

Highgate for his delinquencies, consoled the injured husband with immense damages, and left him free to pursue the farther steps for releasing himself altogether from the tie which had been bound with affecting Episcopal benediction at St. George's, Hanover Square.

So Lady Clara flies from the custody of her tyrant, but to what a rescue! The very man who loves her, and gives her asylum, pities and deplores her. She scarce dares to look out of the windows of her new home upon the world, lest it should know and reproach her. All her sisterhood of friendship is cut off from her. If she dares to go abroad she feels the sneer of the world as she goes through it, and knows that malice and scorn whisper behind her. People as criminal, but undiscovered, make room for her as if her touch were pollution. She knows she has darkened the lot and made wretched the home of the man whom she loves best; that his friends who see her treat her with but a doubtful respect; and the domestics who attend her, with a suspicious obedience. In the country lanes, or the streets of the county town, neighbors look aside as the carriage passes in which she sits splendid and lonely. Rough hunting companions of her husband come to her table—he is driven perforce to the company of flatterers and men of inferior sort; his equals, at least in his own home, will not live with him. She would be kind, perhaps, and charitable to the cottagers round about her, but she fears to visit them lest they, too, should scorn her. The clergyman who distributes her charities blushes and looks awkward on passing her in the village, if he should be walking with his wife or one of his children. Shall they go to the Continent, and set up a grand house at Paris or Florence? There they can get society, but of what a sort! Our acquaintances of Baden, Mme. Schlangenbad, and Mme. de Cruchecassée, and Mme. d'Ivry, and Messrs. Loder and Punter, and Blackball and Deuceace, will come and dance, and flirt, and quarrel, and gamble, and feast round about her; but what in common with such wild people has this poor, timid, shrinking soul? Even these scorn her. The leers and laughter on those painted faces are quite unlike her own sad countenance. She has no reply to their wit. Their infernal gayety scares her more than the solitude at home. No wonder that her husband does not like home, except for a short while in the hunting season. No wonder that he is away all day; how can he like a home which she has made so wretched? In the midst

of her sorrow, and doubt, and misery, a child comes to her; how she clings to it! how her whole being, and hope, and passion centers itself on this feeble infant! . . . but she no more belongs to our story; with the new name she has taken, the poor lady passes out of the history of the Newcomes.

If Barnes Newcome's children meet yonder solitary lady, do they know her? If her once husband thinks upon the unhappy young creature whom his cruelty drove from him, does his conscience affect his sleep at night? Why should Sir Barnes Newcome's conscience be more squeamish than his country's, which has put money in his pocket for having trampled on the poor weak young thing, and scorned her, and driven her to ruin? When the whole of the accounts of that wretched bankruptcy are brought up for final audit, which of the unhappy partners shall be shown to be most guilty? Does the Right Reverend Prelate who did the benedictory business for Barnes and Clara his wife repent in secret? Do the parents who pressed the marriage, and the fine folks who signed the book, and ate the breakfast, and applauded the bridegroom's speech, feel a little ashamed? O Hymen Hymenae! The bishops, beadles, clergy, pew openers, and other officers of the temple dedicated to Heaven under the invocation of St. George, will officiate in the same place at scores and scores more of such marriages; and St. George of England may behold virgin after virgin offered up to the devouring monster Mammon (with many most respectable female dragons looking on)—may see virgin after virgin given away, just as in the Soldan of Babylon's time, but with never a champion to come to the rescue!

CHAPTER XXI.

IN WHICH ACHILLES LOSES BRISEIS.

Although the years of the Marquis of Farintosh were few, he had spent most of them in the habit of command; and from his childhood upward, had been obeyed by all persons round about him. As an infant he had but to roar, and his mother and nurses were as much frightened as though he had been a Libyan lion. What he willed and ordered was law among his clan and family. During the period of his London

and Parisian dissipations his poor mother did not venture to remonstrate with her young prodigal, but shut her eyes, not daring to open them on his wild courses. As for the friends of his person and house, many of whom were portly elderly gentlemen, their affection for the young Marquis was so extreme that there was no company into which their fidelity would not lead them to follow him; and you might see him dancing at Mabile, with veteran aids-de-camp looking on, or disporting with opera dancers at a Trois-Frères banquet, which some old gentleman of his father's age had taken the pains to order. If his lordship Count Almaviva wants a friend to carry the lantern or to hold the ladder, do you suppose there are not many most respectable men in society who will act Figaro? When Farintosh thought fit, in the fullness of time and the blooming pride of manhood, to select a spouse, and to elevate a marchioness to his throne, no one dared gainsay him. When he called upon his mother, and sisters, and their ladyships' hangers-on and attendants; upon his own particular kinsmen, led captains, and toadies, to bow the knee and do homage to the woman whom he delighted to honor, those duteous subjects trembled and obeyed. In fact he thought that the position of a Marchioness of Farintosh was under heaven, and before men, so splendid that, had he elevated a beggar maid to that sublime rank, the inferior world was bound to worship her.

So my lord's lady mother, and my lord's sisters, and his captains, and his players of billiards, and the toadies of his august person all performed obeisance to his bride-elect, and never questioned the will of the young chieftain. What were the private comments of the ladies of the family, we had no means of knowing; but it may naturally be supposed that his lordship's gentlemen-in-waiting, Captain Henchman, Jack Todhunter and the rest, had many misgivings of their own respecting their patron's change in life, and could not view without anxiety the advent of a mistress who might reign over him and them, who might possibly not like their company, and might exert her influence over her husband to oust these honest fellows from places in which they were very comfortable. The jovial rogues had the run of my lord's kitchen, stables, cellars and cigar boxes. A new marchioness might hate hunting, smoking, jolly parties, and toadeaters in general, or might bring into the house favorites of her own. I am sure any kind-hearted man of the world must feel for the

position of these faithful, doubtful, disconsolate vassals, and have a sympathy for their rueful looks and demeanor as they eye the splendid preparations for the ensuing marriage, the grand furniture sent to my lord's castles and houses, the magnificent plate provided for his tables—tables at which they may never have a knife and fork; castles and houses of which the poor rogues may never be allowed to pass the doors.

When, then, the "Elopement in High Life," which has been described in the previous pages, burst upon the town in the morning papers, I can fancy the agitation which the news occasioned in the faithful bosoms of the generous Todhunter and the attached Henchman. My lord was not in his own house as yet. He and his friends still lingered on in the little house in May Fair, the dear little bachelor's quarters where they had enjoyed such good dinners, such good suppers, such rare doings, such a jolly time. I fancy Hench coming down to breakfast and reading the Morning Post. I imagine Tod dropping in from his bedroom over the way, and Hench handing the paper over to Tod, and the conversation which ensued between those worthy men. "Elopement in high life—the excitement in N-come—flight of Lady Cl-a N-come, daughter of the late and sister of the present Earl of D-rking, with Lord H-gate; personal rencontre between Lord H-gate and Sir B-nes N-come. Extraordinary disclosures." I say I can fancy Hench and Tod over this awful piece of news.

"Pretty news, ain't it, Toddy?" says Henchman, looking up from a Périgord pie which the faithful creature is discussing.

"Always expected it," remarked the other. "Anybody who saw them together last season must have known it. The Chief himself spoke of it to me."

"It'll cut him up awfully when he reads it. Is it in the Morning Post? He has the Post in his bedroom. I know he has rung his bell; I heard it. Bowman, has his lordship read his paper yet?"

Bowman, the valet, said, "I believe you, he have read his paper. When he read it he jumped out of bed and swore most awful. I cut as soon as I could," continued Mr. Bowman, who was on familiar—nay, contemptuous terms with the other two gentlemen.

"Enough to make any man swear," says Toddy to Henchman; and both were alarmed in their noble souls, reflecting that their chieftain was now actually getting up and dressing

himself; that he would speedily, and in the course of nature, come downstairs; and then, most probably, would begin swearing at them.

The most noble Mungo Malcolm Angus was in an awful state of mind, when at length he appeared in the breakfast room. "Why the dash do you make a taproom of this?" he cries. The trembling Henchman, who has begun to smoke—as he has done a hundred times before in this bachelor's hall—flings his cigar into the fire.

"There you go—nothing like it! Why don't you fling some more in? You can get 'em at Hudson's for five guineas a pound," burst out the youthful peer.

"I understand why you are out of sorts, old boy," says Henchman, stretching out his manly hand. A tear of compassion twinkled in his eyelid and coursed down his mottled cheek. "Cut away at old Frank, Farintosh—a fellow who has been attached to you since before you could speak. It's not when a fellow's down, and cut up, and riled—naturally riled—as you are—I know you are, Marquis; it's not then that I'm going to be angry with you. Pitch into old Frank Henchman—hit away, my young one." And Frank put himself into an attitude as of one prepared to receive a pugilistic assault. He bared his breast, as it were, and showed his scars, and said, "Strike!" Frank Henchman was a florid toady. My uncle, Major Pendennis, has often laughed with me about the fellow's pompous flatteries and ebullient fidelity.

"You have read this confounded paragraph?" says the Marquis.

"We have read it; and were deucedly cut up, too," says Henchman, "for your sake, my dear boy."

"I remembered what you said last year, Marquis," cries Todhunter, not unadroitly. "You yourself pointed out, in this very room, I recollect, at this very table—that night Coralie and the little Spanish dancer and her mother supped here, and there was a talk about Highgate—you yourself pointed out what was likely to happen. I doubted it; for I have dined at the Newcomes', and seen Highgate and her together in society often. But though you are a younger bird, you have better eyes than I have, and you saw the thing at once—at once, don't you remember? and Coralie said how glad she was, because Sir Barnes ill-treated her friend. What was the name of Coralie's friend, Hench?"

"How should I know her confounded name?" Henchman

briskly answers. "What do I care for Sir Barnes Newcome and his private affairs? He is no friend of mine. I never said he was a friend of mine. I never said I liked him. Out of respect for the Chief here I held my tongue about him, and shall hold my tongue. Have some of this pâté, Chief? No? Poor old boy. I know you haven't got an appetite. I know this news cuts you up. I say nothing and make no pretense of condolence; though I feel for you—and you know you can count on old Frank Henchman—don't you, Malcolm?" And again he turns away to conceal his gallant sensibility and generous emotion.

"What does it matter to me?" bursts out the Marquis, garnishing his conversation with the usual expletives which adorned his eloquence when he was strongly moved. "What do I care for Barnes Newcome, and his confounded affairs and family? I never want to see him again, but in the light of a banker, when I go to the City, where he keeps my account. I say, I have nothing to do with him, or all the Newcomes under the sun. Why, one of them is a painter, and will paint my dog Ratcatcher, by Jove! or my horse, or my groom, if I give him the order. Do you think I care for any one of the pack? It's not the fault of the Marchioness of Farintosh that her family is not equal to mine. Besides two others in England and Scotland, I should like to know what family is? I tell you what, Hench. I bet you five to two that before an hour is over my mother will be here, and down on her knees to me, begging me to break off this engagement."

"And what will you do, Farintosh?" asks Henchman slowly. "Will you break it off?"

"No!" shouts the Marquis. "Why should I break it off with the finest girl in England, and the best-plucked one, and the cleverest and wittiest, and the most beautiful creature, by Jove, that ever stepped, for no fault of hers, and because her sister-in-law leaves her brother, who I know treated her infernally? We have talked this matter over at home before. I wouldn't dine with the fellow, though he was always asking me; nor meet, except just out of civility, any of his confounded family. Lady Ann is different. She is a lady, she is. She is a good woman, and Kew is a most respectable man, though he is only a peer of George III.'s creation, and you should hear how he speaks of Miss Newcome, though she

refused him. I should like to know who is to prevent me marrying Lady Ann Newcome's daughter?"

"By Jove, you are a good-plucked fellow, Farintosh. Give me your hand, old boy," says Henchman.

"Heh! am I? You would have said, 'Give me your hand, old boy,' whichever way I determined, Hench. I tell you, I ain't intellectual and that sort of thing, but I know my rank, and I know my place. When a man of my station gives his word, he sticks to it, sir; and my lady and my sisters may go on their knees all around, and, by Jove, I won't flinch."

The justice of Lord Farintosh's views was speedily proved by the appearance of his lordship's mother, Lady Glenlivat, whose arrival put a stop to a conversation which Captain Francis Henchman has often subsequently narrated. She besought to see her son, in terms so urgent that the young nobleman could not be denied to his parent; and, no doubt, a long and interesting interview took place, in which Lord Farintosh's mother passionately implored him to break off a match upon which he was as resolutely bent.

Was it a sense of honor; a longing desire to possess this young beauty, and call her his own; or a fierce and profound dislike to being balked in any object of his wishes, which actuated the young lord? Certainly he had borne very philosophically delay after delay which had taken place in the devised union; and, being quite sure of his mistress, had not cared to press on the marriage, but lingered over the dregs of his bachelor cup, complacently still. We all know in what an affecting farewell he took leave of his associates—of his *vie de garçon*; the speeches made (in both languages), the presents distributed, the tears and hysterics of some of the guests assembled; the cigar boxes given over to this friend, the *cerin* of diamonds to that, et caetera, et caetera, et caetera. Don't we know? If we don't, it is not Henchman's fault, who has told the story of Farintosh's betrothals a thousand and one times at his clubs; at the houses where he is asked to dine on account of his intimacy with the nobility; among the young men of fashion, or no fashion, whom this two-bottle Mentor and burly admirer of youth has since taken upon himself to form. The farewell at Greenwich was so affecting that all "traversed the cart," and took another farewell at Richmond, where there was crying too, but it was Eucharis cried because fair Calypso wanted to tear her eyes out; and where not only Telemachus (as was natural to his age), but Men-

tor likewise, quaffed the wine cup too freely. You are virtuous, oh, reader, but there are still cakes and ale. Ask Henchman if there be not. You will find him in the park any afternoon. He will dine with you, if no better man ask him in the interval. He will tell you story upon story regarding young Lord Farintosh, and his marriage, and what happened before his marriage, and afterward; and he will sigh—weep almost at some moments—as he narrates their subsequent quarrel, and Farintosh's unworthy conduct, and tells you how he formed that young man. My uncle and Captain Henchman disliked each other very much, I am sorry to say—sorry to add that it was very amusing to hear either one of them speak of the other.

Lady Glenlivat, according to the Captain, then, had no success in the interview with her son, who, unmoved by the maternal tears, commands, and entreaties, swore he would marry Miss Newcome, and that no power on earth should prevent him. "As if trying to thwart that man could ever prevent him having his way!" ejaculated his quondam friend.

But on the next day, after ten thousand men in clubs and coteries had talked the news over; after the evening had repeated and improved the delightful theme of our "morning contemporaries"; after Calypso and Eucharis driving together in the park, and reconciled now, had kissed their hand to Lord Farintosh, and made him their compliments; after a night of natural doubt, disturbance, defiance, fury—as men whispered to each other at the club where his lordship dined, at the theater where he took his recreation; after an awful time at breakfast, in which Messrs. Bowman, valet, and Todhunter and Henchman, captains of the Farintosh body-guard, all got their share of kicks and growling—behold, Lady Glenlivat came back to the charge again, and this time with such force that poor Lord Farintosh was shaken indeed.

Her ladyship's ally was no other than Miss Newcome herself, from whom Lord Farintosh's mother received, by that day's post, a letter which she was commissioned to read to her son:

Dear Madam (wrote the young lady in her firmest handwriting): Mamma is at this moment in a state of such grief and dismay at the cruel misfortune and humiliation which has just befallen our family that she is really not able to write to you as she ought, and this task, painful as it is, must be mine. Dear Lady Glenlivat, the kindness and confidence which I have ever received

from you and yours merit truth and most grateful respect and regard from me. And I feel after the late fatal occurrence, what I have often and often owed to myself, though I did not dare to acknowledge it, that I ought to release Lord F., at once and forever, from an engagement which he could never think of maintaining with a family so unfortunate as ours. I thank him with all my heart for his goodness in bearing with my humors so long. If I have given him pain, as I know I have sometimes, I beg his pardon, and would do so on my knees. I hope and pray he may be happy, as I feared he never could be with me. He has many good and noble qualities; and, in bidding him farewell, I trust I may retain his friendship, and that he will believe in the esteem and gratitude of your most sincere

ETHEL NEWCOME.

A copy of this farewell letter was seen by a lady who happened to be a neighbor of Miss Newcome's when the family misfortune occurred, and to whom, in her natural dismay and grief, the young lady fled for comfort and consolation. "Dearest Mrs. Pendennis," wrote Miss Ethel to my wife, "I hear you are at Rosebury; do, do come to your affectionate E. N." The next day it was: "Dearest Laura—If you can, pray, pray come to Newcome this morning. I want very much to speak to you about the poor children—to consult you about something most important." Mme. de Montcontour's pony carriage was trotting constantly between Rosebury and Newcome in these days of calamity.

And my wife, as in duty bound, gave me full reports of all that happened in that house of mourning. On the very day of the flight, Lady Ann, her daughter, and some others of her family arrived at Newcome. The deserted little girl, Barnes' eldest child, ran, with tears and cries of joy, to her aunt Ethel, whom she had always loved better than her mother, and clung to her and embraced her, and, in her artless little words, told her that mamma had gone away, and that Ethel should be her mamma now. Very strongly moved by the misfortune, as by the caresses and affection of the poor orphaned creature, Ethel took the little girl to her heart, and promised to be a mother to her, and that she would not leave her; in which pious resolve, I scarcely need say, Laura strengthened her, when, at her young friend's urgent summons, my wife came to her.

The household at Newcome was in a state of disorganization after the catastrophe. Two of Lady Clara's servants, it has been stated already, went away with her. The luckless master of the house was lying wounded in the neighboring

town. Lady Ann Newcome, his mother, was terribly agitated by the news, which was abruptly broken to her, of the flight of her daughter-in-law and her son's danger. Now she thought of flying to Newcome to nurse him, and then feared lest she should be ill received by the invalid—indeed, ordered by Sir Barnes to go home and not to bother him. So at home Lady Ann remained. The thoughts of the sufferings she had already undergone in that house; of Sir Barnes' cruel behavior to her at her last visit, which he had abruptly requested her to shorten; of the happy days which she had passed as mistress of that house and wife of the defunct Sir Brian; the sight of that departed angel's picture in the dining room and wheel-chair in the gallery; the recollection of little Barnes as a cherub of a child in that very gallery, and pulled out of the fire by a nurse in the second year of his age, when he was all that a fond mother could wish—these incidents and reminiscences so agitated Lady Ann Newcome that she, for her part, went off in a series of hysterical fits and acted as one distraught; her second daughter screamed in sympathy with her; and Miss Newcome had to take the command of the whole of this demented household—hysterical mamma and sister, mutineering servants, and shrieking, abandoned nursery, and bring young people and old to peace and quiet.

On the morrow after this little concussion Sir Barnes Newcome came home, not much hurt in body, but woefully afflicted in temper, and venting his wrath upon everybody round about him in that strong language which he employed when displeased; and under which his valet, his housekeeper, his butler, his farm bailiff, his lawyer, his doctor, his disheveled mother herself—who rose from her couch and her sal volatile to fling herself round her dear boy's knees—all had to suffer. Ethel Newcome, the Baronet's sister, was the only person in his house to whom Sir Barnes did not utter oaths or proffer rude speeches. He was afraid of offending her or encountering that resolute spirit, and lapsed into a surly silence in her presence. Indistinct maledictions growled about Sir Barnes' chair when he beheld my wife's pony carriage drive up; and he asked what brought her here? But Ethel sternly told her brother that Mrs. Pendennis came at her particular request, and asked him whether he supposed anybody could come into that house for pleasure now, or for any other motive but kindness. Upon which Sir Barnes fairly burst out into tears, intermingled with execrations