

smiled at the arch expression of that bright blue eye.

"Was the letter from your cousin Cecil?" she asked with a significant smile.

"I had two letters; one was from him."

"And the other?"

"Was from Sir Gervase Montague. He is also coming to Canada."

"I thought as much," remarked Maud pointedly. "I knew he would come one of these days."

"Are you not glad to hear of Cecil's intended visit, Maud?" Hilda continued, blushing at her young friend's remarks. "You know you have often found it dull here, so different from Montreal."

"I am glad to hear of the arrival of anyone to enliven our solitude," replied the young girl frankly.

"Cecil will be a *beau* for you, Maud, and mind you play your cards well, for he is a good *parti*; he has an estate worth some thousands a year."

The arrival of a gentleman at the Lodge—as Miss Tremayne's residence was called—was something pleasant to look forward to. It would break the monotony of their quiet life, and Maud Castonell's beautiful face betrayed the pleasure Hilda's information gave her.

"What sort of person is Mr. Godfrey?" asked Mrs. Castonell.

"Quite handsome, mamma. Hilda has his likeness. You have seen and admired it," remarked her daughter in surprise at the question.

"Yes, I know, but my question referred to Mr. Godfrey's character."

"Cecil is a young man with fine principles. I like him very much, and feel considerable pleasure at the prospect of seeing him again."

"When do you expect Sir Gervase and Mr. Godfrey," asked Maud.

"In about two weeks."

"Will they come out in the same steamer?"

"Very probably they will cross the ocean together. Cecil was aware of Sir Gervase's intention to visit Canada."

"And the purpose that brings him here also, I presume. Does he come to act as groomsmen to the Baronet, or to give the bride away?" and again there was a mischievous gleam in the bright eyes she fixed on Miss Tremayne.

"Not to give the bride away," remarked Mrs. Castonell quietly. "Mr. Grant Berkeley, being Hilda's oldest relative, would do that. And now let us consider what preparations are necessary for the reception of these gentlemen," she continued, turning to Miss Tremayne.

"What rooms will they occupy?"

"Those from which there is the best view of the river and mountains. Cecil is a great admirer of fine scenery. He will be delighted with Canada, I know."

"Then I shall give up my room," said Maud. "It commands the finest view in the house, and I shall occupy one of the back rooms looking out upon the gloomy pine-wood."

CHAPTER XLIII. CONCLUSION.

ABOUT two weeks after this conversation two gentlemen stood on the deck of a steamer ascending the Richelieu from Sorel, eagerly looking out for Miss Tremayne's residence which the captain told them they were now approaching. These travellers were Sir Gervase Montague and Cecil Godfrey. They preferred this route in order to see the scenery and fertile country along the Richelieu which is justly celebrated. Ere long a bend in the river brought them in view of the Lodge; looking so picturesquely conspicuous on the verdant eminence above the water, its grey walls boldly contrasting with the dark pine trees behind. Half an hour afterwards and the steamer was passing below the Lodge, but the shades of night had wrapped the scene, preventing the approach of the steamer being observed from the house.

"We stop here," said Sir Gervase, addressing the captain. "Can you put us and our luggage on shore?"

A boat was soon alongside to remove the gentlemen from the steamer, and in a few minutes they were landed at the foot of the steep stairs leading from the height above to the water. Leaving their servants to remove the luggage, the Baronet and Cecil walked up the gravelled walk leading to the house.

"Hilda will not expect us to-night, we shall take her by surprise," remarked Cecil, "but it will be an agreeable surprise, I know. How long is it since you have seen her, Gervase?"

"About five years. A long, sad time our separation has been, but thank heaven it is ended now."

There were lights in the drawing-room, and through the open windows the brightness was streaming on the parterre outside. The occupants of the room were plainly seen from without. Mrs. Castonell and Hilda sitting at a work-table sewing, and Maud reclining gracefully in a low chair, reading aloud, the clear, sweet intonations of her voice being heard distinctly in the stillness of the night.

"Who is that beautiful girl, Gervase?" asked Cecil in tones of admiration.

"I really do not know," the Baronet replied, glancing towards her. He only had eyes for Hilda, on whose face he could see traces of the

hidden grief borne so long, but now at an end for ever!

As the gentlemen approached the house the sound of their footsteps on the gravelled walk caught the ear of Maud. She looked up eagerly and listened.

"Some one approaches," she remarked, and laying down her book, she advanced to the window and looked out.

Two tall figures were standing within a few paces. She gave a little scream and hastily retreated to her seat, in some alarm.

"Pardon our unceremonious entrance, Hilda," exclaimed Cecil Godfrey, now advancing with Sir Gervase into the room.

Miss Tremayne rose, in joyful excitement, to welcome her guests.

"How did you come? I did not expect you, to-night there is no train from Montreal at this hour," she said hurriedly, trying to appear calm, anxious to hide the confusion, the excess of joy which her sudden meeting with Sir Gervase caused.

"We came by boat up the Richelieu. Gervase wished to see this part of the country, and as this is to be his last visit to Canada he would not again have an opportunity."

"How did you like the scenery along the river from Sorel?" asked Mrs. Castonell, when the ceremony of introduction, and the first excitement were over.

"It is exceedingly romantic! I am delighted with Canada!" was Cecil's enthusiastic answer. "If I had not a place of my own in Ireland, I should be tempted to settle down here the rest of my life. Everything in nature is on a grand scale. Such rivers! Such forests! Even the moon seems larger and the sun brighter," he added, laughing.

"There must be a striking contrast to the eye of a stranger between Canada and the old country," observed Mrs. Castonell.

"There is! Even the people here look different—so happy and independent. You meet none of the wretched peasantry you see in Ireland, who seem afraid to walk erect or look their superior in the face. There is nothing of their servile cringing manner in the poor of Canada. It does one good to breathe the free air of this country."

"You are enthusiastic, Cecil!" said Hilda, smiling at her cousin's outburst of feeling.

"You have not yet seen half the glorious beauty of the land," broke in Sir Gervase warmly.

"I suppose not, but I shall see all before I leave. I am going to make a long stay in Canada! Hilda, I am afraid you will be away before I make up my mind to return to Ireland," Cecil added, with a significant glance at Sir Gervase.

"Cecil intends to bring a Canadian bride home," remarked the Baronet gayly. "He declares the ladies here are remarkably handsome, even surpassing in beauty his own fair countrywomen."

"Equalling them you mean, Gervase," rejoined Cecil hastily. "The Irish ladies yield the palm to none! Am I not right, Hilda?" remember you are half Irish."

"What style of beauty do you admire most, Mr. Godfrey?" asked Mrs. Castonell, amused at the young Hibernian's warmth of manner.

"Bright and fresh-looking," he answered promptly; "golden tresses, blue eyes glittering with mirthfulness, and a figure not particularly tall, but queenlike."

"Really, Cecil, you have a critical eye in beauty. You have described perfection," said Hilda laughing.

"Do I not see it before me," he answered gallantly, bowing to his cousin and Maud Castonell, whose peculiar style of beauty had evidently suggested his description.

"How is old Eveleen?" asked Hilda after a short pause in the conversation.

"Quite well; she declares she cannot die happy unless she sees you again. And, by the way, I have a singular message for you from her. She desired me tell you," Cecil continued mimicking the Irish accent and pronunciation, "that there had been another dreadful shipwreck on the coast last month, and it was mighty strange that the captain of the vessel happened to be the very same man whose life Sir Gervase saved when you were at Innismoyne; but he hadn't the luck to be saved this time, the crythur; he was drowned sure enough, and berried too, for she saw him herself with her own eyes laid with the other misfortunate sailors, whose bodies were washed ashore, in the berrying-ground at Innismoyne."

Eveleen also desired me to tell Miss Hilda that she was hoping soon to see her again, and that she was expecting to be able to call her my lady when she next came to Innismoyne, and Cecil glanced archly from his cousin to Sir Gervase.

If there had been any doubt on Hilda's mind about Dudley's death it was now removed by this kind forethought of the old nurse. She smiled sadly, while the others laughed at Eveleen's odd message, she and Sir Gervase alone understanding what information it meant to convey. Hilda now inquired for Lady Millicent Godfrey and Miss Clifford.

"Miss Clifford is no more," Cecil replied with much gravity.

"Hilda looked at him in grave surprise, but perceiving a smile on the face of the Baronet she added: "She is married, I suppose."

"Even so! have you not heard the news? the aristocratic wedding was a nine days' topic of conversation in the fashionable world."

"And whom did she marry?"

"Lord Ashleigh, of course, because he was the most eligible of her two principal admirers," Cecil replied contemptuously. "She refused Lord Percy Dashton in spite of all his attractions, and married that titled doct Ashleigh. How I despise such worldliness! I at least shall marry to please myself, and not gratify Lady Millicent's ambition, for it was chiefly her fault this heartless marriage of Charlotte's. She would have preferred Lord Percy, but *ma mère* was inexorable, would not hear of an alliance with a penniless younger brother."

Was Cecil Godfrey even now forming plans for the future with which that beautiful girl was connected, who was sitting opposite to him, on whom his admiring gaze so often turned? Did he foresee Lady Millicent's opposition to a marriage with her, and was it this thought that imparted that disrespectful bitterness to his tone when speaking of his lady mother?

Some weeks passed on, a period of indescribable happiness not only to Hilda and Sir Gervase, but also to Cecil Godfrey and Maud Castonell. Cecil had fallen in love with her at first sight, he declared seriously to Hilda, and if he could succeed in winning her affections he would not wait for Lady Millicent's consent to their marriage, for it would never be obtained; but that was of little consequence, as he was—thank Heaven!—his own master.

We have now brought our story to a conclusion, and have only to add that late in the fall there were two brides at the Episcopal Church in St. John's one fine morning, and the sacred edifice was filled with a motley crowd anxious to see the ceremony. Both brides were pronounced to be singularly lovely, the unalloyed happiness of the last two months had restored Hilda's brilliant beauty. They were dressed alike, richly attired in white satin, Brussels lace, and orange blossoms. After visiting the principal cities in the United States, Sir Gervase and Lady Montague, with Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey, embarked at New York for their respective homes in the old country. Mrs. Castonell accompanied her daughter to Innismoyne.

THE END.

Nearly twenty tons of diseased fish were seized in the London markets during the month of December.

A manufacturer in Hamburg was lately giving his partner, then residing in London, some information concerning the progress of their business. As he was sealing his letter the news of the taking of Orleans arrived; he hastened to add a postscript in these words (alluding to the evacuation of the city by the French), "All out of Orleans." The recipient of the letter instantly telegraphed back—"Seven bales of Orleans are on the way."

The steamship Alaska, of the Pacific Mail Company's line, was to leave New-York on January 18th for China, by way of the Suez Canal. This vessel is over four thousand tons burden, and if she passes safely through the canal she will be the largest vessel that has yet made the passage. If the Arizona's trip is successful, it will be proof positive that the canal is available for vessels of her size, which has thus far been considered a matter of considerable doubt. She will stop on her way at Gibraltar, Malta, and one or two other important points in the Mediterranean.

The *Army and Navy Gazette* says that a story which has been going about the clubs for some time strangely illustrates the extreme want of officers in the Loire armies. A young gentleman of Irish family, lately a cadet at Woolwich, with not long to wait for his commission, took it into his head that it was a pity to lose so much good fighting as he lately was daily hearing of. So one night he was wanted at tattoo and not to be found. Nor was he heard of for some days, and then only because he wrote of his having departed to join General d'Amielles. Since then various accounts have been received of and from him. He not only reached the Army of the Loire, but succeeded in proving his military education to the satisfaction of Gambetta's bureau, and was forthwith gazetted as a captain of artillery.

The Paris correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette* says:—Christmas Day passed off quietly, and there was a feeble attempt on the part of the English colony to indulge in the festivities of the season. The great butcher at the top of the Faubourg St. Honoré, over whose door are the arms of England, made a grand exhibition of fancy meat, and purchasers hovered between a *cotelette de mouton* of white bear or a *filet* of the patient dromedary, whose hump, by the way, attracted much curiosity, having all the appearance of being padded with wool. Butcher Dubois also made a fine show of plum puddings, which were often mistaken by the crowd for Prussian cannon balls, and, judging by their appearance, I should say that the German artillery has not forged any projectile more deadly.

Sunday, Jan. 1, 1871, will take its place among the memorable days in Irish history. It marks the close of the connection between Church and State in Ireland.

Mr. Motley will finish his "History of the Netherlands" during his residence at the Hague. The Queen of Holland, who takes a great interest in the work, has placed a cottage at his disposal. He will, therefore, shortly take up his abode there, and resume his literary labours.

A wealthy gentleman, who owns a country-seat, nearly lost his wife, who fell into a river which flows through his estates. He announced the narrow escape to his friends, expecting their congratulations. One of them—an old bachelor—wrote as follows: "I always told you that river was too shallow."

"I thought I understood you to say that your father was a merchant only a week ago," said a lady to a little girl who was soliciting alms, "and if that is so, how could your family have been reduced to beggary?" "It is true, ma'am; my father kept a peanut stand, and last week he took a bad two dollar bill and failed!"

The *Cologne Gazette* says that at Vienna M. Thiers happened to stay at the same hotel with M. Ranke. The two historians dined together, and M. Thiers put the question:—"Against whom does Germany in fact fight at the moment?" "Against Louis XIV.," answered M. Ranke. M. Thiers did not reply.

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