

against his enemies and his own fate, and assertions that he was the most miserable beggar alive. He would not see his children; but with more tears he would implore Ethel never to leave them, and anon would ask what he should do when she married, and he was left alone in that infernal house.

T. Potts, Esq., of the Newcome Independent, used to say afterward that the Baronet was in the direst terror of another meeting with Lord Highgate, and kept a policeman at the lodge gate, and a second in the kitchen, to interpose in event of a collision. But Mr. Potts made this statement in after days, when the quarrel between his party and paper and Sir Barnes Newcome was flagrant. Five or six days after the meeting of the two rivals in Newcome market place Sir Barnes received a letter from the friend of Lord Highgate, informing him that his lordship, having waited for him according to promise, had now left England, and presumed that the differences between them were to be settled by their respective lawyers—"infamous behavior, on a par with the rest of Lord Highgate's villainy," the Baronet said. "When the scoundrel knew I could lift my pistol arm," Barnes said, "Lord Highgate fled the country"—thus hinting that death, and not damages, were what he intended to seek from his enemy.

After that interview in which Ethel communicated to Laura her farewell letter to Lord Farintosh, my wife returned to Rosebury with an extraordinary brightness and gayety in her face and her demeanor. She pressed Mme. de Montcontour's hands with such warmth, she blushed and looked so handsome, she sang and talked so gayly that our host was struck by her behavior, and paid her husband more compliments regarding her beauty, amiability, and other good qualities than need be set down here. It may be that I like Paul de Florac so much, in spite of certain undeniable faults of character, because of his admiration for my wife. She was in such a hurry to talk to me that night that Paul's game and nicotian amusements were cut short by her visit to the billiard room; and when we were alone by the cozy dressing room fire she told me what had happened during the day. Why should Ethel's refusal of Lord Farintosh have so much elated my wife?

"Ah!" cries Mrs. Pendennis, "she has a generous nature, and the world has not had time to spoil it. Do you know there are many points that she has never thought of—I would

say problems that she has to work out for herself, only you, Pen, do not like us poor ignorant women to use such a learned word as problems! Life and experience force things upon her mind which others learn from their parents or those who educate them, but for which she has never had any teachers. Nobody has ever told her, Arthur, that it was wrong to marry without love, or pronounce lightly those awful vows which we utter before God at the altar. I believe if she knew that her life was futile it is but of late she has thought it could be otherwise, and that she might mend it. I have read (besides that poem of Goethe of which you are so fond) in books of Indian travels of bayaderes, dancing girls brought up by troops round about the temples, whose calling is to dance, and wear jewels, and look beautiful; I believe they are quite respected in—in pagoda land. They perform before the priests in the pagodas; and the Brahmins and the Indian princes marry them. Can we cry out against these poor creatures, or against the custom of their country? It seems to me that young women in our world are bred up in a way not very different. What they do they scarcely know to be wrong. They are educated for the world, and taught to display; their mothers will give them to the richest suitor, as they themselves were given before. How can these think seriously, Arthur, of souls to be saved, weak hearts to be kept out of temptation, prayers to be uttered, and a better world to be held always in view, when the vanities of this one are all their thought and scheme? Ethel's simple talk made me smile sometimes, do you know? and her strenuous way of imparting her discoveries. I thought of the shepherd boy who made a watch, and found on taking it into the town how very many watches there were, and how much better than his. But the poor child has had to make hers for herself, such as it is; and, indeed, is employed now in working on it. She told me very artlessly her little history, Arthur; it affected me to hear her simple talk, and—and I blessed God for our mother, my dear, and that my early days had had a better guide.

"You know that for a long time it was settled that she was to marry her cousin, Lord Kew. She was bred to that notion from her earliest youth, about which she spoke as we all can about our early days. They were spent, she said, in the nursery and schoolroom for the most part. She was allowed to come to her mother's dressing room, and sometimes to see



more of her during the winter at Newcome. She describes her mother as always the kindest of the kind; but from very early times the daughter must have felt her own superiority, I think, though she does not speak of it. You should see her at home now in their dreadful calamity. She seems the only person of the house who keeps her head.

"She told very nicely and modestly how it was Lord Kew who parted from her, not she who had dismissed him, as you know the Newcomes used to say. I have heard that—oh! that man Sir Barnes say so myself. She says humbly that her cousin Kew was a great deal too good for her; and so is everyone, almost, she adds, poor thing!"

"Poor everyone! Did you ask about him, Laura?" said Mr. Pendennis.

"No; I did not venture. She looked at me out of her downright eyes, and went on with her little tale. 'I was scarcely more than a child then,' she continued, 'and though I liked Kew very much—who would not like such a generous, honest creature?—I felt somehow that I was taller than my cousin, and as if I ought not to marry him, or should make him unhappy if I did. When poor papa used to talk we children remarked that mamma hardly listened to him; and so we did not respect him as we should, and Barnes was especially scoffing and odious with him. Why, when he was a boy, he used to sneer at papa openly before us younger ones. Now Henrietta admires everything that Kew says, and that makes her a great deal happier at being with him.' And then," added Mrs. Pendennis, "Ethel said, 'I hope you respect your husband, Laura; depend on it you will be happier if you do.' Was not that a fine discovery of Ethel's, Mr. Pen?"

"Clara's terror of Barnes frightened me when I stayed in the house,' Ethel went on. 'I am sure I would not tremble before any man in the world as she did. I saw early that she used to deceive him, and tell him lies, Laura. I do not mean lies of words alone, but lies of looks and actions. Oh! I do not wonder at her flying from him. He was dreadful to be with: cruel, and selfish, and cold. He was made worse by marrying a woman he did not love—as she was by that unfortunate union with him. Suppose he had found a clever woman who could have controlled him, and amused him, and whom he and his friends could have admired, instead of poor Clara, who made his home wearisome, and trembled when he

entered it? Suppose she could have married that unhappy man to whom she was attached early? I was frightened, Laura, to think how ill this worldly marriage had prospered.

"My poor grandmother, whenever I spoke upon such a subject, would break out into a thousand gibes and sarcasms, and point to many of our friends who had made love matches, and were quarreling now as fiercely as though they had never loved each other. You remember that dreadful case in France of the Duc de —, who murdered his duchess? That was a love match, and I can remember the sort of screech with which Lady Kew used to speak about it; and of the journal which the poor duchess kept, and in which she noted down all her husband's ill behavior."

"Hush, Laura! Do you remember where we are? If the Princess were to put down all Florac's culpabilities in an album, what a ledger it would be—as big as Dr. Portman's 'Chrysostom'!" But this was parenthetical; and after a smile, and a little respite, the young woman proceeded in her narration of her friend's history.

"I was willing enough to listen,' Ethel said, 'to grandmamma then; for we are glad of an excuse to do what we like; and I liked admiration, and rank, and great wealth, Laura; and Lord Farintosh offered me these. I liked to surpass my companions, and I saw them so eager in pursuing him! You cannot think, Laura, what meannesses women in the world will commit—mothers and daughters too—in the pursuit of a person of his great rank. Those Miss Burrs—you should have seen them at the country houses where we visited together, and how they followed him; how they would meet him in the parks and shrubberies; how they liked smoking, though I knew it made them ill; how they were always finding pretexts for getting near him! Oh, it was odious.'"

I would not willingly interrupt the narrative, but let the reporter be allowed here to state that at this point of Miss Newcome's story (which my wife gave with a very pretty imitation of the girl's manner) we both burst out laughing so loud that little Mme. de Montcontour put her head into the drawing room and asked what we was a-laughing at. We did not tell our hostess that poor Ethel and her grandmother had been accused of doing the very same thing for which she found fault with the Misses Burr. Miss Newcome thought herself quite innocent, or how should she have cried out at the naughty behavior of other people?



"Wherever we went, however," resumed my wife's young penitent, "it was easy to see (I think I may say so without vanity) who was the object of Lord Farintosh's attention. He followed us everywhere; and we could not go upon any visit in England or Scotland, but he was in the same house. Grand-mamma's whole heart was bent upon that marriage, and when he proposed for me I do not disown that I was very pleased and vain.

"It is in these last months that I have heard about him more, and learned to know him better—him and myself too, Laura. Someone—someone you know, and whom I shall always love as a brother—reproached me in former days for a worldliness about which you talk too sometimes. But it is not worldly to give yourself up for your family, is it? One cannot help the rank in which one is born, and surely it is but natural and proper to marry in it. Not that Lord Farintosh thinks me or anyone of his rank. [Here Miss Ethel laughed.] He is the Sultan, and we—every unmarried girl in society—are his humblest slaves. His Majesty's opinions upon this subject did not suit me, I can assure you; I have no notion of such pride!

"But I do not disguise from you, dear Laura, that after accepting him, as I came to know him better, and heard him, and heard of him, and talked with him daily, and understood Lord Farintosh's character, I looked forward with more and more doubt to the day when I was to become his wife. I have not learned to respect him in these months that I have known him, and during which there has been mourning in our families. I will not talk to you about him. I have no right, have I? to hear him speak out his heart, and tell it to any friend. He said he liked me because I did not flatter him. Poor Malcolm! they all do. What was my acceptance of him, Laura, but flattery? Yes, flattery, and servility to rank, and a desire to possess it. Would I have accepted plain Malcolm Roy? I sent away a better than him, Laura.

"These things have been brooding in my mind for some months past. I must have been but an ill companion for him, and indeed he bore with my waywardness much more kindly than I ever thought possible; and when, four days since, we came to this sad house, where he was to have joined us, and I found only dismay and wretchedness, and these poor children deprived of a mother, whom I pity, God help her, for she has been made so miserable—and is now and must

be to the end of her days—as I lay awake, thinking of my own future life, and that I was going to marry, as poor Clara had married, but for an establishment and a position in life, I, my own mistress, and not obedient by nature, or a slave to others that that poor creature was—I thought to myself, why should I do this? Now Clara has left us, and is, as it were, dead to us who made her so unhappy, let me be the mother to her orphans. I love the little girl, and she has always loved me, and came crying to me that day when we arrived, and put her dear little arms round my neck, and said, 'You won't go away, will you, Aunt Ethel?' in her sweet voice. And I will stay with her, and will try and learn myself that I may teach her, and learn to be good too—better than I have been. Will praying help me, Laura? I did. I am sure I was right, and that it is my duty to stay here."

Laura was greatly moved as she told her friend's confession, and when the next day at church the clergyman read the opening words of the service, I thought a peculiar radiance and happiness beamed from her bright face.

Some subsequent occurrences in the history of this branch of the Newcome family I am enabled to report from the testimony of the same informant who has just given us an account of her own feelings and life. Miss Ethel and my wife were now in daily communication, and "my dearesting" each other with that female fervor which, cold men of the world as we are—not only chary of warm expressions of friendship, but averse to entertaining warm feelings at all—we surely must admire in persons of the inferior sex, whose loves grow up and reach the skies in a night; who kiss, embrace, console, call each other by Christian names, in that sweet, kindly sisterhood of Misfortune and Compassion who are always entering into partnership here in life. I say the world is full of Miss Nightingales; and we, sick and wounded in our private Scutaris, have countless nurse-tenders. I did not see my wife ministering to the afflicted family at Newcome Park; but I can fancy her there among the women and children, her prudent counsel, her thousand gentle offices, her apt pity and cheerfulness, the love and truth glowing in her face, and inspiring her words, movements, demeanor.

Mrs. Pendennis' husband for his part did not attempt to console Sir Barnes Newcome Newcome, Baronet. I never professed to have a half-pennyweight of pity at that gentleman's



command. Florac, who owed Barnes his principality and his present comforts in life, did make some futile efforts at condolence, but was received by the Baronet with such fierceness and evident ill-humor that he did not care to repeat his visits, and allowed him to vent his curses and peevishness on his own immediate dependents. We used to ask Laura, on her return to Rosebury from her charity visits to Newcome, about the poor suffering master of the house. She faltered and stammered in describing him and what she heard of him; she smiled, I grieve to say, for this unfortunate lady cannot help having a sense of humor; and we could not help laughing outright sometimes at the idea of that discomfited wretch, that overbearing creature overborne in his turn—which laughter Mrs. Laura used to chide as very naughty and unfeeling. When we went into Newcome the landlord of the King's Arms looked knowing and quizzical; Tom Potts grinned at me and rubbed his hands. "This business serves the paper better than Mr. Warrington's articles," says Mr. Potts. "We have sold no end of Independents; and if you polled the whole borough I bet that five to one would say Sir Screwcome was served right. By the way, what's up about the Marquis of Farintosh, Mr. Pendennis? He arrived at the Arms last night; went over to the Park this morning, and is gone back to town by the afternoon train."

What had happened between the Marquis of Farintosh and Miss Newcome I am enabled to know from the report of Miss Newcome's confidante. On the receipt of that letter of *congé* before mentioned his lordship must have been very much excited, for he left town straightway by that evening's mail, and on the next morning, after a few hours of rest at his inn, was at Newcome lodge gate demanding to see the Baronet.

On that morning it chanced that Sir Barnes had left home with Mr. Speers, his legal adviser; and hereupon the Marquis asked to see Miss Newcome, nor could the lodgekeeper venture to exclude so distinguished a person from the Park. His lordship drove up to the house, and his name was taken to Miss Ethel. She turned very pale when she heard it; and my wife divined at once who was her visitor. Lady Ann had not left her room as yet. Laura Pendennis remained in command of the little conclave of children, with whom the two ladies were sitting when Lord Farintosh arrived. Little Clara wanted to go with her aunt as she rose to leave the

room—the child could scarcely be got to part from her now.

At the end of an hour the carriage was seen driving away, and Ethel returned, looking as pale as before, and red about the eyes. Miss Clara's mutton chop for dinner coming in at the same time, the child was not so presently eager for her aunt's company. Aunt Ethel cut up the mutton chop very neatly, and then having seen the child comfortably seated at her meal, went with her friend into a neighboring apartment (of course with some pretext of showing Laura a picture, or a piece of china, or a child's new frock, or with some other hypocritical pretense by which the ingenuous female attendants pretended to be utterly blinded), and there, I have no doubt, before beginning her story, dearest Laura embraced dearest Ethel, and vice versa.

"He is gone!" at length gasps dearest Ethel.

"Pour toujours? Poor young man!" sighs dearest Laura. "Was he very unhappy, Ethel?"

"He was more angry," Ethel answers. "He had a right to be hurt, but not to speak as he did. He lost his temper quite at last, and broke out in the most frantic reproaches. He forgot all respect and even gentlemanlike behavior. Do you know, he used words—words such as Barnes uses sometimes when he is angry? and dared this language to me! I was sorry till then, very sorry, and very much moved; but I know more than ever now that I was right in refusing Lord Farintosh."

Dearest Laura now pressed for an account of all that had happened, which may be briefly told as follows: Feeling very deeply upon the subject which brought him to Miss Newcome, it was no wonder that Lord Farintosh spoke at first in a way which moved her. He said he thought her letter to his mother was very rightly written under the circumstances, and thanked her for her generosity in offering to release him from his engagement. But the affair—the painful circumstance of Highgate, and that—which had happened in the Newcome family was no fault of Miss Newcome's, and Lord Farintosh could not think of holding her accountable. His friends had long urged him to marry, and it was by his mother's own wish that the engagement was formed which he was determined to maintain. In his course through the world (of which he was getting very tired), he had never seen a woman, a lady who was so—you understand, Ethel—whom he admired so much, who was likely to make so good



a wife for him as you are. "You allude," he continued, "to differences we have had—and we have had them—but many of them, I own, have been from my fault. I have been bred up in a way different to most young men. I cannot help it if I have had temptations to which other men are not exposed; and have been placed by—by Providence in a high rank of life. I am sure if you share it with me you will adorn it, and be in every way worthy of it, and make me much better than I have been. If you knew what a night of agony I passed after my mother read that letter to me I know you'd pity me, Ethel—I know you would. The idea of losing you makes me wild. My mother was dreadfully alarmed when she saw the state I was in; so was the doctor—I assure you he was. And I had no rest at all, and no peace of mind, until I determined to come down to you, and say that I adored you, and you only, and that I would hold to my engagement in spite of everything, and prove to you that—that no man in the world could love you more sincerely than I do." Here the young gentleman was so overcome that he paused in his speech, and gave way to an emotion for which surely no man who has been in the same condition with Lord Farintosh will blame him.

Miss Newcome was also much touched by this exhibition of natural feeling; and I dare say it was at this time that her eyes showed the first symptoms of that malady of which the traces were visible an hour after.

"You are very generous and kind to me, Lord Farintosh," she said. "Your constancy honors me very much, and proves how good and loyal you are; but—but do not think hardly of me for saying that the more I have thought of what has happened here—of the wretched consequences of interested marriages; the long union growing each day so miserable that at last it becomes intolerable, and is burst asunder, as in poor Clara's case—the more I am resolved not to commit that first fatal step of entering into a marriage without—without the degree of affection which people who take that vow ought to feel for one another."

"Affection! Can you doubt it? Gracious Heavens, I adore you! Isn't my being here a proof that I do?" cries the young lady's lover.

"But I?" answered the girl. "I have asked my own heart that question before now. I have thought to myself—if he comes after all, if his affection for me survives this disgrace

of our family—as it has, and every one of us should be thankful to you—ought I not to show at least gratitude for so much kindness and honor, and devote myself to one who makes such sacrifices for me? But before all things I owe you the truth, Lord Farintosh. I never could make you happy—I know I could not, nor obey you as you are accustomed to be obeyed, nor give you such a devotion as you have a right to expect from your wife. I thought I might once. I can't now. I know that I took you because you were rich and had a great name; not because you were honest and attached to me, as you show yourself to be. I ask your pardon for the deceit I practiced on you. Look at Clara, poor child, and her misery! My pride, I know, would never have let me fall as far as she has done; but, oh! I am humiliated to think that I could have been made to say I would take the first step in that awful career."

"What career, in God's name?" cries the astonished suitor. "Humiliated, Ethel? Who's going to humiliate you? I suppose there is no woman in England who need be humiliated by becoming my wife. I should like to see the one that I can't pretend to—or to royal blood if I like; it's not better than mine. Humiliated, indeed! That is news. Ha! ha! You don't suppose that your pedigree, which I know all about—that the Newcome family, with your barber-surgeon to Edward the Confessor, are equal to—"

"To yours? No. It is not very long that I have learned to disbelieve in that story altogether. I fancy it was an odd whim of my poor father's, and that our family were quite poor people."

"I knew it," said Lord Farintosh. "Do you suppose there were not plenty of women to tell it me?"

"It was not because we were poor that I am ashamed," Ethel went on. "That cannot be our fault, though some of us seem to think it is, as they hide the truth so. One of my uncles used to tell me that my grandfather's father was a laborer in Newcome; but I was a child then, and liked to believe the prettiest story best."

"As if it matters!" cries Lord Farintosh.

"As if it matters in your wife—n'est-ce pas? I never thought that it would. I should have told you, as it was my duty to tell you all. It was not my ancestors you cared for; and it is you yourself that your wife must swear before Heaven to love."



"Of course it's me," answers the young man, not quite understanding the train of ideas in his companion's mind. "And I've given up everything—everything, and have broken off with my old habits, and—and things, you know—and intend to lead a regular life, and will never go to Tattersall's again, nor bet a shilling, nor touch another cigar if you like—that is, if you don't like; for I love you so, Ethel—I do, with all my heart I do."

"You are very generous and kind, Lord Farintosh," Ethel said. "It is myself, not you, I doubt! Oh! I am humiliated to make such a confession!"

"How humiliated?" Ethel withdrew her hand which the young nobleman endeavored to seize.

"If," she continued, "if I found it was your birth, and your name, and your wealth that I coveted, and had nearly taken, ought I not to feel humiliated, and ask pardon of you and of God? Oh! what perjuries poor Clara was made to speak—and see what has befallen her! We stood by and heard her without being shocked. We applauded even. And to what shame and misery we brought her! Why did her parents and mine consign her to such ruin? She might have lived pure and happy but for us. With her example before me—not her flight, poor child—I am not afraid of that happening to me—but her long solitude, the misery of her wasted years, my brother's own wretchedness and faults aggravated a hundred-fold by his unhappy union with her—I must pause while it is yet time, and recall a promise which I know I should make you unhappy if I fulfilled. I ask your pardon that I deceived you, Lord Farintosh, and feel ashamed for myself that I could have consented to do so."

"Do you mean," cried the young Marquis, "that after my conduct to you—after my loving you, so that even this—this disgrace in your family don't prevent my going on—after my mother has been down on her knees to me to break off, and I wouldn't—no, I wouldn't—after all White's sneering at me, and laughing at me, and all my friends, friends of my family who would go to—go anywhere for me, advising me, and saying, 'Farintosh, what a fool you are; break off this match,' and I wouldn't back out, because I loved you so, by Heaven, and because, as a man and a gentleman, when I give my word I keep it—do you mean that you throw me over? It's a shame—it's a shame!" And again there were tears of rage and anguish in Farintosh's eyes.

"What I did was a shame, my lord," Ethel said humbly; "and again I ask your pardon for it. What I do now is only to tell you the truth, and to grieve with all my soul for the falsehood—yes, the falsehood—which I told you, and which has given your kind heart such cruel pain."

"Yes, it was a falsehood!" the poor lad cried out. "You follow a fellow, and you make a fool of him, and you make him frantic in love with you, and then you fling him over! I wonder you can look me in the face after such an infernal treason. You've done it to twenty fellows before; I know you have. Everybody said so, and warned me. You draw them on, and get them to be in love, and then you fling them away. Am I to go back to London, and be made the laughingstock of the whole town—I, who might marry any woman in Europe, and who am at the head of the nobility of England?"

"Upon my word, if you will believe me, after deceiving you once," Ethel interposed, still very humbly, "I will never say that it was I who withdrew from you, and that it was not you who refused me. What has happened here fully authorizes you. Let the rupture of the engagement come from you, my lord. Indeed, indeed, I would spare you all the pain I can. I have done you wrong enough already, Lord Farintosh."

And now the Marquis burst forth with tears and imprecations, wild cries of anger, love, and disappointment, so fierce and incoherent that the lady to whom they were addressed did not repeat them to her confidante. Only she generously charged Laura to remember, if ever she heard the matter talked of in the world, that it was Lord Farintosh's family which broke off the marriage; but that his lordship had acted most kindly and generously throughout the whole affair.

He went back to London in such a state of fury, and raved so wildly among his friends against the whole Newcome family, that many men knew what the case really was. But all women averred that that intriguing, worldly Ethel Newcome, the apt pupil of her wicked old grandmother, had met with a deserved rebuff; that, after doing everything in her power to catch the great *parti*, Lord Farintosh, who had long been tired of her, flung her over, not liking the connection; and that she was living out of the world now at Newcome, under the pretense of taking care of that unfortunate Lady Clara's children, but really because she was pining away for Lord Farintosh, who, as we all know, married six months afterward.