

The Doctor's Wife

BY MISS M. E. BRADDON

CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

"I loved my aunt very dearly, Mr. Lansdell," she said; "so dearly, that I could endure a great deal for her sake; but I cannot endure the insolence of her son."

And then she swept out of the room, leaving her cousin standing alone in a sunlit window, with the spring breezes blowing in upon him, and the shrill voice of a woman crying primroses sounding in the street below.

He went home, dispirited, disheartened, doubtful of himself, doubtful of all the world; and early the next morning he received a letter from his cousin, coolly releasing him from his engagement. The experience of yesterday had proved that they were unsuited to each other, she said; it was better that they should part now, while it was possible for them to part friends. Nothing could be more dignified or more decided than the dismissal.

Mr. Lansdell put the letter in his breast; the pretty perfumed letter, the elegant, ladylike letter, which recorded his sentence without a blot or a blotter, without one uncertain line to mark where the hand had trembled.

The hand may have trembled, nevertheless; for Gwendoline was just the woman to write a dozen copies of her letter rather than send one that bore the faintest evidence of her weakness. Roland put the letter in his breast and resigned himself to his fate. He was a great deal too proud to appeal against his cousin's decree; but he had loved her very sincerely, and if she had recalled him, he would have gone back to her and would have forgiven her.

He lounged and dawdled away his time in drawing rooms and boudoirs, on moorlit balconies, in shadowy orange groves, beside the rippling Arno, in the colonnades of Venice, on the Parisian boulevards, under the lime trees of Berlin, in any region where there was life and color and gaiety, and the brightness of beautiful faces, and where a man of a naturally gloomy temperament might forget himself and be amused.

Mr. Lansdell's life abroad was neither a good nor useful one. It was an artificial kind of existence, with spurious brilliancy—a life whose brightest moments but poorly compensated for the dismal reaction that followed them.

Now, in the bright July sunshine Gwendoline and her cousin lounged upon the lawn, and talked of old pleasures and old acquaintances, and the things that happened to them when they were young. If the lady ever cherished any hope that Roland would return to his allegiance, that hope was now utterly vanished. He has forgiven her for all the past, and they are friends and first cousins again; but there is no room for hope that they can ever be again what they have been. A man who can forgive so generously must have long ceased to love; that strange madness, so nearly allied to hatred, and jealousy, and rage, and despair, has no kindred with forgiveness. Gwendoline knew that her chance was gone, and there was a secret bitterness in her heart when she thought of it, and she was jealous of her cousin's regard, and exacting in her manner to him.

Gwendoline catechised him rather closely as to what he had done with himself upon the previous afternoon; and he told her very frankly that he had strolled into Hurstonleigh Grove to see Mr. Raymond, and had spent an hour or two talking with his old friend, while Mrs. and Miss Gilbert and the children enjoyed themselves, and prepared a rustic tea.

"It was very pretty, Gwendoline, I assure you," he said. "Mrs. Gilbert made tea and we drank it in a scalding state; and the two children were all of a greasy radiance with bread and butter. The doctor seems to be an excellent fellow."

"Oh, the doctor! that's Mr. Gilbert, is it not?" said Gwendoline; "and what do you think of his wife, Roland? You must have formed some opinion upon that subject, I should think, by the manner in which you stared at her."

"Did I stare at her?" cried Mr. Lansdell, with supreme carelessness. "I dare say I did; I always stare at pretty women. Yes, I admire Mrs. Gilbert, and I like to look at her. I don't suppose she's any better than other people, but she's a great deal prettier. A beautiful piece of animated wax work, with a little machinery inside, just enough to make one say, 'Yes, if you please,' and 'No, thank you.' A lovely nonentity with yellow black eyes. Did you observe her eyes?"

"No," Gwendoline answered sharply; "I observed nothing except that she was a very dowdy-looking person. What is Mr. Raymond's motive for taking her up? He's always taking up some extraordinary person."

"But Mrs. Gilbert is not an extraordinary person; she's very stupid and commonplace. She was nursery maid or nursery governess, or something of that kind, to that dear good Raymond's penitence niece."

There was no more said about Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert. Gwendoline did not care to talk about these common people, who came across her dull pathway, and robbed her of some few accidental rays of that light which was now the only radiance upon earth for her—the light of her cousin's presence.

"He loved me once," she thought, as she sat in the summer twilight, watching her cousin strolling on the lawn, looking so tired—so tired of himself and every-

thing in the world. "He loved me once; it is something to remember that."

CHAPTER XI.

While Mr. Lansdell remembered Isabel Gilbert as a pretty automaton, who had simpered and blushed when he spoke to her, and stammered shyly when she was called upon to answer him, the doctor's wife walked up and down the flat commonplace garden at Graybridge, and thought of her birthday afternoon in a rapturous day dream; a dangerous day dream, in which Roland Lansdell's dark face shone dazzling and beautiful. Was it wrong to think of him? She never asked herself that question.

One day—one never-to-be-forgotten day, which made a kind of chasm in her life, dividing all the past from the present and the future—she sat on her old seat under the great oak tree, beside the creaking mill wheel and the plashing water; she sat in her favorite spot, with Shelley on her lap and the green parasol over her head. She had been sitting there for a long time in the drowsy midday atmosphere, when a great dog came up to her and stared at her, and sniffed at her hands, and made friendly advances to her; and then another dog, bigger if anything, than the first, came bounding over a stile and bounding toward her; and then a voice, whose sudden sound made her drop her book all confused and frightened, cried, "Hi, Frolo! this way, Frolo." And in the next minute a gentleman, followed by a third dog, came along the narrow bridge that led straight to the bench on which she was sitting.

Her parasol had fallen back as she stooped to pick up her book, and Roland Lansdell could not avoid seeing her face. He thought her very pretty, but he thought her also very stupid; and he had clean forgotten his talk about her coming to Mordred.

"Let me pick up the book, Mrs. Gilbert," he said. "What a pretty place you have chosen for your morning's rest! This is a favorite spot of mine." He looked at the open pages of the book as he handed it to her, and saw the title, and glancing at another book on the seat near her, he recognized the familiar green cover and beveled edges of the "Alien." A man always knows the cover of his own book, especially when the work has hung rather heavily on the publisher's hands.

"You are fond of Shelley," he said.

"Oh, yes, I am very, very fond of him. Wasn't it a pity that he was drowned?" She spoke of that calamity as if it had been an event of the last week or two. These things were nearer to her than all that common business of breakfast and dinner and supper which made up her daily life. Mr. Lansdell shot a searching glance at her from under cover of his long lashes. Was this feminine affectation, or what?

"Yes, it was a pity," he said; "but I fancy we're beginning to get over the misfortune. And so you like all that dreamy, misty stuff?" he added, pointing to the open book which Isabel held in her hands.

"I think it is the most beautiful poetry that was ever written," she said.

"Better than Byron's?" asked Mr. Lansdell. "I thought most young ladies made Byron their favorite."

"Oh, yes; I love Byron. But then he makes one so unhappy, because one feels that he was so unhappy when he wrote. Fancy his writing late at night, after being out at parties, where everybody adored him; and if he hadn't written it he would have gone mad," said Mrs. Gilbert, opening her eyes very wide. "Reading Shelley's poetry seems like being among birds and flowers and blue rippling water and summer. It always seems summer in his poetry. Oh! I don't know which I like best."

Was all this affectation, or was it only simple childish reality? Mr. Lansdell was so much given to that dreadful disease, disbelief, that he was slow to accept even the evidence of those eloquent blushes, the earnest shining light in those wonderful eyes, which could scarcely be assumed at will, however skilful in the light comedy of everyday life Mrs. Gilbert might be.

Mr. Lansdell and his dogs lingered for some considerable time under the shadow of the big oak. Mr. Lansdell was amused by Isabel's talk; and he led her on very gently, till her shyness vanished, and she dared to look up at his face as she spoke to him; and he attuned his own talk to the key of hers, and wandered with her in the Vallhalla of her heroes, from Eugene Aram to Napoleon Bonaparte. But in the midst of all this she looked all in a hurry at the little silver watch that George had given her, and found that it was past three.

"Oh, I must go, if you please," she said; "I have been out ever since 11 o'clock, and we dine at half past 4."

"Let me carry your books a little way for you, then," said Mr. Lansdell.

"But are you going that way?"

"Yes, that is the very way I am going. I suppose you often stroll as far as Thurston's Crag?"

"Oh, yes, very often. It isn't too long a walk, and it is so pretty."

"It is pretty," Mordred is quite as near to you, though; and I think that you would like the garden at Mordred; there are ruins, you know, and it's altogether very romantic. I will give you and Mr. Gilbert a key, if you would like to come there sometimes. Oh, by the bye, I hope you haven't forgotten your

promise to come to luncheon and see the pictures, and all that sort of thing."

No, Isabel had not forgotten; her face flushed suddenly at the thought of this rapturous vista opening before her.

"Then will you ask Mr. Gilbert to accept an unceremonious invitation, and to bring you to the Priory to luncheon—say next Tuesday, as that will give me time to invite by Cousin Gwendoline and your old friend Mr. Raymond, and the two little girls who are so fond of you?"

Isabel murmured something to the effect that she would be very happy, and she was sure her husband would be very happy.

CHAPTER XII.

The Tuesday was a fine day. The August sunshine—the beautiful harvest-time sunshine, which was rejoicing the hearts of all the farmers, awoke Mrs. Gilbert very early. She was going to Mordred Priory. For once she forgot to notice the ugliness of the shabby furniture, the bare whitewashed walls upon which her eyes opened. She was going to Mordred Priory.

How pretty the village of Mordred looked in the sleepy August atmosphere. How beautiful everything looked just at the entrance to the village, where there was a long straggling inn with a top-heavy roof, all dotted over with impossible little windows, a dear old red-tiled roof, with pouters and fantails brooding and cooing to themselves in the sunshine, and yellow stone-crop creeping here and there in patches of gold!

Isabel almost trembled as Mr. Gilbert got out of the gig and pulled the iron ring that hung at the end of a long chain on one side of those formidable oaken gates. It seemed like ringing at the door of the past, somehow; and the doctor's wife half expected to see quaintly costumed servants, with long points to their shoes and strange parti-colored garments, and a jester with a cap and bells, when those great gates were opened. But the person who opened the gates was only a very harmless old woman, who inhabited some stony chambers on one side of the ponderous archway; and in the next moment Mr. Lansdell came out of the porch and bade his visitors welcome to Mordred.

"I am so glad to see you! What a lovely morning, is it not? I'm afraid you must have found the roads rather dusty, though. Take care of Mr. Gilbert's horse, Christie; you'd better put him into one of the loose boxes. You see my dogs know you, Mrs. Gilbert." A liver-colored pointer and a great black retriever were taking friendly notice of Isabel. "Will you come to see my pictures at once? I expect Gwendoline and her father, and your friend Mr. Raymond and the children presently."

There was no special brilliancy or eloquence in all this, but it sounded different to other people's talk, somehow. The languid, lingering tones were very cordial, in spite of their languor; and then how splendid the speaker looked in his loose black velvet morning coat, which harmonized so exquisitely with the hues of his complexion.

Mr. Lansdell led the way into a room beyond which there were other rooms opening one into the other in a long vista of splendor and sunshine. Isabel had only a very faint idea of what she saw in those beautiful rooms. It was all a confusion of brightness and color, which was almost too much for her poor sentimental brain.

They all went downstairs presently, and were ushered into an oak-paneled room, where there was an oval table laid for luncheon, and where Isabel found herself seated presently on Mr. Lansdell's right hand, and opposite to Gwendoline Pomphrey.

This was life. * * * Mrs. Gilbert had a very vague idea of the nature of the viands which were served to her at that wonderful feast.

"Shall we go into the garden?" said Gwendoline, as they rose from the table, and everybody assented; so presently Isabel found herself amidst a little group upon the miniature lawn, in the center of which there was a broad marble basin, filled with goldfish, and a feeble little fountain that made a faint tinkling sound in the still August atmosphere.

Mr. Lansdell and his guests had been talking of all manner of things; flying off at tangents to all kinds of unlucky subjects, till they had come, somehow or other, to discuss the question of length of days.

"I can't say that I consider long life an inestimable blessing," said Roland, who was amusing himself with throwing minute morsels of macaroon to the goldfish. "No, we are not a long-lived race. We have been consumptive. Very few of us have ever lived to see a fortieth birthday."

"And how is your doom to be brought about, Roland?" asked Gwendoline.

"Oh, that's all settled," Mr. Lansdell answered; "I know my destiny."

"It has been predicted to you?"

"Yes."

"Pray tell us the story."

"Well, I'll tell you the story, if you like," said Roland; "but I warn you that there's not much in it. I don't suppose any of you take much interest in criminal cases; but this one made rather a sensation at the time."

(To be continued.)

Knew His Psalms.

A letter tells of a minister's son who had been so disobedient at table that he was banished to a small table by himself, to eat there until he should repent and reform. He could not even join in the family grace, but was told to say grace at his own little table. So from his store of Scripture selections he chose this: "Oh, Lord, I thank Thee that Thou hast prepared a table for me in the presence of mine enemies."—Christian Register.

Dead-game sports are anything but dead ones.

GOOD Short Stories

The Shah of Persia is said to have once told the Duchess of Westminster that the fame of her beauty had reached Teheran. "Ah," said she to some one who stood by, "he takes me for Westminster Abbey."

The story is told of a well-known man who, not finding his wife, went out into the kitchen where the laundress was busy with the family linen, and inquired: "Bridget, do you know anything of my wife's whereabouts?" "Yis, sor," replied Bridget, "I put them in the wash."

Sydney Smith loved to tell a good story; and one that haunted his brain and tickled his sides for weeks was that of a tame magpie in a church that suddenly descended on the reading-desk and strove to fly off with the sermon, and of the desperate struggle that ensued between the bird and the preacher—the congregation all in favor of the bird.

A story is told of the wonderful cure from deafness of a patient who was recommended to hear a Wagner opera, and to sit near the orchestra by the trombones. The physician accompanied his patient, and sat beside him. Suddenly, while the crash of the instruments was at its loudest, the deaf man found he could hear. "Doctor," he almost shrieked, "I can hear!" The doctor gave no sign that he noticed the remark. "I tell you, doctor," repeated the patient, in ecstasy, "you have saved me! I have recovered my hearing." Still the physician was silent. He had become deaf himself.

Shortly after Garfield's death, a prominent politician made an address upon the life of the statesman before a school. When he had finished, he said: "Now, can any of you tell me what a statesman is?" A little hand went up, and a little girl replied: "A statesman is a man who makes speeches." "Hardly that," answered the politician, who loved to tell this story. "For instance, I sometimes make speeches, and yet I am not a statesman." The little hand again went up, and the answer came, triumphantly: "I know; a statesman is a man who makes good speeches!"

A private was brought up one morning for a summary. His listless eyes were about the only evidences of his previous night's offense. "Now," said the captain, "you may plead what you like," but the culprit noticed that the captain was already looking up the blue book for the fine. "Sdamm outrage," replied the accused men. "Ten dollars and ten days," said the captain; "what have you got to say now?" "Sdamm outrage," repeated the accused. "Ten dollars more," said the captain; "I'll just give you just one more chance to defend yourself." "Sno use, captain," came the reply, with considerable feeling; "you're too good at repartee for me."

When the father of the present Czar of Russia, after the death of his minister of finance, could find no successor among the aristocratic clique, he received Sergius Witte in audience. The following authentic and highly characteristic dialogue followed: "I appoint you herewith my minister of finance. By the way, I learned, Mr. Witte, that you are single." "Excuse me, sire," exclaimed the hero of Portsmouth. But the Czar said quickly and with irritating emphasis: "Then, 'tis understood, you are single." Mr. Witte's wife, who divorced her first husband, a Jewish banker, to share the destinies of the Russian Colbert, as he is called by his numerous admirers, does not exist for the imperial court.

MIGRATION TO AMERICA.

As It Is Viewed by a London Daily Newspaper.

The human Niagara flowing from all lands into the United States is, if mere volume is considered, the most remarkable phenomenon of the sort known to history. In 1904 812,870 immigrants landed on the shores of the States, an average of nearly 160,000 every week; or more than 2,000—the population of a decent sized town—every day. But this flood of immigration is of a very mixed and doubtful quality. It is made up largely of the cheap races of Europe; nearly one-fourth could neither read nor write; the vast majority of them had only a few coins in their pockets. The bulk of these immigrants poured into the great cities and settled down there as a sort of human sediment, under conditions which recall the Ghetto of ancient Rome. They congest the jails and the insane asylums of the United States, with social and political ideals of their own, and refuse to melt into the general population. In his last report the commissioner of immigration laments almost tearfully over "the failure of the government to provide for the distribution of aliens throughout the United States," and he charges foreign powers with "speending large

sums of money and employing many agents in the business of keeping their subjects together as separate colonies on American soil and preventing their melting into the common citizenship of the United States. The unstable element in the politics of the United States is simply the dyspepsia caused by so much undigested, not to say undigestible, material in its population.

The immigration into Canada, as far as volume is concerned, is only a ripple compared with that flowing into the United States, but it is a ripple which may well become a tide. Canada is being advertised as though it were a patent medicine. Its agencies are scattered all over Europe; they invade the United States itself, and last year persuaded no fewer than 45,000 settlers to give up the exhausted farm lands of New England and of some of the western states and betake themselves to Manitoba.

Canada does not spoon-feed her immigrants. She does not buy them. The average cost to the Dominion is a little over £1 per head for each settler, and this is mainly expended in advertising. But if money is not wasted on the immigrants, nothing else is denied them. The government clothes itself to an almost amusing degree with all the functions of a Providence for the great host of intending settlers crowding into its ports. A great steamboat with 1,500 immigrants on board moors, for example, alongside the port of Quebec. The immigrants are marched in procession down a long passage, and betwixt narrow railings they are checked, classed, and medically examined almost without being conscious of the process. Long trains with open doors are waiting along the platform, and, in a period of time, incredibly brief, the immigrants, in family groups, are packed into the train and move off.

When the destination is at last reached there are government agents, with maps of the district and vehicles in which to drive the intending settler round to make his choice. At a cost of time and money incredibly small the immigrant is then planted on his homestead block, or his quarter section, of purchased land, and finds himself practicing the rudiments of farming; while the government continues to watch over him, supply him with paternal advice and encouragement, and, if necessary, seed corn—everything, indeed, except cash.—W. H. Fitchett, in the London Daily Mail.

INTERVIEWS THE PRESIDENT.

Girl Representative of Australian Paper Tells Experience.

An Australian girl has succeeded in "interviewing" Mr. Roosevelt for the British Australian. This is her account of the incident, says the St. James Gazette:

In a little while I was summoned to the audience chamber, where, after waiting about two minutes, a kind of whirlwind danced into the room, an electrical, breezy atmosphere enveloped every corner of my consciousness. I heard a laughing voice say, "I'm delighted to see you, delighted!" and my hand was grasped by Theodore Roosevelt, President of the American republic.

How that man exudes vitality and cheerfulness and sunshine! How such a man is wanted in Australia, where pessimism is the national keynote! Dressed in a well-cut frock suit of light gray, he looked exactly like an Englishman until he spoke. Then all the world might know he was an American. He laughed most of the time, even when he said to me, "I don't give interviews for newspapers to any living soul." He told me to "sit right down," and talked about the "Allen Restriction act" of Australia and our "declining birth rate." You people must do one or the other," he said, laughingly, "either let the world enter your gates or keep your cradles full. But I take the keenest interest in those great commonwealths beyond the South seas—Australia and New Zealand—particularly New Zealand." He held a toy commonwealth flag in his hand, which some extraordinary humorous Australian had "presented him with on behalf of the nation."

He is as quick as lightning. I put a few questions quickly to him. He was just as quick and told me, laughingly, that he couldn't answer me. Just then a solemn-looking man entered and announced that Baron Somebody, ambassador of somewhere, was waiting. "All right, send him into the office," said the President.

Then turning to me he laughed good-humoredly. "I hope to come to Australia some day!" he told me. "I don't know of any one who would be more welcome," said I, as we shook hands and said good-bye. He told me what a pleasure it was to meet me and if the recording angel dropped a tear he must have smiled also.

An Unavoidable Delay.

Owner of automobile (to chauffeur)—Have you any recommendation from your last employer?

Chauffeur—No, sir; but I guess I can get one in the course of a month or so.

"Why the delay?"

"He's in the hospital."—Life.