time that the Rev. Dr. Potter, the rector at Rosebury, knew her. The old clergy, you see, live with the county families. Good little Mme. de Florac was pitied and patronized by the Doctor; treated with no little superciliousness by Mrs. Potter and the young ladies, who only kept the first society. Even when her rich

brother died, and she got her share of all that money, Mrs. Potter said poor Mme. de Florac did well in not trying to move out of her natural sphere. (Mrs. P. was the daughter of a bankrupt hatter in London, and had herself been governess in a noble family, out of which she married Mr. P., who was a private tutor.) Mme. de Florac did well, she said, not to endeavor to leave her natural sphere, and that The County never would receive her. Tom Potter, the rector's son, with whom I had the good fortune to be a fellow student at Saint Boniface College, Oxbridge — a rattling, forward, and, it must be owned, vulgar youth — asked me whether Florac was not a billiard marker by profession? and was even so kind as to caution his sisters not to speak of billiards before the lady of Rosebury. Tom was surprised to learn that M. Paul de Florac was a gentleman of lineage incomparably better than that of any except two or three families in England (including your own, my dear and respected reader, of course, if you hold to your pedigree). But the truth is, heraldically speaking, that union with the Higgs of Manchester was the first misalliance which the Florac family had made for long years. Not that I would wish for a moment to insinuate that any nobleman is equal to an English nobleman; nay, that an English snob, with a coat of arms bought yesterday or stolen out of Edmonston, or a pedigree purchased from a peerage-maker, has not a right to look down upon any of your paltry foreign nobility.

One day the carriage-and-four came in state from Newcome Park, with the well-known chaste liveries of the Newcomes, and drove up Rosebury Green toward the parsonage gate, where Mrs. and the Miss Potters happened to be standing, cheapening fish from a donkeyman with whom they were in the habit of dealing. The ladies were in their pokiest old headgear and most dingy gowns when they perceived the carriage approaching; and considering, of course, that the visit of the Park people was intended for them, dashed into the rectory to change their clothes, leaving Rowkins, the costermonger, in the very midst of the negotiation about the three mackerel. Mamma got that new bonnet out of the handbox; Lizzy and Liddy skipped up to their bedroom, and brought out those dresses which they wore at the déjeuner at the Newcome Athenaeum, when Lord Leveret came down to lecture; into which they no sooner had hooked their lovely shoulders than they reflected with terror that mamma had

been altering one of papa's flannel waistcoats, and had left it in the drawing room when they were called out by the song of Rowkins and the appearance of his donkey's ears over the green gate of the rectory. To think of the Park people coming, and the drawing room in that dreadful state!

But when they came downstairs the Park people were not in the room—the woolen garment was still on the table (how they plunged it into the chiffonier!)—and the only visitor was Rowkins, the costermonger, grinning at the open French windows, with the three mackerel, and crying, "Make it sixpence, miss—don't say fippens, ma'am, to a pore fellow that has a wife and family." So that the young ladies had to cry, "Impudence!" "Get away, you vulgar, insolent creature!" "Go round, sir, to the back door." "How dare you?" and the like; fearing lest Lady Ann Newcome, and young Ethel, and Barnes should enter in the midst of this ignoble controversy.

They never came at all—those Park people. How very odd! They passed the rectory gate; they drove on to Mme. de Florac's lodge. They went in. They stayed for half an hour, the horses driving round and round the gravel road before the house; and Mrs. Potter and the girls, speedily going to the upper chambers and looking out of the room where the maids slept, saw Lady Ann, Ethel, and Barnes walking with Mme. de Florac, going into the conservatories, issuing thence with MacWhirter, the gardener, bearing huge bunches of grapes and large fascies of flowers; they saw Barnes talking in the most respectful manner to Mme. de Florac; and when they went downstairs and had their work before them—Liddy her gilt music book, Lizzy her embroidered altar cloth, mamma her scarlet cloak for one of the old women—they had the agony of seeing over the railings the barouche whisk by, with the Park people inside and Barnes driving the four horses.

It was on that day when Barnes had determined to take up Mme. de Florac; when he was bent upon reconciling her to her husband. In spite of all Mrs. Potter's predictions, the county families did come and visit the manufacturer's daughter; and when Mme. de Florac became Mme. la Princesse de Montecontour, when it was announced that she was coming to stay at Rosebury for Christmas, I leave you to imagine whether the circumstance was or was not mentioned in the Newcome Sentinel and the Newcome Independent; and whether Rev. G. Potter, D. D., and Mrs. Potter did or did not call on the

Prince and Princess. I leave you to imagine whether the lady did or did not inspect all the alterations which Vinceer's people from Newcome were making at Rosebury House—the chaste yellow satin and gold of the drawing room—the carved oak for the dining room—the chintz for the bedrooms—the Princess' apartment—the Prince's apartment—the guests' apartment—the smoking room, gracious goodness!—the stables (these were under Tom Potter's superintendence), "and I'm dashed," says he one day, "if here doesn't come a billiard table!"

The house was most comfortably and snugly appointed from top to bottom; and thus it will be seen that Mr. and Mrs. Pendennis were likely to be in very good quarters for their Christmas of 184—.

Tom Potter was so kind as to call on me two days after our arrival, and to greet me in the Princess' pew at church on the previous day. Before desiring to be introduced to my wife, he requested me to present him to my friend the Prince. He called him your highness. His highness, who had behaved with exemplary gravity, save once when he shrieked an "ah!" as Miss Liddy led off the children in the organ loft in a hymn, and the whole pack went woefully out of tune, complimented M. Tom on the sermon of monsieur his father. Tom walked back with us to Rosebury Lodge gate. "Will you not come in, and make a party of billiard with me?" says his highness. "Ah, pardon! I forgot, you do not play the billiard the Sunday!" "Any other day, Prince, I shall be delighted," says Tom; and squeezed his highness' hand tenderly at parting. "Your comrade of college was he?" asks Florac. "My dear, what men are these comrades of college! What men are you English! My word of honor, there are some of them here—if I were to say to them, 'Wax my boots,' they would take them and wax them! Didst thou see how the Révérend eyed us during the sermon? He regarded us over his book, my word of honor."

Mme. de Florac said simply she wished the Prince would go and hear Mr. Jacob at the Ebenezer. Mr. Potter was not a good preacher certainly.

"Savez-vous qu'elle est furieusement belle la fille du Révérend?" whispered his highness to me. "I have made eyes at her during the sermon. They will be pretty neighbors, these meess!" and Paul looked unutterably roguish and victorious as he spoke. To my wife, I am bound to say, M. de

Montcontour showed a courtesy, a respect and kindness, that could not be exceeded. He admired her. He paid her compliments innumerable, and gave me, I am sure, sincere congratulations at possessing such a treasure. I do not think he doubted about his power of conquering her or any other of the daughters of women. But I was the friend of his misfortunes—his guest; and he spared me.

I have seen nothing more amusing, odd, and pleasant than Florac at this time of his prosperity. We arrived, as this veracious chronicle has already asserted, on a Saturday evening. We were conducted to our most comfortable apartments, with crackling fires blazing on the hearths, and every warmth of welcome. Florac expanded and beamed with good nature. He shook me many times by the hand; he patted me; he called me his good—his brave. He cried to his maître d'hôtel, "Frédéric, remember monsieur is master here! Run before his orders. Prostrate thyself to him. He was good to me in the days of my misfortune. Hearest thou, Frédéric? See that everything be done for M. Pendennis—for madame, sa charmante lady—for her angelic infant, and the bonne. None of thy garrison tricks with that young person Frédéric, vieux scélérat! Garde-toi de là, Frédéric; si non, je t'envoie à Botani Bay; je te traduis devant le Lord Maire!"

"En Angleterre je me fais Anglais, vois-tu, mon ami," continued the Prince. "Demain c'est Sunday, et tu vas voir! I hear the bell, dress thyself for the dinner—my friend!" Here there was another squeeze of both hands from the good-natured fellow. "It do good to my 'art to 'ave you in my 'ouse. Heuh!" He hugged his guest; he had tears in his eyes as he performed this droll, this kind embrace. Not less kind in her way, though less expansive and *embracive*, was Mme. de Montcontour to my wife, as I found on comparing notes with that young woman when the day's hospitalities were ended. The little Princess trotted from bedchamber to nursery to see that everything was made comfortable for her guests. She sat and saw the child washed and put to bed. She had never beheld such a little angel. She brought it a fine toy to play with. She and her grim old maid frightened the little creature at first, but it was very speedily reconciled to their countenances. She was in the nursery as early as the child's mother. "Ah!" sighed the poor little woman, "how happy you must be to have one." In fine, my wife was quite overcome by her goodness and welcome.

Sunday morning arrived in the course of time, and then Florac appeared as a most wonderful Briton indeed! He wore topboots and buckskins; and after breakfast, when he went to church, a white greatcoat with a little cape, in which garment he felt that his similarity to an English gentleman was perfect. In conversation with his grooms and servants he swore freely—not that he was accustomed to employ oaths in his own private talk, but he thought the employment of these expletives necessary, as an English country gentleman. He never dined without a roast beef, and insisted that the piece of meat should be bleeding, "as you love it, you others." He got up boxing matches, and kept birds for combats of cock. He assumed the sporting language with admirable enthusiasm—drove over to cover with a steppare—rode across contri like a good one—was splendid in the hunting field, in his velvet cap and Napoleon boots, and made the hunt welcome at Rosebury, where his good-natured little wife was as kind to the gentlemen in scarlet as she used to be of old to the stout dissenting gentlemen in black, who sang hymns and spake sermons on her lawn. These folks, scared at the change that had taken place in the little Princess' habits of life, lamented her falling away; but in the county she and her husband got a great popularity, and in Newcome town itself they were not less liked, for her benefactions were unceasing, and Paul's affability the theme of all praise. The Newcome Independent and the Newcome Sentinel both paid him compliments; the former journal contrasting his behavior with that of Sir Barnes, their Member. Florac's pleasure was to drive his princess with four horses into Newcome. He called his carriage his "trappe," his "drague." The street boys cheered and hurried the Prince as he passed through the town. One haberdasher had a yellow stock called "The Montcontour" displayed in his windows; another had a pink one marked "The Princely," and as such recommended it to the young Newcome gents.

The drague conveyed us once to the neighboring house of Newcome, whither my wife accompanied Mme. de Montcontour at that lady's own request, to whom Laura very properly did not think fit to confide her antipathy for Lady Clara Newcome. Coming away from a great house, how often she and I, egotistical philosophers, thanked our fates that our own home was a small one! How long will great houses last in this world? Do not their owners now prefer a lodging at

Brighton, or a little entresol on the Boulevard, to the solitary ancestral palace in a park barred round with snow? We were as glad to get out of Newcome as out of a prison. My wife and our hostess stepped into the carriage, and began to talk freely as the lodge gates closed after us. Would we be lords of such a place, under the penalty of living in it? We agreed that the little angle of earth called Fair Oaks was dearer to us than the clumsy Newcome pile of Tudor masonry. The house had been fitted up in the time of George IV. and the quasi-Gothic revival. We were made to pass through Gothic dining rooms, where there was no hospitality, Gothic drawing rooms shrouded in brown holland, to one little room at the end of the dusky suite, where Lady Clara sat alone, or in the company of the nurses and children. The blank gloom of the place had fallen upon the poor lady. Even when my wife talked about children (good-natured Mme. de Montcontour vaunting ours as a prodigy), Lady Clara did not brighten up! Her pair of young ones was exhibited and withdrawn. A something weighed upon the woman. We talked about Ethel's marriage. She said it was fixed for the new year, she believed. She did not know whether Glenlivat had been very handsomely fitted up. She had not seen Lord Farintosh's house in London. Sir Barnes came down once—twice—of a Saturday sometimes, for three or four days to hunt, to amuse himself, as all men do, she supposed. She did not know when he was coming again. She rang languidly when we rose to take leave, and sank back on her sofa, where lay a heap of French novels. "She has chosen some pretty books," says Paul, as we drove through the somber avenues, through the gray park, mists lying about the melancholy ornamental waters, dingy herds of huddled sheep speckling the grass here and there; no smoke rising up from the great stacks of chimneys of the building we were leaving behind us, save one little feeble thread of white, which we knew came from the fire by which the lonely mistress of Newcome was seated. "Ouf!" cries Florac, playing his whip, as the lodge gates closed on us, and his team of horses rattled merrily along the road. "What a blessing it is to be out of that vault of a place! There is something fatal in this house—in this woman. One smells misfortune there."

The hotel which our friend Florac patronized on occasions of his visits to Newcome was the King's Arms, and it happened one day, as we entered that place of entertainment in

company, that a visitor of the house was issuing through the hall, to whom Florac seemed as if he would administer one of his customary embraces, and to whom the Prince called out "Jack," with great warmth and kindness as he ran toward the stranger.

Jack did not appear to be particularly well pleased on beholding us—he rather retreated from before the Frenchman's advances.

"My dear Jack, my good, my brave 'Ighgate! I am delighted to see you!" Florac continues, regardless of the stranger's reception, or of the landlord's looks toward us, who was bowing the Prince into his very best room.

"How do you do, M. de Florac?" growls the newcomer surlily; and was for moving on after this brief salutation; but having a second thought seemingly, turned back and followed Florac into the apartment whither our host conducted us. *A la bonne heure!* Florac renewed his cordial greetings to Lord Highgate. "I knew not, *mon bon*, what fly had stung you," says he to my lord. The landlord, rubbing his hands, smirking and bowing, was anxious to know whether the Prince would take anything after his drive. As the Prince's attendant and friend, the luster of his reception partially illuminated me. When the chief was not by, I was treated with great attention (mingled with a certain degree of familiarity) by my landlord.

Lord Highgate waited until Mr. Taplow was out of the room, and then said to Florac, "Don't call me by my name here please, Florac. I am here incog."

"Plait-il," asks Florac, "where is incog?" He laughed when the word was interpreted to him. Lord Highgate had turned to me. "There was no rudeness, you understand, intended, Mr. Pendennis, but I am down here on some business, and don't care to wear the handle to my name. Fellows work it so, don't you understand? Never leave you at rest in a country town—that sort of thing. Heard of our friend Clive lately?"

"Whether you 'ave 'andle or no 'andle, Jack, you are always the *bien-venu* to me. What is thy affair? Old monster! I wager——"

"No, no; no such nonsense," says Jack rather eagerly. "I give you my honor, I—I want to—to raise a sum of money—that is, to invest some in a speculation down here—deuced good the speculations down here; and, by the way, if the landlord asks you, I'm Mr. Harris, I'm a civil engineer, I'm