

# LADY BOUNTIFUL.

A STORY WITH A MORAL FOR SOCIAL THEORISTS TO ACT UPON.

CHAPTER VI.—Continued.

She looked as earnest over this amusement, Harry said, as if she were herself in possession of the fortune which they were thus administering. They agreed that when the schools were built, an endowment of seventy thousand pounds each, which would yield two thousand pounds a year, ought to be enough, with the school fees, to provide for the education of five hundred in each school. Then they proceeded with the splendid plan of the College. It was agreed that learning properly so called, should be entirely kept out of the programme. No Political Economy, said the Newnham student, should be taught there. Nor any of the usual things—Latin, Greek, mathematics, and so forth—said the young man from the United States. What, then, remained?

Everything. The difficulty in making such a selection of studies is to know what to omit.

'We are to have,' said Harry, now almost as enthusiastic as Angela herself, 'a thing never before attempted. We are to have a College of Art. What a grand idea! It was yours, Miss Kennedy.'

'No,' she replied, 'it was yours. If it comes to anything, we shall always remember that it was yours.'

An amiable contest was finished by their recollecting that it was only a play, and they laughed and went on, half ashamed, and yet both full of enthusiasm.

'The College of Art!' he repeated; 'why, there are a hundred kinds of art; let us include accomplishments.'

They would; they did.

They finally resolved that there would be professors, lecturers, or teachers, with convenient class-rooms, theatres, and lecture halls in the following accomplishments and graces: Dancing, but there must be the old as well as the new kinds of dancing. The waltz was not to exclude the minuet, the reel, the country dance, or the old square dances; the pupils would also have such dances as the bolero, the tarantella, and other national jumpteries. Singing, which was to be a great feature, as anybody could sing, said Angela, if they were taught. 'Except my Uncle Bunker!' said Harry. Then there were to be musical instruments of all kinds. Skating, bicycling, lawn tennis, rackets, fives, and all kinds of games; rowing, billiards, archery, rifle shooting. Then there was to be acting, with reading and recitation, there were to be classes on gardening, on cookery, and on the laws of beauty in costume. 'The East End shall be independent of the rest of the world in fashion,' said Angela; 'we will dress according to the rules of Art!' 'You shall,' cried Harry, 'and your own girls shall be the new dress-makers to the whole of glorified Stepney.' Then there were to be lectures, not in literature, but in letter-writing, especially in love-letter writing, versifying, novel-writing, and essay-writing; that is to say, on the more delightful forms of literature—so that poets and novelists should arise, and the East End, hitherto a barren desert, should blossom with flowers. Then there was to be a Professor of Grace, because a graceful carriage of the body is so generally neglected; and Harry, who had a slim figure and long legs, began to indicate how the professor would probably carry himself. Next there was to be Professors of Painting, Drawing, Sculpture and Design; and lectures on Furniture, Color, and Architecture. The arts of photography, china painting, and so forth were to be cultivated; and there were to be classes for the encouragement of leather-work, crewel-work, fret-work, brass-work, wood and ivory carving, and so forth.

There shall be no house in the East End, cried the girl, 'that shall not have its panels painted by one member of the family; its wood work carved by another, its furniture designed by a third, its windows planted with flowers by another.'

Her eyes glowed, her lips trembled.

'You ought to have had the millions,' said Harry.

'Nay, you, for you devised it all,' she replied. She was so glowing, so rosy red, so soft and sweet to look upon; her eyes were so full of possible love—though of love she was not thinking—that almost the young man fell upon his knees to worship this Venus.

'And all these beautiful things,' she went on, breathless, 'are only designed for the sake of the Palace of Delights.'

'It shall stand somewhere near the central place, this Stepney Green, so that all the East can get to it.'

'It shall have many halls,' she went on.

'One of them shall be for concerts, and there shall be an organ; one of them shall be for a theatre, and there will be a stage and everything; one shall be a dancing-hall, one a

skating-rink, one a hall for lectures, readings and recitations; one a picture-gallery, one a permanent exhibition of our small Arts. We will have our concerts performed from our School of Music; our plays shall be played by our amateurs taught at our School for Acting; our exhibitions shall be supplied by our own people; the things will be sold, and they will soon be sold off and replaced, because they will be cheap. Oh! oh! oh!' She clasped her hands, and fell back in her chair, overpowered with the thought.

'It will cost much money,' said Harry, weakly, as if money was an object—in dreams.

'The College must be endowed with thirty thousand pounds a year, which is a million of money,' Angela replied, making a little calculation. 'That money must be found. As for the Palace, it will require nothing but the building, and a small annual income to pay for repairs and servants. It will be governed by a Board of Directors, elected by the people themselves, to whom the Palace will belong. And no one shall pay or be paid for any performance. And the only condition of admission will be good behavior, with expulsion as a penalty.'

The thing which she contemplated was a deed the like of which makes to tingle the ears of those who hear it. To few, indeed, is it given to communicate to a whole nation this strange and not unpleasant sensation.

One need not disguise the fact that the possession of this power, and the knowledge of her own benevolent intentions, gave Angela a better opinion of herself than she had ever known before. Herein, my friends, lies, if you will rightly regard it, the true reason of the feminine love for power illustrated by Chaucer. For the few who have from time to time wielded authority have ever been persuaded that they wielded it wisely, benevolently, religiously, and have of course congratulated themselves on the possession of so much virtue. What mischiefs, thought Elizabeth of England, Catharine of Russia, Semiramis of Babylon, and Angela of Whitechapel, might have followed had a less wise and virtuous person been on the throne!

It was not unnatural, considering how much she was with Harry at this time, and how long were their talks with each other, that she should have him a great deal in her mind. For these ideas were certainly his, not hers. Newnham, she reflected humbly, had not taught her to originate. She knew that he was but a cabinet-maker by trade. Yet, when she involuntarily compared him, his talk, his manners, his bearing, with the men who she had met, the young Dons and the undergraduates of Cambridge, the clever young fellows in society who were reported to write for the 'Saturday,' the Berties and Algies of daily life, she owned to herself that in no single point did this cabinet-maker fellow compare unfavorably with any of them. He seemed as well taught as the last made Fellow of Trinity who came to lecture on Literature and Poetry at Newnham; as cultivated as the medieval Fellow who took Philosophy and Psychology, and was supposed to entertain ideas on religion so original as to amount to a Fifth Gospel; as quick as the most thorough-going Society man who has access to studios, literary circles, musical people and aesthetes; and as careless as any Bertie or Algie of the whole set. This it was which made her blush, because if he had been a common man, a mere Bunker, he might, with his knowledge of his class, have proved so useful a servant to her, so admirable a vizier. Now, unfortunately, she felt that she could only make him useful in this way after she had confided in him; and that to confide in him might raise dangerous thoughts in the young man's head. No; she must not confide in him.

It shows what a thoughtful young person Angela was that she would blush all by herself only to think of danger to Harry Goslett.

She passed all that night and the whole of the next day and night in a dream over the Palace of Delights and the College for educating people in the sweet and pleasant things—the College of Art.

On the next morning a chill fell upon her, caused I know not how; not by the weather, which was the bright and hot weather of last July; not by any ailment of her own, because Angela owned the most perfect mechanism ever constructed by Nature; nor by any unpleasantness in the House, because, now that she had her own room, she generally breakfasted alone; nor by anything in the daily papers—which frequently, by their evil telegrams and terrifying forebodings, do poison the spring and the fountain head of the day; nor by any letter, because the only one she had was from Constance Woodcote at Newnham, and it told the welcome news that she was appointed Mathematical Lecturer with so

much a head for fees, and imploring Angela to remember her promise that she would endow Newnham with a scholarship. Endow Newnham! Why, she was going to have a brand new college of her own, to say nothing of the High Schools for boys and girls. Perhaps the cause of her depression was the appearance of Bunker, who came to tell her that he had at last found the house which would suit her. No other house in the neighborhood was in any way to compare with it; the house stood close by, at the south-west corner of Stepney Green. It was ready for occupation, the situation was as desirable as that of Tirzah the Beautiful; the rent was extremely low, considering the many advantages; all the nobility and gentry of the place, as he declared, would flock around a dress-maker situated in Stepney Green itself; there were rooms for show-room, with plenty of other rooms and everything which would be required; and finally, as if this were an additional recommendation, the house belonged to himself.

he said, with a winning smile, 'to make a sacrifice of my own interests in order to oblige a young lady, and I will take a lower rent from you than I would from anybody else.'

She went with him to 'view' the house. One looks at a picture, a horse, an estate, a book, but one 'views' a house. Subtle and beautiful distinction, which shows the poetry latent in the heart of every house agent! It was Bunker's own. Surely that was not the reason why it was let at double the rent of the next house, which belonged to Angela herself, nor why the tenant had to undertake all the repairs, paper, and painting, external and internal, nor why the rent began from that very day, instead of the half quarter or the next quarter day. Bunker himself assured Miss Kennedy that he had searched the whole neighborhood for a suitable place, but could find none so good as his own house. As for the house of the Messenger Property, they were liable, he said, to the demands of a lawyer's firm, which had no mercy on a tenant, while as for himself, he was full of compassion, and always ready to listen to reason. He wanted no other recommendation than a year's rent paid in advance, and would undertake to execute, at the tenant's cost, the whole of the painting, papering, whitewashing, roofing, pipes, chimneys, and general work himself; 'whereas, young lady,' he added, 'if you had taken one of those Messenger houses, you can not tell in what hands you would have found yourself, nor what charges you would have to pay.'

He shook his fat head, and rattled his keys in his pocket. So strong is the tendency of the human mind to believe what is said, in spite of all experience to the contrary, that his victim smiled and thanked him, knowing very well that the next minute she would be angry with herself for so easily becoming a dupe to a clumsy rogue.

She thanked him for his consideration, she said, yet she was uneasily conscious that he was overreaching her in some way, and she hesitated.

'On the Green,' he said, 'What a position! Looking out on the garden! With such rooms! And so cheap!'

'I don't know,' she replied, 'I must consult some one.'

'As to that,' he said, 'there may be another tenant; I can't keep offers open. Take it, miss, or leave it. There!'

While she still hesitated, he added one more recommendation.

'An old house it is, but solid, and will stand forever. Why, old Mr. Messenger was born here.'

'Was he?' she cried, 'was my—was Mr. Messenger actually born here?'

She hesitated no longer. She took the house at his own price; she accepted his terms, extortionate and grasping as they were.

When the bargain was completed—when she had promised to sign the agreement for a twelvemonth, pay a year in advance, and appoint the disinterested one her executor of repairs, she returned to Bormalack's. In the door-way, a cigarette in his mouth, lounged the Idle Apprentice.

'I saw you,' he said, 'with the benevolent Bunker. You have fallen a prey to my uncle?'

'I have taken a house from him.'

'The two phrases are convertible. Those who take his house are his victims. I hope no great mischief is done.'

'Not much, I think.'

The young man threw away his cigarette. 'Seriously, Miss Kennedy,' he said, 'my good uncle will possess himself of all the money he can get out of you. Have a care.'

'He can do me no harm, thank you all the same. I wanted a house soon, and he has found me one. What does it matter if I pay a little more than I ought?'

'What does it matter?' Harry was not versed in details of trade, but he knew enough to feel that this kind of talk was unpractical. 'What does it matter? My dear young lady, if you go into business, you must look after the sixpences.'

Miss Kennedy looked embarrassed. She had betrayed herself, she thought. 'I know But he talked me over.'

'I have heard,' said the practical man, looking profoundly wise, 'that he who would save money must even consider that there is a difference between a guinea and a sovereign; and that he shouldn't pay his cabman more than twice his fare, and that it is wrong to pay half a guinea for Heidsieck Monopole when he can get Pommery and Greno at seven and sixpence.'

Then he, too, paused abruptly, because he felt as if he had betrayed himself. What have cabinet-makers to do with Pommery and Greno? Fortunately, Angela did not hear the latter part of the speech. She was reflecting on the ease with which a crafty man—say Bunker—may compass his ends with the simple—say herself.

'I do not pretend,' he said, 'to know all the ropes, but I should not have allowed you to be taken in so readily by this good uncle. Do you know—' his eyes, when they were serious, which was not often, were really good. Angela perceived they were serious now—'Do you know that the name of the Uncle who was indirectly, so to speak, connected with the Robin Redbreasts, was originally Bunker? He changed it after the children were dead, and he came into the property.'

'I wish you had been with me,' she said, simply. 'But I suppose I must take my chance as other girls do.'

'Most other girls have got men to advise them. Have you no one?'

'I might have—she was thinking of her lawyers—who were paid to advise her if required. 'But I will find out things for myself.'

'And at what a price! Are your pockets lined with gold, Miss Kennedy?' They certainly were, but he did not know it.

'I will try to be careful. Thank you.'

'As regards going with you, I am always at your command. I will be your servant, if you will accept me as such.'

This was going a step further than seemed altogether safe. Angela was hardly prepared to receive a cabinet-maker, however polite and refined he might seem, as a lover.

'I believe,' she said, 'that in our class of life it is customary for young people to "keep company," is it not?'

'It is not uncommon,' he replied, with much earnestness. 'The custom has even been imitated by the higher classes.'

'What I mean is this, that I am not going to keep company with anyone; but, if you please to help me, if I ask your advice, I shall be grateful.'

'Your gratitude,' he said, with a smile, 'ought to make any man happy!'

'Your compliments,' she retorted, 'will certainly kill my gratitude; and now, Mr. Goslett, don't you really think that you should try to do some work? Is it right to lounge away the days among the streets? Are your pockets, I may ask, lined with gold?'

I am looking for work. I am hunting everywhere for work. My uncle is going to find me a workshop. Then I shall request the patronage of the nobility and gentry of Stepney, Whitechapel, and the Mile End Road. H. G. respectfully solicits a trial.' He laughed as if there could be no doubt about the future, as if a few years' looking around were of no importance. Then he bowed to Angela in the character of the Complete Cabinet-maker. 'Orders, madam, orders executed with neatness and dispatch. The highest price given for second-hand furniture.' She had got her house, however, though she was going to pay far too much for it. That was a great thing, and, as the more important schemes could not be all commenced at a moment's notice, she would begin with the lesser—her dress-maker's shop.

Here Mr. Goslett could not help her. She applied, therefore, again to Mr. Bunker, who had a Registry Office for situations wanted. 'My terms,' he said, 'are five shillings on application and five shillings for each person engaged.'

He did not say that he took half a crown from each person who wanted a place and five shillings on her getting the place. His ways were ways of pleasantness, and on principle he never spoke of things which might cause unpleasant remarks. Besides, no one knew the trouble he had to take in suiting people.

'I knew,' he said, 'that you would come back to me. People will only find out my worth when I am gone.'

'I hope you will be worth a great deal, Mr. Bunker,' said Angela.

'Pretty well, young lady. Pretty well. Ah! my nephews will be the gainers. But not what I might have been had it not been for the meanness, the—the—Hunxiness of that wicked old man.'

'Do you think you can find me what I want, Mr. Bunker?'

'Can I?' He turned over the leaves of a great book. 'Look at this long list; all ready to better themselves. Apprentices anxious to get through their articles, and improvers to be dress-makers, and dress-makers to be forewomen, and forewomen to be mistresses. That is the way of the world, young lady. Sweet contentment, where art thou?' The pastoral simplicity of his words and attitude were inexpressibly comic.

'And how are you going to begin, Miss Kennedy?'

'Quietly, at first.'

'Then you'll want a matter of one or two dress-makers, and half a dozen improvers. The apprentices will come later.'

'What are the general wages in this part of London?'

'The dress-makers get sixteen shillings a week; the improvers six. They bring their own dinners, and you give them their tea. But, of course, you know all that.'

'Of course,' said Angela, making a note of the fact, notwithstanding.

'As for one of your dress-makers, I can recommend you Rebekah Hermitage, daughter of the Reverend Percival Hermitage. She cannot get a situation because of her father's religious opinions.'

'That seems strange. What are they?'

'Why, he's Minister of the Seventh Day Independents. They've got a chapel in Redman's Row; they have their services on Saturday because, they say—and it seems true—that the Fourth Commandment has never been abolished any more than the rest of them. I wonder the bishops don't take it up. Well, there it is. On Saturdays she won't work, and on Sundays she don't like to, because the other people don't.'

'Has she any religious objection,' asked Angela, 'to working on Monday and Tuesday?'

'No; and I'll send her over, Miss Kennedy, this evening, if you will see her. You'll get her cheap, because no one else will have her. Very good. Then there is Nelly Sorensen. I know she would like to go out, but her father is particular. Not that he's any right to be, being a Pauper. If a man like me, or the late Mr. Messenger, my friend, chooses to be particular, it's nothing but right. As for Captain Sorensen—why, it's the Pride after the fall, instead of before it. Which makes it, to a substantial man, sickening.'

'Who is Captain Sorensen?'

'He lives in the Asylum along the White-chapel Road, only ten minutes or so from here. Nelly Sorensen is as clever a work-woman as you will get. If I were you, Miss Kennedy, I would go and find her at home. Then you can see her work and talk to her. As for her father, keep him in his right place. Pride in an Almshouse! Why, you'd hardly believe it; but I wanted to put his girl in a shop where they employ fifty hands, and he wouldn't have it, because he didn't like the character of the proprietor. Said he was a grinder and an oppressor. My answer to such is, and always will be, 'Take it or leave it.' If they won't take it, there's heaps that must. As old Mr. Messenger used to say, 'Bunker, my friend,' or 'Bunker, my only friend,' sometimes, 'Your remarks is true wisdom.' Yes, Miss Kennedy, I will go with you to show you the way.' He looked at his watch. 'Half past four. I dare say it will take half an hour there and back, which, with the last quarter of an hour's talk, we shall charge as an hour's time, which is half a crown. Thank you. An hour,' he added, with great feeling, 'an hour, like a pint of beer, can not be divided. And on these easy terms, Miss Kennedy, you will find me always ready to work for you from sunrise to sunset, thinking of your interests even at meals, so as not to split an hour or waste it, and to save trouble in reckoning up.'

(To be Continued.)

A Medical Phenomenon.

Hello, Wigglesworth! exclaimed a Texas man, meeting an acquaintance on the avenue; you are as gray as a rat. What's the matter with you?

It's terrible, isn't it? Last night I experienced a severe fright and my hair turned to its present silvery hue immediately.

A few days after this the Texas man again encountered Wigglesworth, wearing beautiful, resplendent, coal-black locks.

Why Wigglesworth, what's the meaning of this? The last time we met your hair was snow white and now it is dark as the raven's wing.

Yes; you see my hair turned gray from sudden fright. Yesterday a man paid me ten dollars he had been owing me for a long time and the pleasurable emotions were so violent that they turned it back again to its original color.

Woman in Politics.

Mrs. Bulfinch—Wasn't it horrible how the election went?

Mrs. Wooden—Wasn't it dreadful?

Mrs. Bulfinch—Mr. Allen was ever so much handsomer.

Mrs. Wooden—And with that lovely moustache, too.

Parson Gridly is very much opposed to dancing. He said recently to a young lady of his congregation: Are you one of those giddy girls to whom dancing is a heavenly pastime? No, I don't think dancing is perfectly heavenly, she replied, demurely. Ah, that's right. Dancing is not perfectly heavenly, continued the young lady, for you see it comes to an end too soon, but it is very much like heaven as long as it lasts.