Lola's Secret,

A Romance.

The domestics at Deeping Hurst had forgotten him; he had seldom been there. When the servant asked what name he should give, Sir Karl replied that he should prefer not to give his name, as Lady Rhysworth did not expect him. He was shown into the drawing-room, where he saw many traces of her ladyship's presence. The piano was opened, and one of her favorite songs stood on it; a dainty lace handkerchief was on the table, and a little white glove in a filligree basket; a book lay open, as though she had just put it down, and a jeweled fan near it. They were little tokens, all of them, but they meant so much to him. He took the little white glove; it should never go back to the filigree basket again.

That which struck him most in the room was a lifelike portrait of Lord Rhysworth, painted by one of the greatest of living artists. Sir Karl stood for some little time looking at it; he felt sorry for his rival's death, so sorry that if any wish of his could have brought him back to life he would have uttered it. He felt only reverence and pity for the man who had enjoyed his happiness so short a time.

"If ever the wish of my heart is realized," he said, "his child shall be as dear to me as my own."

In the meantime the servant who had gone in search of Lady Rhysworth could not find her. She was not in her own suite of rooms, or in the nursery. The child was absent, too, so that it was evident to those who knew her ladyship's habits that they had gone out together.

"I had better tell the gentleman," the man thought, "that he must please wait while I go into the gardens."

When the drawing-room door opened, and the servant came in, Sir Karl looked up with a sudden, startled glance. Though he longed to see Dolores, his emotion was so great that it was almost a respite to find that it was not she who entered. He trembled for the moment when his eyes should first fall upon the face he loved so well.

"Perhaps," he said to the man half hesitatingly, "Lady Rhysworth is engaged; if so, I will call again."

"It is not that, sir, my lady is somewhere with Miss Kathleen, and I came to ask you if you would wait while I go into the gardens to look for her."

Sir Karl thought that he would have liked to go himself in quest of her ladyship; but he only said:

"I will wait," and the servant went off to renew his search.

A fit of sweet musing had seized Dolores that fine morning. As little Kathleen wanted to go out on the grass and fill her fat little hands with daisies, she must indulge her; besides which, she wanted to know what these sweet musings of hers meant. So away she went, her dress of black crape trailing on the grass, with little Kathleen trotting by her side. When they reached the fountain, Dolores sat down. Her mind and heart were full of Lola's words that Sir Karl would soon be home. She thought that she knew what he would say when he came to Deeping Hurst. She had been unflinchingly true to her husband while he lived; she had allowed no thought of hers to wander from him. She had been unswervingly faithful to his memory since his death; but, now that she knew Sir Karl was coming home, surely there could be no harm in letting her thoughts stray to him. She would be pleased to see him; and, if he cared for her now as he had cared before, why, there was nothing— But there—she would not think that. It was some years since she d seen him. Would he be much altered, she wondered.

She hardly realized the fact that a servant was speaking to her; telling her that she was wanted in the drawing-room; she hardly comprehended the words. Her thoughts so completely engrossed her that she did not ask who the visitor was. She rose slowly, never dreaming that it was Sir Karl, half impatient that she could not have a few moments of rest and respite, a few moments to dream.

"Good-bye, baby," she said, half sadly; "they will not give mamma one moment's peace."

"Take me!" begged the little one.

"I will come back again in a few minutes," answered Dolores. "I will not be long, dear."

"It must be some man on business about the farm," she thought as she moved towards the house. "I shall not be sorry when I am free from the whole responsibility."

If she had known that it was Sir Karl who had sent to rouse her from dreams of himself, she would surely have gone more quickly; while he stood with a beating heart in the drawing-room waiting for what he should see when the door was opened.

CHAPTER XVII.

What Sir Karl saw when the door opened was a picture that he never forgot. Dolores had gained so much in beauty. He had left her a slender girl, with the promise of a magnificent womanhood, which was now fulfilled. There was a deeper sheen on the golden hair, a deeper light in the lovely violet eyes; the face wore an expression of sweet content—not the content of indifference, but of thought, and the graceful figure was fully developed. She stood for a few moments in irresolute silence, not recognizing in the bronzed, beared man before her handsome Sir Karl. Then into her eyes came a sudden soft light, as of recognition, over the face spread a faint beautiful blush, and the next moment the two little white hands were hastily extended in earnest greeting.

"Sir Karl," she cried, and the sound of her voice was as sweetest music to him; "I am pleased to see you. Welcome home!"

To him, who had thirsted and hungered for a sight of her face, it was like reaching the gates of paradise; he could not speak; his face, bronzed as it was, grew colorless; his heart beat so fast and loud that he was afraid she must hear it; his breath came in quick gasps, and he held the white hands as though he could never let them go.

"Do you know what a shipwrecked mariner feels when he safely reaches land?" he said at last in a low hoarse voice.

"I can imagine," she replied, "but I have never been shipwrecked."

"I have been," he cried; "I and my whole life were wrecked when I left you. Now I touch land once more! How well you are looking Lady Rhysworth!" The name seemed to pass his lips with difficulty. "I believe you have grown; you seem to be taller than you were, and are more beautiful than ever."

She drew one hand from his clasp and held up a pretty white finger in warning.

"You must not flatter me, Sir Karl," she said, smiling.

"It is not flattery, it is truth," he answered, looking at her tenderly. "Since I left you, I have seen no one half so fair. In my dreams, I have gone over this meeting a hundred times. I have dreamed that I should meet you out of doors, by the river, in the old church, everywhere and anywhere; but one thing is quite certain—since the moment I parted from you in madness and despair, I have thought of nothing but the hour of my return."

"If you have called to pay me a sensible visit, Sir Karl," she said, laughingly, "you must talk to me in a sensible manner. I am afraid neither France nor Italy has improved you. You never talked such nonsense as this to me before."

"My dearest Lady Rhysworth, I never had the chance. If ever a man wished to talk what you kindly call nonsense, but did not dare to do so, I am that man. I have suffered more than anyone can tell from constant, cruel repression."

"You must admit that you are making up for it now," she said, with a smile, "and you have not lost much time in beginning. Did you return last evening?"

"Yes, it was late in the afternoon."

"And am I the first old friend you have seen?" she inquired.

The question was asked without any special reason; but she saw a dark flush pass swiftly over his face, and a gleam almost of anger darkened his eyes.

"No," he answered frankly. "I called at Beaulieu. It was an old promise made, but, I am sorry to say, almost forgotten by me, that I would make my first call there on my return to England; and having been reminded of my promise, I was compelled to keep it."

There was an almost imperceptible change in Lady Rhysworth's manner. At the mention of Beaulieu all that Lola had said of Sir Karl returned to her mind. She had called him "mine," and the fact that he had gone first to Beaulieu seemed to give her the right.

He felt rather than saw the change. Her sweet face grew paler, and she quietly withdrew her other hand from his clasp.

"You did well to keep your promise. I have the greatest horror of a broken promise," she said calmly.

He took one of the white hands back into his own.

"Dolores," he said—"I may call you so?—you gave me permission when I was leaving you, and you must award me the same privilege in the first happiness of my return—there have been misunderstandings enough between us; there shall be no more. I did not intend, when I first saw you, to speak of myself, but it must be so. Do you remember what took place between us when I went away?"

"Yes," she replied.

"I have not changed," he said. "Since I left you, I have never given a thought to any other woman; and, if you had never been free, I should, for love of you, have gone unmarried to my grave."

She shrunk away from him, pointing to the crape on her dress.

[To be Continued.]

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Cabled Comment

On Old World Topics—A Call to Ruthlessly Suppress Rebellion in South Africa—Chauvinism in England—Lord Rosebery on "Imperialism"—It Chamberlain and Kruger Meet?—The Church and the Stage.

London, Oct. 28.—The news of the guerilla successes in South Africa which has been received during the last few days has prompted some of the more serious publications to issue notes of alarm. The Saturday Review begs Lord Roberts to take "a lesson from one who was a greater soldier than he, namely, Caesar, and ruthlessly suppress the rebellion." "The truest mercy in the present case," says the Globe, "is to be merciless." That fairly voices the average opinion of the government organs, while a few out and out Radical organs scarcely conceal their satisfaction arising from their ability to say, "I told you so," in reference to the war being long drawn out and engendering racial hatred that a century will not dissipate.

STRENGTHEN THE ARMY.

The point now made by military experts is that there will be concurrent necessity for maintaining a large army in South Africa and for organizing another great force for foreign emergencies and home defense. They hold that the attitude, not of the French Government, but of a large section of the French people, is hostile to England, and that it is actually necessary that the British army should be strengthened and rendered more efficient. There is considerable Chauvinism even in staid and sober England when these dangers of foreign hostilities are made the basis for demands that the military establishment should be increased by 50,000 men. Another significant fact is the willingness of the forward party in the army to make the best of the present situation and to assume that Lord Lansdowne will not be displaced at the war office. The plea offered is that there is no time to waste; that a programme for an increase of the military forces needs be initiated at once, and that it is more important that this increment of 50,000 men, or a larger proportion of it, should be set out in the army estimates than that Lord Lansdowne should be relieved from duty at the war office. So much stress is laid by the professional element in the army upon the necessity for strengthening the establishment with more officers, more men and more guns, that the suspicion is excited that reorganization of the military service is a question of merely academic interest.

GIVE KITCHENER A CHANCE.

Another correspondent says: The military journals are greatly exasperated by the recrudescence of Boer activity in South Africa. The Broad Arrow does not hesitate to say that Lord Roberts' departure has been delayed too long to permit of a speedy settlement there, and that his method of dealing with the insurgents does more honor to his heart than to his head. The Jacobsdal affair has been the last straw, and military men now blurt out their impatience over the employment of a field marshal and an immense army for the suppression of brigandage and for other police work, and assert that Lord Roberts can gain no further distinction in South Africa, and that Lord Kitchener should be allowed a free hand and the means for operating with energy and mobility in the disturbed districts. The same authorities are opening their eyes to the truth that the presence of a large British force will be required in South Africa for a long time. Raiding and armed resistance are in progress simultaneously at a dozen points long distances apart, and there will be great risk in releasing the 16,000 Boer prisoners now under guard, since there can be no guarantee that they will not reinforce the raiders, and have access to secret stores of arms and ammunition.

ROSEBERY ON IMPERIALISM.

Lord Rosebery has appeared before the public with a new definition of imperialism. Speaking before a meeting of the Christian Social Union, this versatile and brilliant figure in British politics struck a note which meets with universal approval from all sections of the Liberals, even those who were most bitterly opposed to the former leader. "Imperialism," he declared, "depends on the integrity and heart of the empire for its virtue."

Continuing, Lord Rosebery said: "What is an empire unless it is pillared on an imperial race? The heart of the empire is Great Britain, and the heart of Great Britain is London. You cannot afford to let the source and center of the empire decay or be poisoned, and this is what you are doing if you allow this imperial race to be vitiated and poisoned in the dens of crime and horror in which too many of them are reared at this moment."

Lord Rosebery's subtle turn in making the virtue of imperialism depend upon internal reform has opened a door to the malcontents, and the Star, which fought his lordship tooth and nail, today declares: "This is the true and only imperialism for this empire of Great Britain."

CHAMBERLAIN AND KRUGER.

An encounter as dramatic as any that marked the battlefields of South Africa may shortly occur at Marseilles. The plan of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, the secretary of state for the colonies, to go to Marseilles to meet Mrs. Chamberlain, who is now at Aix les Baines, will more than probably be effected just about the time Mr. Kruger is arriving at the same port on the Dutch cruiser. Judging from the tone of French public opinion the simultaneous arrival of these two leading figures in the late world drama would afford opportunities for demonstrations not too pleasant for Mr. Chamberlain, and which might possibly cause international complications that would be hard to settle peaceably.

CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, who has been the Liberal leader in the House of Commons up to the present, is said to be ready to accept Lord Rosebery's leadership. Combining this with the former premier's (Rosebery's) partial retirement from the turf, the expectation is rife that he will return to the arena of active politics and make the fight of his life against the "mammoth majority" of the present government.

It is interesting to observe, while speaking of the next parliament, what a task confronts the speaker of the House of Commons before he masters the personnel of the new house. It includes no less than eight Wilsons, four Balfours, four Smiths, four Thomases, four O'Briens and four Murrays, to say nothing of half a dozen trios of similarly named members and a perfect maze of couples.

CHURCH AND STAGE.

Church matters are attracting no little interest. The resignation of the Bishop of Exeter, Right Rev. Edward Henry Bickersteth, has given Lord Salisbury the chance to add one more to the long list of bishops of his creation, an opportunity which the Kensites (anti-ritualists) have improved by memorializing the premier to appoint a Low Churchman who will protect the Protestant interest better than the former bishop. Within a few days final steps will be taken to amalgamate the two great Scotch churches, the Free Church and the United Presbyterians, under the title of the United Free Church of Scotland, which will accomplish a greater breaking down of religious barriers and divisions than the century has witnessed.

The old question of the morality of the stage is once more discussed by the English bishops and clergy. This time it is the Rochester diocesa conference, where several clergymen urged a sweeping crusade against the immorality of English plays and actors. Canon Jeff, well-kown here, declared it was a dreadful thing to see a Christian man taking the part of a murderer and a Christian woman playing the role of a harlot, now so common in the London theaters. The bishops of Rochester and Southwark, have, however, persuaded a modification of the resolutions, the bishop of Rochester telling the clergy they would be ashamed to utter such statements before one delicate, refined lady, who was a friend of his in the profession. It was then agreed that stage authors, managers and artists merely required watchful attention of churchmen.

Curiously enough the last new play, "Mr. and Mrs. Daventry," produced at the Royal Theater, Thursday, has received scathing criticism on all sides for its indecency, which was not redeemed by the faintest trace of originality or cleverness, though the acting of Mrs. Patrick Campbell, in the leading role, is universally praised.

HOUSES WITH HISTORIES.

That the memory of Charles Dickens is not guarded very jealously is clearly evidenced by the fact that in Tavistock Square, where the novelist lived nine years, entertained the celebrities of the day, and wrote "Bleak House," and other works, is now in course of demolition, and that in a few days nothing will be left of it. The removal of this landmark, visited by so many thousand Americans, is due to the Duke of Bedford's desire to erect on the site buildings which produce more revenue.

Touching upon houses with history it is said once more that the Duchess of Marlborough's most cherished dream is to purchase Marlborough House, now occupied by the Prince of Wales, but which once belonged to the Churchills. As the story goes, the young American duchess would be pleased if the Prince of Wales would sell the property, and even when told that the house was crown property she did not give up hope of eventually securing it.

THE LONGEST EDITORSHIP.

The retirement of Mr. Norman Maccoll, M.A., Jan. 1, from the editorship of the Athenaeum, marks the completion of the longest editorship on record in England. For 31 years he has controlled this academic journal, beating Delane's service on the Times, and he has probably had more to do with the formation of the higher literary standards than any man in England. He was a close friend of Carlisle, Dickens, Tennyson, Browning, Ruskin, and Darwin, and in later years of Swinburne, Henley, Kipling and Wetmore, and to quote the Outlook, "He knows more than any man living of books and their authors."

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The Local Express will leave Montreal daily, except Sunday, at 7:40 a.m., due to arrive at Levis at 1 p.m., Riviere du Loup at 5 p.m., and Little Metis at 8:25 p.m.

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