Geraldine

CHAPTER IX.—Continued.

And all the time, and underlying all there had been a stimulus other still, the dream of a spur, a secret incentive, the bare thought of which had been sufficient to incite anew had energy for a moment flagged or ardor abated. That spell had been the thought of Bellenden.

He it was who had persuaded her to enter those new regions. It had been to please him that she had agreed to tread them, and to display to him her conquests and her triumphs was the prize she had coveted.

She had pictured his questioning her as to this and that. In her mind's eye she had beheld him scanning her books, her maps, her records of one sort and another. For his ear she had treasured up little histories of difficulties encountered and victories obtained, and she had fancied, poor little thing, in her innocent heart, that when the happy day of meeting should come at last, she should find him as eager to hear as she to tell, and as appreciative and attentive as she could be discursive and dramatic.

He had not been expected before the autumn following his departure. He had written—a hasty line, but sufficient under the circumstances—during those first over-crowded days of mourning at his old home, and he had hinted at writing again, and had hoped to meet again some day, and had assured one and all that he could never feel grateful enough for all the kindness shown him at Inchmarew.

For some time after the note had been received another had been expected; but on young Raymond's departure, Mrs. Campbell had felt that she had probably for the present heard the last of his pleasant friend and guest, and that, considering all that had happened, it was hardly to be wondered at if it were so.

"I shall ask him here for the twelfth next year, if you approve," Cecil had observed; and the suggestion having been received cordially, "the twelfth" had gradually come to be considered in his young cousin's mind as the point on which to fix hope and expectancy.

All through the long warm days of the following June and July, it had been a vision standing brightly out to view, and daily at last had the blue eyes scanned the contents of the post-bag, and marked every envelope which might be Cecil's, and might contain some words, something definite, some allusion or reference even to that great meeting—but in vain.

Cecil had come himself, and had neither written nor spoken once about Bellenden.

Perhaps Geraldine's grandmother had a quicker vision than the little maid gave her credit for; it could hardly have been sheer forgetfulness which caused her to let the whole first evening of her grandson's arrival pass without a question, considering what had once been agreed upon; she almost must have had some reason for waiting till after Jerry had gone to bed to make her inquiries, but she had done all this, and Cecil having been equally reticent, the little girl had gone to rest with Bellenden forgotten by everyone but herself.

He had not been so. Young Raymond had been somewhat sore on the subject, to tell the truth, and had not cared to touch upon it. He, as well as his grandmother, had seen more than either chose to take notice of; and although at first Geraldine's open manifest devotion had merely amused the one and nettled the other, they had both since felt that it was as well it should quietly pass off, more especially as it had not to any appearance been reciprocated. Bellenden had made a fuss about the little heiress when there had been nobody else for him to do, and then he had gone off, and never given either her or her guardian another thought. No wonder each of the two elders had silently understood the other's suppression of his name.

The next morning, however, Cecil had casually let fall a piece of information.

"By the way, grandmamma," he had said, "you told me I might invite Bellenden here"—Jerry's heart thumped up at the words—"if he should be our way," continued the speaker, hunting for something in his pocket. "I did drop him a line, and I have his answer somewhere about me," pulling out two or three crumpled envelopes. "Ay, here it is," and then he had read it aloud, and had afterwards, unconsciously, as it were, tossed the scrap over to her, and Jerry had read it for herself.

It had indeed been a disillusion.

A few bold sentences—a reference to "his pleasant remembrance of Inchmarew and his charming visit there"—"his best regards to Mrs. Campbell and his little friend Geraldine." And that was all. His "little friend Geraldine!"

How her heart had swelled at the words! She had been only his "little friend Geraldine," while he—she had lain awake, sleepless and dreamless, thinking about him! Oh, the days wherein she had watched and waited, harkening, as it were, for the faintest echoes of his approaching footfall, the furthest away whisper of his coming.

Scarcely, if ever, had a single sun risen and set without there being some association with him in her thoughts, her efforts, or her wishes.

And he had not even come this once! And he had not even cared to pretend that he meant to come! For Bellenden had written hastily, and he let the simple truth appear. Inchmarew had not been in his program, and he had made other arrangements. There had been no temptation to reconsider them, no inducement sufficiently attractive, no prospect sufficiently seductive and, accordingly, he had let them stand, and had not when writing taken the pains to put another face upon the matter.

All had been clearly conveyed, and the very bitterness of the conviction that it had been so, had kept the child-woman from betraying herself.

No note in her voice, no tear in her eye, nothing but a deep flush upon her cheek had been visible to others. She had endured her wound in silence, and had felt it throb and sting without a moan.

But for a time all the sunlight had died out of her day-dreams, and what had been full of ever deepening interest, these pursuits and occupations, that had been growing ever more engrossing as the hour had seemed to draw near when the harvest was to be reaped, all of these had become straightway almost loathsome.

She had not been ill. She had been too hardy and too healthy for that. But she had drooped and flagged, and at length fond eyes had seen and there had been change of air and scene, and the young girl had been spirited about from place to place, until the results of such delightful medicine had been all that might have been expected.

Miss Corunna had been a princess of traveling companions, and the kindest and most judicious of nurses. Jerry had not only been shown this and that, and allowed to follow the bent of her own ardent spirit in seeing the things she really cared for, and doing what she really wished, but another sort of machinery had also been set a-going. She had tasted something of the pleasures of being rich, had been set on to by numbers of nice new things, new adornments for her own modest little chamber, a new carpet and writing-table for the school-room, books, drawing materials, music. Miss Corunna had superintended the purchase of a vast piece of gorgeous silk embroidery, wherewith to beguile the winter evenings; and altogether there had been a complete restoration to cheerfulness; and if the studies had not been resumed presently with quite so much vivacity at the very first, it had been, perhaps, still more satisfactory to the preceptress to feel that now it had not been the mere novelty of the thing which had actuated the youthful disciple, but that Geraldine had sprung up a steady resolution to progress, not unmixed with a genuine taste for some branches of knowledge.

But Bellenden had never been quite forgotten nor forgiven.

True, he had been from that time regarded in a different light, namely, as one who had slighted and deceived.

It had been no longer to please him that Geraldine had strained her utmost in mental toil. That had gone by. But his image had still fitfully haunted her, and she had not been able all at once to rid herself of it.

He had, she had told herself, deliberately promised that which he had never intended to perform.

In this, we may observe, Bellenden had been done injustice to; but Jerry could hardly be expected to understand this. With all her brightness and gaiety she was, as may have been seen, of a very tenacious, downright, and steadfast nature, and with her, as with others of her kind, to say, however lightly, "I will" do this or that, implied a promise, and a promise to be scrupulously kept. This is, perhaps, a little hard upon the facile.

Bellenden, when he had said "I will come again to Inchmarew," had certainly dreamed of nothing less than of imposing upon himself a solemn vow to do so. He had equally certainly meant to come if all winds being favorable; but he could not tell that the words as spoken were sinking deep down into the breast of the listener at his side, to be registered there at the end of time, would, indeed, have taken his breath away.

He had now, in the eyes of his worshiper, disgraced himself and her who had believed in him.

He had broken his pledge, and broken it in the easy fashion of one to whom a pledge is nothing. Her idol had fallen with a crash into a thousand pieces.

She would think of him no more. She would never breathe his name to human ear. The little casket of treasures, each of which spoke of him and conjured his presence up! She would fling them to the winds. Even the most precious of all, the sketch of Inchmarew from the Kincraig hights—the pretty, dainty marvel of skill and beauty, set such infinite store by hitherto—it should go with the rest, and with ruthless, passionate fingers it had first been torn in many pieces.

And thus had ended the day-dream, with an awakening sharp and bitter enough.

But even that period had now gone by, and the peaceful routine of her improved and altered life with its new occupations and aspirations, had completed the cure which her own dawning womanly pride and resolution had begun.

The next summer she had only occasionally wondered at times whether anything would be heard of the recreant or not? She had scarcely known whether or no she had even wished him to come. If she had wished it, it had been with a new object in view, namely, to make it clear that Sir Frederick Bellenden, changed as he might have himself proved to be, could not be regarded as an equal, if not much more, in the "little friend" from whom he had parted two years before. His "little friend!" She had felt she could never forgive him that.

Had he come after these two years, he would have been met by a tall and graceful girl, whose stately greeting would have repelled all tardy advances towards renewed intimacy, and ignored all reminiscences. He would have been treated at arm's length, received with dignified courtesy, and his presence, except in that of others, quietly avoided.

All thrown away.

He had never come, and apparently Cecil had never asked him. By the next spring, he had ceased to be thought about at all.

For Geraldine was now, as we had said, on the brink of entering the great world, and since it would be doing her trusty guardian and grandmother injustice to let it be supposed that she contemplated launching a lovely girl upon a vortex of fashion and folly, or was bent upon an absorbing giddy round of society pleasures, it must be borne in mind that the old lady had her own views about the matter, and was quite equal to carrying these out. She had no intention that her mountain heiress should go without the experience she deemed suitable and necessary, as well as the pleasures and pastimes enjoyable at her age. Happily, Geraldine was not by nature one whom the glitter and fame of fashionable life was likely to impress. Not only was she of too sincere and simple a disposition, but owing to granny's early example, she had of later years the inestimable advantage of beholding in the person of her beloved instructress humble unobtrusive piety a thing upon the daily life, a lesson all involuntarily learnt, and now her chiefest safeguard. Miss Corunna was now, as was not surprising, friend, counselor, and indispensable companion, and accordingly on the May-day with which this chapter opens, who so busy as Miss Corunna about the all-important affair, and the decking of the fair debutante?

Every one, high and low, indeed, wanted to have a finger in the pie.

The nurse who had cherished her nestling through every stage of childhood and girlhood; granny's maid, who, intent on instructing and remembering, yet blundered sadly among new fashions and new follies; the old butler who ran off like a boy to the nurseryman's, in terror lest the bouquets, the scarlet and cream one for the old lady, and the pure white for Geraldine should not arrive before the hour appointed; the footman who flung open the hall-door for monsieur, the hair-dresser, to enter, ere that very fine personage could descend from his hansom, bag in hand; down to every housemaid and scullery-maid in the establishment, who, abandoning their work for the nonce, giggled over the top of the stairs as eleven o'clock approached.

And then at the very last moment, what should have been the last moment, came the terrible discovery that Geraldine had no fan.

The fan of white plumes which should have matched those in her hair had been forgotten, and if Miss Corunna, all as she was, did not catch up a hat, and spin round the corner like a whirlwind, returning with the same in less than no time, triumphant.

Then came such a displaying and spreading of trains, and showing of accoutrements to the delighted household, who could never look nor wonder, nor admire enough.

Granny said they really should be late, and was almost inclined to be a little put out, when it was proved that she was completely wrong, that they were among the very earliest on the line of carriages. Granny was sure that in her day people had been wont to set off earlier, and hoped that there was no falling off in the attendance on Her Majesty's drawing-rooms. She would have been sorry, very sorry, to have witnessed any diminution of their ancient splendor, and so on.

The dear old lady was soon consoled. That there was no falling off, and no curtailment, was obvious in a very short period, and she could then sit proudly up, and gaze upon the fair young face opposite with little thrills of fond emotion and anticipation, such as from time to time brought the quiet tear into either eye.

Granny was looking beautiful herself.

Her train of black satin, lined with some old, old brocade, rich and rustling, such as the little Court dressmaker had seldom seen or handled before, and which made her little eyes twinkle now, was such as suited her stately, queen-like presence; and although our gracious Queen does forbid high necks and long sleeves on these occasions, granny had contrived so to befrill and berufle herself that the poor dear old wrinkles were quite invisible beneath the soft folds, and were, indeed, as completely out of sight as though they had been veiled.

All her ancient diamonds and some of Geraldine's too, for Jerry would wear none of them—looked brave in granny's silvery hair.

Jerry had contented herself with a single row of milky pearls round her white throat, than which, indeed, nothing could have looked more soft and tender, so that even granny had not had the heart nor conscience to press the diamonds back upon her, even while she had hardly felt it fair to shine herself in borrowed splendor.

But to be sure, Geraldine shone unaided. She looked such a fresh bright, radiant young thing in her simple white, with no adornments save the string of pearls, that, in the partial eyes so proudly bent upon her, it seemed there would not, could not be a fairer rosebud blown that day.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Woods of the Northwest.

At the inter-state exhibition of the northwest, now closed, which was held at Tacoma, Wash., the finest wood shown was that of the Douglas pine, otherwise known as red fir—rather course in grain, but exceedingly tough, and capable of bearing almost any strain. Both English and French experts have pronounced it superior to any wood for ship-building, bridges, and other strong work. It will bend or twist like iron, but no pressure can break it squarely as other woods break. When it parts it is in long, jagged rents. Other valuable woods are the red cedar, yellow, black, and bull pine, hemlock, spruce, oak, maple, and ash. The yellow pine is generally utility lumber, red cedar furnishes the best shingles in the world, and western spruce is almost as good as oak for finishing purpose. A curly maple which grows in the Pacific coast states is exceptionally suited to cabinet work. There were several pieces of furniture at the fair made of this wood, three handsome boats and a piano.

Then and Now.

A Father was complaining recently of the way in which his children destroyed their clothing.

He said: "Why, when I was a boy I only had one suit of clothes, and I had to take care of it. I was only allowed one pair of shoes a year in those days."

There was a pause, and then the youngest boy spoke up said:

"My, dad, you have a much better time of it now you are living with us."

J. COLEMAN DRAYTON assures a New York paper that he "wants no publicity in his divorce case." That was two years ago at least.

WHEN THE WOMEN VOTE.

A circular came in the course of the mail,
A circular dainty and white;
'Twas printed in script and well gotten up,
And worded in fashion polite;
In envelope square and monogram, too,
Some function it seemed to denote,
But when it was read it proved but to be
A brief invitation to vote.

She pondered it over and knitted her brow;
She never had had one before;
Then studied the date for a minute or two,
And thought of engagements a score.
And could she find time? she asked of herself—
She'd a luncheon she knew for that day,
And an afternoon tea she'd ought to attend;
The outlook was pleasant and gay.

The new invitation was novel, of course,
And that had a charm of its own,
But the joys of a tea she had tasted before,
While those of the polls were unknown.
She wearily sighed, and she picked up her pen
As one whom a problem besets,
And the campaign committee received the next day
Her daintily written regrets.
—Boston Graphic.

THREE BLACK BAGS.

As I often say to my wife, when she blames me for forgetting her little commissions, it's a queer thing, is the mind, and great is the force of habit. I never forget to do anything I'm in the habit of doing, but as Tilly usually attends to the shopping herself I'm not in the habit of calling at the butcher's or the grocer's on my way home from business, and therefore—well, therefore, I don't call three times out of five that she tells me to.

Don't I catch it? No; not overmuch, anyhow. For one thing, we haven't been married very long, and Tilly agrees that it's only reasonable I should have time to learn to be more careful, and, for another, if it wasn't for the hold a habit has on me, I doubt whether we should be married yet, or at least we shouldn't be living in our own house, with the furniture all bought at a large discount for cash.

I am a clerk in the service of a firm of colliery and quarry owners at Lington, and every Saturday morning I go out to Westerby, a village some thirty miles off among the moors, to pay the quarrymen there their wages.

It's an awkward sort of journey. I have to start by the first train in the morning, which leaves Lington at 6, change at Drask, our junction with the main line, leave the main line again at Thurley, some ten miles further south, and do the rest of the distance in the brake van of a mineral train.

The money (nearly 100 pounds, mostly silver) I always carry in a little black leather bag, one of those bags you see by scores every day, which may contain anything from a packet of sandwiches and a collar to a dynamite bomb, and it's my habit when in the train to put my bag on the rack facing me. I rarely keep it on the seat by my side, and I don't like to put it over my head.

If it has to go there because the opposite rack is full I am always uneasy about it, fancying I shall forget when I get out. I never have forgotten it yet, but one Saturday in November, 1893, I did something which might have been worse. I took the wrong bag when I left the train at Thurley.

It happened in this way. On Friday night I went out with Tilly to a party, which broke up so late that I had only just time to change my clothes and get a sort of apology for breakfast before catching my train. Consequently I slept all the way from Lington to Drask, and at Drask I stumbled, only half awake, into the first third-class compartment I came to.

Three of the corner seats were occupied and I took the fourth, though there was no room on the opposite rack for my bag. I couldn't put it on the seat at my side, either, because the man opposite in the other corner had his legs up and I didn't care to disturb him. I ought, of course, to have kept it on my knees, but it was rather heavy and I was sleepy, so I just slung it over my head, settled myself down and dropped off again almost before the train was clear of the station.

I didn't wake up until we stopped at Thurley, and even then I fancy I should have slept on if the two men at the far end of the compartment had not wanted to get out.

"What station is this?" I asked, sitting up and drawing my legs from across the door to let them pass. "Otterford, I suppose?"

"No, Thurley," said one, and up I jumped in a hurry, took my bag, as I thought, from the rack opposite me, and got down on to the platform just as the guard whistled the train away.

"You ran it a bit fine that time, mister," remarked the man who had saved me from being carried past my destination. "I wonder if that other chap meant going on? He was as fast asleep as you."

"Oh, he's all right," said his companion. "He's booked for London. I heard him say so when he got in."

I felt much refreshed when we arrived at the quarries. After I had had a wash and done full justice to a second breakfast at the "Miner's Arms" I felt ready to face my morning's work of making up the men's pay sheets. Then, as I felt in my pocket for my keys, my memory began to entertain a vague suspicion that that bag was somehow unfamiliar to it. However, my key fitted the lock, and as I turned it my suspicion vanished, but only to be replaced a moment later by an astounding certainty.

Instead of resting upon the familiar brown paper packages of silver and little canvas bags of gold, my eyes were dazzled by a many-colored iridescence, which shone forth from the inside of that bag as soon as I opened it.

"Diamonds, by jingo!" I cried as I started back amazed.

I thought it best to keep my discovery to myself.

The bag, I guessed, was probably the property of a jeweler's traveler—a traveler in a large way of business, too, thought I, as I peered into it in the least exposed corner of the office and found it almost full of what, little as I knew about precious stones, I felt certain were valuable jewels.

Rings, brooches, bracelets, loose stones, at least one necklace, a gold watch and chain, some bank notes and a considerable sum of sovereigns were all mixed up together in a chaotic confusion which seemed at least inconsistent with their habits. I began to doubt whether it was consistent with honest possession of, at all events, the contents of the bag on the part of my late fellow passenger—the man who was booked for London, and who had been asleep when I left the train at Thurley. No doubt he was awake and also aware of his loss by this time. What a state of mind he must be in, too. But just as I was trying to realize his state of mind a murmur of gruff voices and a shuffling of heavy feet in the yard outside reminded me that it was time to pay the men.

Hurriedly summoning the foreman, and telling him that a mistake had been made in supplying me with money, I went down into the village, and, after some trouble, succeeded in collecting enough silver and copper to serve my purpose. Then, with that precious bag out of sight between my feet, I paid the men.

As soon as I had finished my task I returned, per mineral train, to Thurley, and there I broke my journey. On calmly reviewing all the circumstances of the case in the seclusion of the brake van I had decided that the police rather than the railway authorities ought to be first informed of my mistake, and the inspector to whom I told my story agreed with me.

"I am very glad you came straight to me," said he, turning the contents of the bag out on his desk. "If you can hold your tongue for a week or two it's just possible we may catch the gentleman who put this nice little lot together."

"You think they have been stolen, then?" I asked.

"Think!" he repeated, smiling at my simplicity. "I know, my boy. And when and where, too; though, unfortunately, not by whom. Run your eye over this."

"This" was a list of jewels and other valuables missing from Erlingthorpe, Lord Yerbury's place, where, the inspector said, a well-planned robbery had been carried out on the Thursday evening.

"You seem to have nailed a lot," he went on; "but we may as well go through the articles seriatim."

We did so, and found there was nothing missing except the money I had taken to pay the men.

"Now, look here, young man," he went on, eying me keenly, "I'm not in charge of this case—yet—but, if you'll do as I tell you, I hope I may be in the course of a few days. There's a tidy reward offered for the recovery of the property, as you see. That, I take it, you've earned already; but are you game to help me catch the man? There's a further reward for nabbing him, which, of course, I can't touch—officially—and don't particularly want. My aim is promotion. Do you understand?"

"I think so," said I; "and I am willing to help you all I can. What do you want me to do?"

"Nothing," he replied; "just literally nothing. Go home. Keep a still tongue in your head and a sharp eye on the agony columns of the London papers, and wait till you hear from me. I'll take charge of these articles and give you a receipt for them, but don't be surprised if you see them still advertised as missing."

A few days later the inspector set his trap. It took the shape of an advertisement begging the gentleman with whom "G. C." inadvertently exchanged bags to communicate with G. C. at the address he would find in G. C.'s pocket-book.

Personally, I didn't think our fish would be foolish enough to rise to this bait, but my friend, the inspector, was more hopeful.

"Luckily for us, Mr. Corner," said he, when I took advantage of my next visit to the quarries to call upon him, "there's always a sort of wary or twist in the mind of the habitual criminal which prevents him from believing in the honesty of other folks. Now, not a soul but you and I and the chief constable knows those jewels are as good as back on Lady Yerbury's dressing-table, or wherever she's in the habit of leaving 'em lying about. Therefore the hue and cry after them's not likely to die away yet awhile, and there'll be a genuine ring about it which should persuade our unknown friend that you've got 'em and mean to convert 'em to your own use, as we say in the profession, but, being an amateur, don't know how to go about turning 'em into more cash than the reward comes to, and that, consequently, you are anxious to come to terms with him. See?"

For a month Lady Yerbury's diamonds were sought in vain and for a month "G. C." continued to appeal to his late fellow traveler, also in vain, but at the end of that time his patience was rewarded by the appearance of an advertisement, telling him, if he really meant business, to write to "B. H." at a given address.

The letter I wrote at the dictation of Inspector Bland was more cautious than incriminating, but as it produced a reply which the inspector deemed satisfactory it was followed by others less carefully worded, until at last it stood pledged to personally deliver, for the compensation of £2,000, the stolen jewels to one Benjamin Hurst, whom I was to meet at a public house in Chillingham.

Now, I don't pretend to be braver than the average man of peaceful and sedentary habits, and when I saw what sort of a house the "Spotted Dog" was I began to wish I had refused to have anything to do with Inspector Bland's scheme.

The little company of disreputable-looking loafers hanging about the bar eyed me curiously as I entered, and when I asked the landlord if Mr. Hurst was in, one of them raised a general laugh offering to carry my luggage up to him.

"No larks, Bill," said the landlord sternly. "Mary, show the gentleman Mr. Hurst's room."

I found Mr. Hurst a decidedly surly rascal. He began by grumbling at the hardness of the bargain I was driving with him, and swearing at his luck generally. Then, being perhaps emboldened by the conciliatory manner I thought it prudent to adopt, he tried to make better terms, offering me first £500 less, and finally insisting that he ought at least to be allowed to deduct from my £2,000 the sum I had used to pay the men.

Inspector Bland had allowed me a quarter of an hour for negotiations. At the end of that time he proposed to make a raid upon the house.

"And mind," he had said in his jocular way, "we don't find the property still in your hands, Mr. Coroner. It would be a pretty kettle of fish if we had to prosecute you for unlawful possession, wouldn't it?"

In accordance with these instructions I haggled with Mr. Hurst a little while and then allowed him to have his way, whereupon he, having satisfied himself that the bag which I restored to him still contained his spoils, handed me £1,800 in what afterward turned out to be very creditable imitations of Bank of England notes.

"I suppose you don't want no receipt?" he growled.

"No, thank you," said I, "I think we may mutually dispense with that formality. Good morning."

I turned to leave the room as I spoke, but before I could unlock the door it was burst open from the outside, not, unfortunately for me, by the police, but by the man whom the landlord had called Bill, a powerful ruffian, who promptly knocked me down and knelt upon my chest.

"Quick, Ben, get out of this," he cried. "It's a plant. No, no. The window, you fool," he added, as Mr. Hurst, bag in hand, made for the door. "The police are in the bar already."

As Mr. Hurst opened the window he cursed me with much volubility and bitterness, and as soon as he was outside on the leads he did worse.

"Stand clear, Bill," he cried, and his friend obeyed him. I scrambled to my feet, but immediately dropped again with a bullet from Mr. Hurst's revolver in my shoulder.

I am not at all sorry that Mr. Hurst fired at me, as Inspector Bland says it was much easier to convict him of attempted murder than to prove he actually stole those jewels, and the inspector doubts, too, whether he would have got fifteen years if merely charged with receiving them. But I do wish he hadn't hit me.

However, even the pain my wound still gives me it not without its compensation. It prevents me from feeling any twinges of conscience when I reflect that my furniture cost Mr. Hurst his liberty, for Lord Yerbury took it for granted that he was the thief, and paid me the extra reward he had offered for his apprehension.

Inspector Bland won the promotion he coveted, and is now stationed at Lington. His wedding present was characteristic. It was a black bag, with my initials on either side in white letters about six inches long.—All the Year Round.

Confusing.

English verbs are often a source of great confusion and trouble to foreigners who atempt to learn the language. A writer in an educational journal thus describes the trouble a Frenchman had with the verb "to break."

"I begin to understand your language better," said my French friend, Monsieur Dubois, to me; "but your verbs trouble me still; you mix them up so with prepositions."

"I saw your friend, Mrs. Murkeson, just now," he continued. "She says she intends to break down her school earlier than usual. Am I right there?"

"Break up the school she must have said."

"Oh, yes, I remember; break up school."

"Why does she do that?" I asked.

"Because her health is broken into."

"Broken down."

"Broken down? Oh, yes. And, indeed, since fever has broken up in the town——"

"Broken out."

"She thinks she will leave it for three or four weeks."

"Will she leave her house alone?"

"No; she is afraid it will be broken—broken—how do I say that?"

"Broken into."

"Certainly, it is what I meant to say."

"Is her son to be married soon?"

"No, that engagement is broken—broken——"

"Broken off."

"Ah, I had not heard that."

"She is very sorry about it. Her son only broke the news down to her last week. Am I right there? I am so anxious to speak English well."

"He merely broke the news; no preposition this time."

"It is hard to understand. That young man, her son, is a fine young fellow; a breaker, I think."

"A broker, and a very fine fellow. Good-afternoon."

So much for the verb "to break."

Yet She Clamors for Suffrage.

"I am sure Jack will get the letter in time," said one pretty girl to another, as they stood at the stamp window. "He always goes to the postoffice in the evening, and you see I've put a special delivery stamp on it."