

THE COMET OF A SEASON!

By JUSTIN MCCARTHY, M. P.

CHAPTER XIII.

RELATIVE AFFINITIES.

"To sum it up, six long years of bed-ridden sickness, costing \$200 per year, total \$1,200—all of this expense was stopped by three bottles of Hop Bitters, taken by my wife. She has done her own household work for a year since, without the loss of a day, and I want everybody to know it for their benefit."—N.Z. Farmer.

ANOTHER CABLE.

LONDON, Sept. 21.—A contract has been signed between the Portuguese government and M. Brennan for the laying of a cable between Lisbon and the United States, touching at the Azores.

MOGALE'S COMPOUND BUTTERNUT PILLS are carefully prepared with a CONCENTRATED EXTRACT made from the BUTTERNUT and scientifically combined with other Vegetable principles that render them without doubt one of the best LIVER and STOMACH PILLS now before the public.

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THE FATAL FRENCH DUEL.

The duel between M. de Massas and M. D'ichard, in which the former was killed, will, says the Paris correspondent of the London Times, come before a court of justice. It is announced that the four seconds will be prosecuted ex officio, and that M. D'ichard, as soon as his three wounds have healed, will be charged with homicide by imprudence. This duel has a particularly painful character, inasmuch as the antagonists were equally inexperienced, and fell upon each other without even having placed themselves on guard. The engagement lasted scarcely one minute. M. de Massas threw himself on M. D'ichard, striking him a blow, and the latter, without even covering himself, held his weapon forward, M. de Massas throwing himself blindly on it. It was M. de Massas who took prominence in the duel, wishing to bring the antagonist to bay, of which he had just taken the management. Both adversaries were Bonapartists the one a Jacobin, the other a member of the party in favor of Prince Victor. The Paris correspondent of the London Times says:—"M. D'ichard is dangerously wounded. His adversary was so rapid that when he drew blood the seconds had no time to interpose until his impetuosity was checked by a thrust full in the chest. M. Massas was from Port Vendre, and joined the marines as a cadet. Being hot tempered he had to leave the service. When lieutenant he served at Moulon and Bazailles, and was there captured, but escaped and joined Bonaparte. He was wounded at Villersexel, where he was received and nursed by a rich family. A daughter of the host fell in love with him. She is now his widow and the mother of four children. She brought him a large fortune. To keep him out of hot water she took a house in the country. He went, in spite of her, into journalism, and started Le Combat, a militant Bonapartist organ which preached the coup d'etat doctrine. It had not a dozen purchasing readers, and died yesterday of inanition while M. Massas and D'ichard were fighting in the garden of a common friend at Nogent. They previously went to fight at St. Germain, but Mme. Massas sent gardemans after her husband. The seconds thought that the duel being prevented by force majeure honor was satisfied. This position, being disputed, was referred to MM. Casagrac and Cunéo d'Ornano who gave a negative decision in the interest, they said, of Bonapartism. They were obliged to go out again. The last words of the dying duellist were, "My poor wife, my children."

SKINNY MEN.

"Wells' Health Renewer" restores health and vigor, cures Dyspepsia, Impotence, Sexual Debility. \$1.

Justice as administered in the petty courts of England is rigorous if the offender is poor and friendless. Two reputable laborers stole a handful each of oats from a field to feed their hungry donkey, and a magistrate sent them to prison for two months.

With Diamond Dyes any lady can get as good results as the best practical dyer. Every dye warranted true to name and sample.

The Salvation Army in England is now divided against itself, a large faction refusing to submit to the rigorous discipline hitherto maintained by Gen. Booth. Opposing objections occasionally fight on meetings one another in the streets, and break up rival meetings. At Hasley a riot was quelled by the police.

Mr. C. P. Crown, Crown Land Agent, Saint Ste. Marie, writes: "Two or three of my friends and myself were recommended to try Northrop & Lyman's Emulsion of Cod Liver Oil and Hypophosphites of Lime and Soda, in preference to Compound Syrup of Hypophosphites. We prefer your Emulsion, and think it better for the system than the Syrup, &c."

Two women went beyond their depth while bathing at Herne Bay, England. A man swam out to them, and they clung wildly to him, though he begged them not to do it, declaring that all would drown unless they left his arms free. A boatman came to the rescue, and the women were saved, but the hero lost his life.

"A doubtful friend is worse than a certain enemy," and vice versa a certain friend is infinitely better than a doubtful enemy. Thus Kidney-Wort is incomparably better friend to the human race than whole catalogues full of doubtful nostrums. It is an infallible remedy for that tormenting disease piles. It removes the bowels gently and freely, and thus removes the cause. Do not fail to try it faithfully either in dry or liquid form.

A bill was passed by the British Parliament three years ago authorizing anybody to open an institution of retreat for drunkards. Friends of temperance believed that great good would be accomplished, but the Government inspector reports that only two retreats have been started, and that the inmates are restricted.

Messrs. Parker & Laird, of Hilldale, write:—"Our Mr. Laird having occasion to visit Scotland, and knowing the excellent qualities of Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil, concluded to take some with him, and the result has been very astonishing. We may say that in several instances it has effected cures when ailments had been pronounced incurable by eminent practitioners."

There was silence between the two girls for a moment or two after Melissa had made her revelation. The dusk of evening was gathering; the air was soft; Geraldine's windows were open; the footfall of passengers echoed along the street; and the sound of the barrel-organ, which had touched Melissa's sensibility not long before, was still heard in the room, faint from farther distance borne. Geraldine could hear distinctly the beating of Melissa's heart as she sat close to the troubled girl. She could also hear the faint ticking of the pretty little clock that stood on the chimney-piece; and an odd, whimsical fancy came into her head that the little pit-pat of the pendulum ought to represent the beating of the absent lover's heart, keeping time and tune to the throbs of Melissa's enamored bosom. Geraldine assumed that it was an ordinary love affair, but that perhaps the young girl required some little discreet encouragement from the maiden. She was conscious even then, and she remembered it well afterward, of a certain sense of relief in the knowledge that it was not Clement Hope on whom Melissa's uncontrolled affections were fixed. "She would never do for him," Geraldine thought; "she hasn't soul enough; she's too petulant; she couldn't make him happy."

Geraldine was sorry for Melissa, and angry with her too. But she was not at first much alarmed by Melissa's disclosure. It did not occur to her to think who the person could be to whom Melissa had made her confession of love, and she was more inclined to be amused than shocked. "Is this any one," she asked, "whom your father would like?" "I don't know," said Melissa, coldly. "I have not consulted my father."

"But won't your father expect to be consulted?" "I don't think my father would care to be consulted about his daughter making a fool of herself and writing a silly letter to a man."

"He won't answer my letter," Melissa composedly answered, "because he doesn't know my name."

"Oh—then you didn't sign it? You didn't write in your own name?" "No," Melissa answered, in a dismal tone, "I did not get so far as that—but I dare say I shall some day."

"Well, you are a very dreadful little girl, Melissa, and that is the truth of it. I hope you won't get so far as you say. I hope you will be content with your anonymous out-pouring of homage. But I should like to know who the man is, and I think as you don't mind telling me so far, you might trust me a little farther, perhaps."

"What good will it do you to know?" "Well, you see, I think I could better judge whether this humor is likely to last with you or not, and whether he is likely to find out his mysterious admirer, and whether it would matter if he did. Is he a very young man?" "No."

"He is not a very old man, I suppose?" "No, he is not old, and he is not young, and he might be any age. I wish I had never seen him. No, I don't. I'd rather not have lived than not see him."

but now there began to mingle with her concern for Melissa a certain vague, undefinable sense of alarm about herself. Mr. Montana's manner had from the first been unwelcome to her; and if others saw it as well as she, if others had the same impression forced upon them, if a girl like Melissa could see it, how distressing it must be to be brought continually into a sort of companionship with Montana? Always there had seemed something ominous to Geraldine in her relationship with him. She was not afraid of him as others were, or impressed by him and his strange manners and his singular beauty. But there was something uncanny in the manner in which his shadow seemed always to be thrown across her path. Her first thought on hearing Melissa's words was a longing to go away somewhere, anywhere, out of Montana's range; and then came back to her the more reasonable thought that she had better where she was and try to help Melissa out of her difficulty, and if possible help her to cure herself of her foolish passion. She went to work resolutely to reason with the girl, but did not seem to make much impression.

"Let me alone," said Melissa, at last; "advising is never any good with me, nor arguing, nor lecturing. It was always my way; the more I was pressed on to do a thing, the more I wanted to do it. You can't keep me back, Geraldine, from doing anything that comes into my mind. I could not keep myself back; I will try to keep out of this thing as long as I can, but some day I shall tell him all this one way or another. I shall either write it or I shall speak it. I shall not be able to keep it in; and I suppose he will rebuke me and preach me a sermon and tell my father all about it, and Capt. Marlon will shake his head over me and think what a bad girl I am, and what good girls his daughters are—although I don't know that either; I fancy one of them, at all events, is nearly as far gone as I am myself. But anyhow you will all be ashamed of me, and I shall be ashamed of myself. But I am in love with him all the same, and he must come to know it, and that's all about it."

There was not much use in saying more on the matter just then. Melissa's words about Montana, and her hints about some one else as well as herself, made Geraldine unwilling to mention his name again.

"Now I hope I have shocked you enough for once," Melissa said, coldly, and "I'll go. I had better get the redness out of my eyes, hadn't I, before dinner? You can tell me, Geraldine, if you like; you can tell my father, or Captain Marlon, or Sydney, or anybody. I should fancy it would be the duty of a good girl to tell such a thing to a wicked girl's parents, but I am not a great authority on the subject. Do as you like; I don't much care."

"You dreadful little thing! you know I'll not betray you," Geraldine answered. "I don't know that I am not doing wrong; I don't know that I ought not to tell your father; but I won't. You trusted me, and I'll keep my trust. But oh, my poor child, how I wish you would speak to your father. Oh, when I had a father!"

"Yes," Melissa said, "I dare say!" She was going away scornfully; but something in Geraldine's expression seemed to strike her. She turned back and took Geraldine's hand gently, and asked in a low tone, "Will you kiss me, Geraldine?" Geraldine took the little palpitating girl in her arms and kissed her.

Montana was a constant visitor at Captain Marlon's house. He never missed a day. He came and went when he pleased. Sometimes, but not often, he dined and met people there; his habit, however, was to come in early in the day and before any ordinary visitor was likely to arrive. He was a good deal with Captain Marlon, who still remained under the impression that he was going to know all about Montana's schemes. He hardly ever failed to look into the drawing-room and see some of the young ladies.

With all Captain Marlon's admiration and reverence for his friend and possible leader, he could not help feeling that Montana's visits had strangely changed the atmosphere of the house. He was always glad to see Montana; and the singular fascination with which Montana had impressed him from the first in no wise diminished, but rather increased, from the frequency of their intercourse. But Captain Marlon could have wished sometimes that the women were out of the way. Montana's coming and going added strangely upon all of them. Katherine admitted him in the most open way, flattered him, hung upon his utterances, followed him about, one might say, almost like some faithful animal clinging to his master's heels. Captain Marlon did not like this. It puzzled him; it sometimes irritated him. His soft, affectionate, unsuspicious ways did not allow him to think that Katherine was trying to get up a flirtation with the prophet and leader, and indeed Montana's position of prophet and leader made it easy for women to offer any adulation to him without suggestion of levity. Yet Marlon did not like to see his daughter thus openly devoted to Montana. He thought there was something at least unsightly, not to say unwomanly, about it. He wondered Trescoe did not notice it; was sometimes glad he did not notice it, and sometimes thought it rather weak and silly that Trescoe did not see it and talk to her seriously and put a stop to it. On the other hand, the coming of Montana either sent Miss Rowan out of the room or condemned her to absolute silence. She clearly disliked and distrusted Montana as much as Captain Marlon's younger daughter believed in him and adored him. This, too, made Captain Marlon uncomfortable. He was very much attached to Miss Rowan. He was always happy to have her near him. He would have wished her to like everything he liked, to love all that he loved, to have the same tastes, inclinations, and tendencies as he had. It distressed him to find that she shrunk from Montana so openly, and to all appearance disliked him so much. He wondered that Montana was not repelled by it. He was afraid sometimes that Miss Rowan's manners might lead Montana to come less often.

Again and again Marlon was on the point of remonstrating with both young women—with Geraldine for her repelling manner to Montana, and with Mrs. Trescoe for her too open admiration. Then, he could not but observe with pain the strange ways of Melissa and the frequency of her visits to Montana. She crept into corners when he was there, and sookly spoke, but started or grew pale, or looked angry or alarmed, according as others spoke and she spoke to them. She was such an audacious, outspoken, unpolished chatterbox who changed into a melancholy, bitter, protracted creature. How Montana failed to notice that something was amiss with the little girl whenever he came into the room Captain Marlon failed to understand. Marlon himself was anything but an observant man. His sympathies

and not his observation guided him in this instance. When he cared about anybody, man or woman, he was sure to observe that person's movements closely and kindly and thus it was that he came to notice the strange ways of his old friend's only daughter. But Montana, who had been a sympathizer to guide him, and he hardly ever noticed the little girl whose odd ways disturbed Captain Marlon. To make matters worse, Katherine was always saying spiteful little things to her father about Melissa, and suggesting that Melissa was madly in love with Montana, and was making an exhibition of herself.

One day Marlon lost patience a little. "I tell you what, Katherine," he said, "I don't think little Melissa is the only woman in this house who sometimes makes an exhibition of herself. I think if I were you I wouldn't show such awful admiration for Montana."

Katherine got red and looked angry, but concealed her anger. "Why, papa," she said, "you are awfully fond of him—you adore him. I like to do whatever you do."

Marlon smiled in spite of himself at the absurdity of the answer. "That's all very well, Katherine," he said, "for me; but for a young woman to go on showing such admiration is quite another thing. I wonder how Trescoe likes it?" "But Frank doesn't care a bit," said Katherine. "He knows it's all right."

"Yes, yes, of course, we all know it's all right," said Marlon; "but, my dear, don't you think it would be better to be a little more reserved? I don't wonder at your admiring Montana. He is a man that every one must admire—at least, almost every one," he hastily added, as he remembered how Miss Rowan did not seem quite to admire him. "But then, you know, I think it would be more lady-like to be a little more reserved. After all, Montana is not an old man. He is still what would be called 'young,' and he looks younger than he really is, and he is very handsome."

"But then, you know, papa," said Katherine, "one does not think of him as one does of other men. I am sure I don't; I am sure I should not have the courage. One might as soon think of flirting with John of Leyden or with some saint."

Marlon said no more, but he observed that the adulation went on as much as ever, and that it did not seem to be just the sort of adulation which a woman offers to a John of Leyden or to a saint. However, he was sure there was nothing amiss with Katherine, he said to himself, and Montana was the safest of men. Montana never for a moment put on the manner of one who flirts with women, or is conscious that they are trying to flirt with him. His manner was just the same to men and women who he liked. Evidently, Marlon thought, he did not like Miss Rowan. He seldom spoke to her, although Marlon noticed that he often fixed his eyes on her.

Another little trouble to sweet-tempered Captain Marlon was the growing melancholy of his daughter Sydney. Young Fanshawe came very often, and was intensely devoted to Miss Rowan. He was very friendly with Sydney, as he was with Melissa, but he showed an undisguised devotion to Geraldine. She talked to him and went about with him as freely almost as if he had been her brother. It sometimes happened that poor Sydney was thrown a little into the shade—was left, as it were, in a corner by herself. Once or twice, when Clement Hope called after their walk to the Tower, she caught herself wishing that he would come very often, and thinking what a very handsome young man he was, and how like a picture, and how sweet and tender his ways were, and how very delicious it would be if he were only to be a little friendly and companion-like with her, and talk with her in a recess of the room as somebody was always talking with Geraldine. But then, always would come the reflection into Sydney's mind that most assuredly if Clement came often he would devote himself either to Melissa or to Geraldine, and that she would be left out in the cold just the same as before. Captain Marlon could not help helping that Sydney was depressed and dull sometimes, and that something was wrong with her. He often thought he noticed, with peculiar pain, that there was a certain coldness in her manner toward himself, and that her affection was much less demonstrative than it had ever been, although at no time had she the demonstrative ways of Katherine.

This puzzled as well as pained him. None of the talk had reached his ears which had sometimes come to those of his daughter. He did not remember that he was still a clever, handsome, attractive man, little past the prime of life as yet, with plenty of money, and that in his house, apparently on the most familiar and affectionate terms with him, and more so with him than with any other of his family, was a young, bright, and handsome girl who was believed to be poor, and who had all the world before her to make a way of living for herself. It never occurred to Captain Marlon that a good many people were likely enough to assume, as Mrs. Aquitaine had long since assumed, that Sydney Marlon would soon have a young stepmother.

CHAPTER XIV.

A CRISIS.

enough to see that they were of the same kind, breathing the same hysterical passion of selfish adoration and love. They had absolutely no effect upon Montana. The invitations to assist a new discoverer of perpetual motion had quite as much interest for him.

Not all those who sought Montana were wrecks. Stately galleons floating safely to port, tall "arminals" proud in their strength, gilded galleys with silken sails—these sought him out too. It became a matter of competition among the aristocratic to secure him for dinner, and even to get his presence for a few minutes at an evening party was an object to be intruded for long in advance. He only went among those who had shown some interest in his particular movement. No persuasion, no entreaty, could induce him to accept what may be called a general or miscellaneous invitation. He never consented to dine out or go out anywhere for the mere sake of meeting fashionable people and distinguished strangers.

Now, we have already mentioned the invitation pressed upon him by the Duke of Magdelin in the name of the duchess, which Montana had coldly and almost contemptuously declined. The refusal naturally only made the duchess still more eager to have him at her house, or even to meet him at some other house. It was impossible for her ever to unbend so far as to make the attempt again in her own name, even if there had been the least chance of success. She was therefore beginning quietly to give up the idea, and resigning herself to the conviction that after all these Americans have no manners. But her daughter, Lady Vanessa Barnes, was not to be so easily disconcerted. She had married a man who her mother did not like, and who was not of aristocratic rank, but who made up for his defects by having an immense amount of money, and by looking up to his young wife as the head of his house and the star of his existence.

Lady Vanessa Barnes held herself to be in a sort of rivalry to the duchess as regarded social distinction, and had never forgiven her mother the coldness which the duchess at one time showed to her future son-in-law. Lady Vanessa Barnes hardly ever made any movement in social life without having in the recesses of her mind some thought of the opportunity it gave her of showing how great a man her husband was, and how she could bring all the world to his feet as well as to her own. The moment she heard of the rebuff given to the duchess by Montana she determined that Montana must appear in her drawing-room, and be seen by the duchess there. She was very clever, very beautiful, very ignorant, full of audacity and self-complicity, and with about as much reverence in her nature as a school-boy has. She had heard a great deal about Montana, but to her he was for a long time only a funny sort of man, who had odd notions, and about whom people used to ttre her with their ravings. But he became a very important personage indeed when there was a chance of bringing him to her drawing-room and showing him off in triumph to her mother the duchess.

Lady Vanessa quickly went to work. She sought all her male friends who knew anything of Montana to try to get him to dine at her house, or even to come to one of her parties. All her plans proved failures. "I will have him all the same," she said to herself; and the more the difficulties seemed to grow, the greater grew her determination to overcome them.

She had not many accomplishments, but she was a remarkably good amateur actress. She had so much courage that she could always make the fullest use of any gift she possessed, and she had the audacious purity of a savage girl. She once played the part of a swan page at some private theatricals in her own house, and when the play was over she mingled with the company for the rest of the evening, making fearless and full display of her beautiful legs. Lady Vanessa went to hear Montana speak, and formed her opinion of him in a moment.

"The man has no more head than a pin," said the audacious lady. "I don't see anything in him. He is very handsome, but I don't care for beauty-men. I think I can manage him."

It was not difficult for any one interested in Montana's movements to find out where he passed his days and his evenings, with whom he had luncheon, and with whom he dined. He was dining one day with Captain Marlon and his household, and the ladies had left the room and the men were alone, when a servant brought a message that a person, who would give no name, wished particularly to speak a few words with Mr. Montana. Montana never refused to obey a summons of this kind. It suited his purpose to show that he was ready to receive an appeal from any one, however unknown, and that he placed himself and his services at the disposal of all humanity. He did not ask who the person was, or even whether it was a man or a woman. He instantly rose, as a soldier rises at the word of command, and left the dining-room.

dark eyes that looked into his own without a gleam of admiration or homage or coquetry, but only earnest resolve. "Montana became a little interested. "It isn't far, you say?" "Ten minutes' drive," said she. "My carriage will take you there. You may like although what I am doing, you might not lead you to think so; and I know you don't care for ladies. You would grant my request more readily, I dare say, if I were a poor milliner's girl. No matter; I cannot help myself; I must be what I was born. And now let us waste no more time. Come with me."

Montana took his hat, and went with her. They got into a carriage and drove in silence through some streets and squares. She never spoke a word, neither did he. It did not escape his observation, as she moved once or twice in the carriage, that under her veil and cloak she was in evening dress. They came to a stately house. Montana got out and handed her from the carriage. "Come with me," she said.

They passed up a flight of stairs among many servants and some bustle. Montana was more and more puzzled. She drew him into a small side room, threw off her veil and cloak, and showed her tall and very handsome figure in evening dress. Then, with a laugh, she said, "Mr. Montana, you don't know me. I am Lady Vanessa Barnes, and my mother is the Duchess of Magdelin. I tried to get hold of you in a fair and open way. I sent you invitations again and again, and you would not come. So I determined to carry you off; and have carried you off, and played this ridiculous game; and you will only look foolish if you don't fall into the thing now, and let me do as I please. Otherwise it will be all over the town to-morrow that the great Mr. Montana was made the victim of a practical joke by Lady Vanessa Barnes. You can't help yourself; so come, forgive me, the dear man, and let us go into my drawing-room, and I present you to my mother."

Montana had at least one great quality of leadership. The more sudden a difficulty, the more quickly he saw how to deal with it. When driven into a dangerous corner all his hesitancy and view vagueness left him, and he could survey the whole situation and make up his mind what to do in an instant. He saw at once that, trivial and ridiculous as his present embarrassment might appear, it was really serious for him. It would never do if it were to get known through London that the great, mysterious leader of men had been made the victim of a saucy young woman's practical joke, and turned into the laughing-stock of a fashionable drawing-room. Anything must be done to avoid that. He at once accepted Lady Vanessa's invitation, and took her apologies with a graceful gravity which almost impressed her. He met her guests, was the Hon of the evening, was inexpressibly polite to the Duchess of Magdelin, condescending to the duke, and managed somehow to give the duke and duchess, and many other people, to understand that he had come there solely to oblige Lady Vanessa. He spoke of Lady Vanessa with an almost paternal tenderness. Every one assumed that she was among his most devoted followers and closest friends.

Lady Vanessa herself was positively bewildered. "Call me good at acting!" she said to herself. "I can't compare with him. I'm not in it at all. One would think the man had dangled me in his arms in my innocent infancy!"

She had gained her point, however, and felt grateful to him, and was determined never to let any one know what she had done. She began to feel interested in him, and to have a sort of admiration for him. His coolness, and what she would irreverently have called his "cheek," overpowered her.

Montana was determined, for his part, to exhibit Lady Vanessa everywhere in the character of his close friend and pupil. In no other way, he thought, could he escape the risk of being one day or other made ridiculous by the true story getting out. He would exhibit her in the East End as well as in the West. The congregation of the Church of Free Souls must see the beautiful and high-born Lady Vanessa accompany him thither on Sunday. That would make all safe. Even if the story got about then, it would not be believed. Montana felt a good deal interested, too, in the sprinkly audacity of the young woman. The very manner in which she had made light of him gave her a curious interest in his eyes. He was weary of the adoration and adulation of women. He positively admired this woman who had laughed at him, and was ready, if opportunity should arise, to laugh at him again. He had been drawn to Geraldine Rowan from the first by her evident dislike of him, and for him an almost impassioned admiration of the girl who had thus treated him. He was beginning to believe that Geraldine was the indispensable companion of his life and sharer in his plans. He told himself that she was predestined for him, and predestined to conquer her, to make her love him, to make her become his wife. He had set his heart upon this; and in what he set his heart upon Montana always saw the finger of Providence. It was not so much that he loved Geraldine, but that he would not do without her; she must be his.

In a very much modified and milder way, he felt a desire now for the friendship of Lady Vanessa. Barnes. The lady, for her part, liked his company well enough. It amused her to go about with him here and there; to drive him in her pony-carriage; to exhibit him in the Park; to parade him at Mr. Barnes' dinner-parties. He was still as much as ever the lion of the season, and it was something for her to be always able to command his presence. She had tried to penetrate into the story of his early life, and the one only return she had for her curiosity was an impression which somehow seemed to be conveyed to her that he was a man of high birth, who had deliberately made up his mind at an early age to sever himself from the society to which he naturally belonged. He did not say this to her, but she came to think it; perhaps had fancied it all for herself. Still, when she did jump to the conclusion, she let Montana know quickly enough that such was her conviction, and Montana did not contradict her or set her right. He only smiled a sweet, vague smile and said nothing. He was about this time beginning himself to think that there must be some truth in this theory of his lofty ancestry and stately youth.

It was easily arranged, then, that Lady Vanessa and her husband should go with Montana one Sunday to the Church of Free Souls. On the day appointed for the expedition Montana was himself to deliver an exhortation to the Free Souls who lived on the smoke-wreaths of doctrine that went up from the altars of that temple. Montana came to the church with Lady Vanessa and her handmaid in their carriage; he handed Lady Vanessa out in the full sight of an awestricken crowd. Even the most uncomprehending democratic spirits of the place were

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