

# LADY BOUNTIFUL.

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

## CHAPTER II.—Continued.

'I hev,' he said, with another sigh. 'Perhaps we were wrong to come over—I think I was happier in the school-room, when the boys were gone home. It was very quiet there for a sleep in the afternoon by the stove. And in summer the trees looked handsome in the sunlight.'

She shook her head impatiently. 'Come,' she cried. 'Where are the 'Recollections' of your grandfather?' He found another paper, and read it slowly.

'My grandfather died before I was born. My father, however, said that he used to throw out hints about his illustrious family, and that if he chose to go back to England some people would be very much surprised. But he never explained himself. Also he would sometimes speak of a great English estate, and once he said that the freedom of a Wheelwright was better than the gilded chains of a British aristocrat—that was at a Fourth of July Meetin'.'

'Men talk wild at meetin's,' said his wife. 'Still, there have been a meanin' behind it. Go on, Timothy—I mean my lord.'

'As for my father, it pleased him, when he could put up his feet and crack with his friends, to brag of his great connections in England. But he never knew rightly who they were, and he was too peaceful and restful a creature to take steps to find out.'

'Waitin' for King George,' observed his wife. 'Just what you would be doin' but for me.'

'That's all the recollection. Here comes my own declaration:

'I, Timothy Clitheroe Davenant, make affidavit on oath, if necessary—but I am not quite clear as to the righteousness of swearing—that I am the son of the late Timothy Clitheroe Davenant, sometime carpenter of the City of Canaan, New Hampshire, U. S. A., and Susanna his wife, both now deceased; that I was born in the year of grace one thousand eight hundred and fifteen; and that I have been for forty years a teacher in my native town.' That is all clean and above board, Clara Martha; no weak point so far, father to son, marriage certificates regularly found, and baptism registers. No one can ask more. 'Further, I, the above-named Timothy, do claim to be the lawful and legitimate heir to the ancient barony of Davenant, supposed to be extinct in the year 1783 by the death of the last lord, without male issue.' Legally worded, I think,' he added, with a little proud smile.

'Yes; it reads right. Now for the connection.'

'Oh! the connection. His lordship's face clouded over. His consort, however, awaited the explanation, for the thousandth time in confidence. Where the masculine mind found doubt and uncertainty, the quick woman's intellect, ready to believe and tenacious of faith, had jumped to certainty.

'The connection is this.' He took up another paper, and read:

'The last Lord Davenant had one son only, a boy named Timothy Clitheroe. All the eldest sons of the House were named Timothy Clitheroe, just as all the Ashley's are named Anthony. When the boy arrived at years of maturity he was sent on the Grand Tour, which he made with a tutor. On returning to England, it is believed he had some difference with his father, the nature of which has never been ascertained. He then embarked upon a ship sailing for the American Colonies. Nothing more was ever heard about him, no news ever came to his father of his friends, and he was supposed to be dead.'

'Even the ship was never heard of,' added her ladyship, as if this was a fact which would greatly help in lengthening the life of the young man.

'That, too, was never heard of again. If she had not been thrown away, we might have learned what became of the Honorable Timothy Clitheroe Davenant.' There was some confusion of ideas here, which the ex-school-master was not slow to perceive.

'I mean,' he tried to explain, 'that if she got safe to Boston, the young man would have landed there, and all would be comparatively clear. Whereas, if she was cast away, we must now suppose that he was saved and got ashore somehow.'

'Lake Saint Paul,' she cried triumphantly, 'on a piece of wreck—what could be more simple?'

'Because,' her husband continued, 'there is one fact which proves that he did get ashore, that he concluded to stay there, that he descended so far into the social scale as to become a wheelwright; and that he lived and died in the town of Canaan, New Hampshire.'

'Go on, my dear. Make it clear. Put it strong. This is the most interesting point of all.'

'And this young man, who was supposed to be cast away in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, aged twenty-two, was exactly the same age as my grandfather, Timothy Clitheroe Davenant, who bore the same name, which is proved by the headstone and the church books.'

'Could there,' asked his wife, springing to her feet, 'could there have been two Englishmen—'

'Of the same illustrious and historic surname, both in America?' replied her husband, roused into a flabby enthusiasm.

'Of the same beautiful Christian name?—two Timothys?'

'Born both in the same year?'

The little woman with the bright eyes and the sloping shoulders threw her arms about her husband's neck.

'You shall have your rights, my dear,' she said; 'I will live to see you sitting in the House of Lords with the hereditary statesmen of England. If there is justice in the land of England, you shall have your rights. There is justice, I am sure, and equal law for poor and rich, and encouragement for the virtuous. Yes, my dear, the virtuous. Whatever your faults may be, your virtues are many, and it can't but do the House of Lords good to see a little virtue among them. Not that I hold with Aurelia Tucker that the English House of Lords are wallowers in sin; whereas, Irene Pascoe once met a knight on a missionary platform and found he'd got religion. But virtue you can never have too much of. Courage, my lord; forget the Carpenter and think only of the Nobleman, your grandfather, who condescended to be a Wheelwright.'

He obediently took up the pen and began. When he seemed fairly absorbed in the task of copying out and stating the Case, she left him. As soon as the door was closed, he heaved a gentle sigh, pushed back his chair, put his feet upon another chair, covered his head with his red silk pocket-handkerchief—for there were flies in the room—and dropped into a gentle slumber. The Carpenter was, for the moment, above the condescending Wheelwright.

## CHAPTER III.

### ONLY A DRESS-MAKER

Harry Goslett returned to the boarding-house that evening, in a mood of profound dejection; he had spent a few hours with certain cousins, whose acquaintance he was endeavoring to make. 'Hitherto,' he said, writing to Lord Jocelyn, 'the soil seems hardly worth cultivating.' In this he spoke hastily, because every man's mind is worth cultivating as soon as you find out the things best fitted to grow in it. But some minds will only grow turnips, while others will produce the finest strawberries.

The cousins, for their part, did not, as yet, take to the new arrival, whom they found difficult to understand—his speech was strange, his manner stranger; these peculiarities, they thought in their ignorance, were due to residence in the United States, where Harry had found it expedient to place most of his previous years. Conversation was difficult between two rather jealous workmen and a brother artisan, who greatly resembled the typical Swell—an object of profound dislike and suspicion to the working classes.

He had now spent some three weeks among his kinsfolk. He brought with him some curiosity, but little enthusiasm. At first he was interested and amused; rapidly he became bored and disgusted; for as yet he saw only the outside of things. There was an uncle, Mr. Benjamin Bunker, the study of whom, regarded as anybody else's uncle, would have been pleasant. Considered as his own connection by marriage—Benjamin and the late Sergeant Goslett having married sisters—he was too much inclined to be ashamed of him. The two cousins seemed to him—as yet he knew them very little—a pair of sulky, ill-bred young men, who had taken two opposite lines, neither of which was good for social intercourse. The people of the boarding-house continued to amuse him, partly because they were afraid in a way of him. As for the place—he looked about him, standing at the north entrance of Stepney Green—on the left hand, the Whitechapel Road; behind him, Stepney, Limehouse, St. George's in the East, Poplar and Shadwell;

on the right, the Mile End Road, leading to Bow and Stratford; before him, Ford, Hackney, Bethnal Green. Mile upon mile of streets with houses—small, mean, and monotonous houses; the people living the same mean and monotonous lives, all after the same model. In his ignorance he pitied and despised those people, not knowing how rich and full any life may be made, what the surroundings, and even without the gracious influences of Art. Under the influence of this pity and contempt, when he

returned in the evening at half past nine, he felt himself for the first time in his life run very low down indeed.

The aspect of the room was not calculated to cheer him up. It was lighted with a mean two-jet gas-burner; the dingy curtain wanted looping up, the furniture looked more common and mean than usual. Yet, as he stood in the doorway, he became conscious of a change.

The boarders were all sitting there, just as usual, and the supper cloth was removed; Mr. Maliphant has his long pipe fixed in the corner of his mouth, but he held it there with an appearance of constraint, and he had let it go out. Mr. Josephus Coppin sat in the corner in which he always put himself, so as to be out of everybody's way; also with a pipe in his hand unlighted. Daniel Fagg had his Hebrew Bible spread out before him, and his Dictionary, and his copy of the Authorized Version—which he used, as he would carefully explain, not for what school-boys call a crib, but for the purpose of comparison. This was very grand! A man who can read Hebrew at all inspires one with confidence; but the fact is the most important when it is connected with a discovery; and to compare Versions—

one's own with the collected wisdom of a Royal Commission—is a very grand thing indeed. But to-night he sat with his head in his hands, his sandy hair pushed back, looking straight before him; and Mrs. Bormalack was graced in her best black silk dress, and 'the decanters' were proudly placed upon the table with rum, gin, and brandy in them, and beside them stood the tumblers, hot water, cold water, lemons and spoons, in the most genteel way. The representative of the Upper House, who did not take spirits and water, sat calmly dignified in his arm chair by the fire-place, and in front of him, on the other side, sat his wife, with black thread mittens drawn tightly over her little hands and thin arms, bolt upright, and conscious of her rank. All appeared to be silent, but that was their custom, and all, which was not their custom, wore an unaccustomed air of company manners which was very beautiful to see.

Harry, looking about him, perplexed at these phenomena, presently observed that the eyes of all, except those of Daniel Fagg, were fixed in one direction; and that the reason why Mr. Maliphant held an unlighted pipe in his mouth, and Josephus one in his hand, and that Daniel was not reading, and that his lordship looked so full of dignity, and that ardent spirits were abroad, was nothing less than a young lady.

In such a house, and, in fact, all round Stepney Green, the word 'lady' is generally used in a broad and catholic spirit; but in this case Harry unconsciously used it in the narrow, prejudiced, one-sided sense peculiar to Western longitudes. And it was so surprising to think of a young lady in connection with Bormalack's, that he gasped and caught his breath. And then Mrs. Bormalack presented him to the new arrival in her best manner. 'Our youngest!' she said, as if he had been a son of the house—our youngest and last—the sprightly Mr. Goslett. This is Miss Kennedy, and I hope—I'm sure—that you two will get to be friendly with one another, not to speak of keeping company, which is early days yet for prophesies.'

Harry bowed in his most superior style. What on earth he thought again, did a young lady want at Stepney Green? She had the carriage and the manner of a lady; she was quite simply dressed in a black cashmere; she wore a red ribbon around her white throat, and had white cuffs. A lady—unmistakably a lady; also young and beautiful, with great brown eyes, which met his own frankly, and with a certain look of surprise which seemed an answer to his own.

'Our handsome young cabinet-maker, Miss Kennedy,' went on the landlady—Harry wondered whether it was worse to be described as sprightly than as handsome, and which adjective was likely to produce the more unfavorable impression on a young lady—'is wishful to establish himself in a genteel way of business, like yourself.'

'When I was in the dress-making line,' observed her ladyship, 'I stayed at home with mother and Aunt Keziah. It was not thought right in Canaan City for young women to go about setting up shops by themselves. Not that I say you are wrong, Miss Kennedy, but London ways are not New Hampshire ways.'

Miss Kennedy murmured something softly, and looked again at the handsome cabinet-maker, who was still blushing with indignation and shame at Mrs. Bormalack's adjectives, and ready to blush again on recovery to think that he was so absurd as to feel any shame about so trifling a matter. Still, every young man likes to appear in a good light in the presence of beauty.

The young lady, then, was a dress-maker. For the moment she dropped a little in his esteem, which comes of our artificial and conventional education; because—Why not a dress-maker? Then she rose again, because—WHAT a dress-maker? Could there be many such in Stepney? If so, how was it that poets, novelists, painters, and

idle young men did not flock to so richly endowed a district? In this unexpected manner does nature offer compensations. Harry also observed with satisfaction the novel presence of a newly arrived piano, which could belong to no other than the newcomer; and finding that the conversation showed no signs of brightening, he ventured to ask Miss Kennedy if she would play to them.

Now, when she began to play, a certain magic of the music fell upon them all, affecting every one differently. Such is the power of music, and thus diverse is its operation. As for his lordship, he sat nodding his head and twinkling his eyes and smiling sweetly, because he was in imagination sitting among his Peers in the Upper House with a crown of gold and a robe of fur, and all his friends of Canaan City, brought across the Atlantic at his own expense for this very purpose, were watching him with envy and admiration from the gallery. Among them was Aurelia Tucker, the scoffer and thrower of cold water. And her ladyship sat beating time with head and hand, thinking how the family estates would probably be restored, with the title, by the queen. She had great ideas on the Royal Prerogative, and had indeed been accustomed to think in the old days that Englishmen go about in continual terror lest her majesty, in the exercise of this Prerogative, should order their heads to be removed. This gracious vision, due entirely to the music, showed her in a stately garden entertaining Aurelia Tucker and other friends whom she, like her husband, had imported from Canaan City for the purpose of exhibiting the new greatness. And Aurelia was green with envy, though she wore her best black silk dress.

The other boarders were differently affected. The melancholy Josephus leaned his head upon his hand, and saw himself in imagination the Head Brewer, as he might have been, but for the misfortune of his early youth. Head Brewer to the firm of Messenger, Marsden & Company! What a position!

Daniel Fagg, for his part, was dreaming of the day when his Discovery was to be received by all and adequately rewarded. He anticipated the congratulations of his friends in Australia, and stood on deck in port surrounded by the crowd, who shook his hand and cheered him, in good Australian fashion, as Daniel the Great, Daniel the Scourge of Scholars, Daniel the Prophet—a second Daniel. The professor took advantage of this general rapture or abstraction from earthly things to lay the plans for a grand coup in legerdemain, a new experiment, which should astonish everybody. This he afterward carried through with success.

Mrs. Bormalack, for her part, filled and slowly drank a large tumbler of hot brandy and water. When she had finished it she wiped away a tear. Probably, stimulated by the brandy, which is a sentimental spirit, she was thinking of her late husband, Collector for the Brewery, who was himself romantically fond of brandy and water, and came to an early end in consequence of overrating his powers of consumption.

Mr. Maliphant winked his eyes, rolled his head, rubbed his hands, and laughed joyously, but in silence. Why, one knows not. When the music finished, he whispered to Daniel Fagg. 'No,' he said, 'this is the third time in the year that you have asked leave to bury your mother. Make it your grandmother, young man.' Then he laughed again, and said that he had been with Walker in Nicaragua. Harry heard this communication, and the attempt to fill up the story from these two fragments afterward gave him nightmare.

Miss Kennedy played a gavotte, and then another, and then a sonata. Perhaps it is the character of this kind of music to call up pleasant and joyous thoughts; certainly there is much music, loved greatly by some people, which makes us sad, notably the strains sung at places of popular resort. They probably become favorites because they sadden so much. Who not shed tears on hearing 'Tommy Dodd?'

She played without music, gracefully, easily, and with expression. While she played Harry sat beside the piano, still wondering on the same theme. She a Stepney dress-maker! Who, in this region could have taught her that touch? She 'wishful to establish herself in a genteel way of business?' Was art, then, permeating downward so rapidly? Were the people just above the masses, the second or third stratum of the social pyramid, taught music, and in such a style? Then he left off wondering, and fell to the blissful contemplation of a beautiful woman playing beautiful music. This is an occupation always delightful to young Englishmen, and it does equal credit to their heads and to their hearts that they never tire of so harmless an amusement. When she finished playing, everybody descended to earth, so to speak.

The noble pair remembered that their work was still before them—all to do; one of them thought, with a pang, about the drawing of the Case, and wished he had not gone to sleep in the morning.

The clerk in the Brewery awoke to the recollection of his thirty shillings a week, and reflected that the weather was such as to necessitate a pair of boots which had soles.

The learned Daniel Fagg bethought him once more of his poverty and the increasing difficulty of getting subscribers, and the undisciplined contempt with which the head of the Egyptian Department had that morning received him.

Mr. Maliphant left off laughing, and shook his puckered old face with a little astonishment that he had been so moved.

Said the professor, breaking the silence: 'I like the music to go on, so long as no pater is wanted. They listen to music if it's lively, and it prevents 'em from looking round and getting suspicious. You haven't got an egg upon you, Mrs. Bormalack, have you? Dear me, one in your lap! Actually in a lady's lap! A common egg, one of our 'selected,' at tenpence the dozen. Ah! In your lap, too! How very injudicious! You might have dropped it, and broken it. Perhaps, miss, you wouldn't mind obliging once more with 'Tommy, make room for your uncle' or 'Over the garden wall,' if you please.'

Miss Kennedy said she did not know either of these airs, but she laughed and said she would play something lively, while the professor went on with his trick. First he drew all eyes to meet his own like a fascinating constrictor, and then he began to 'palm' the egg in the most surprising manner. After many adventures it was found in Daniel Fagg's pocket. Then the professor smiled, bowed, and spread out his hands as if to show the purity and honesty of his conjuring.

'You play very well,' said Harry, to Miss Kennedy, when the conjuring was over and the professor turned to his chair and his nightly occupation with a pencil, a piece of paper, and a book.

'Can you play?'

'I fiddle a little. If you will allow me, we will try some evening a duet together.'

'I did not know—' she began, but checked herself. 'I did not expect to find a violinist here.'

'A good many people of my class play,' said Harry, mendaciously, because the English workman is the least musical of men.

'Few of mine,' she returned, rising and closing the piano, 'have the chance of learning. But I have had opportunities.'

She looked at her watch, and remarked that it was nearly ten o'clock, and that she was going to bed.

'I have spoken to Mr. Bunker about what you want, Miss Kennedy,' said the landlady. 'He will be here to-morrow morning about ten on his rounds.'

'Who is Mr. Bunker?' asked Angela. They all seemed surprised. Had she never, in whatever part of the world she had lived, heard of Mr. Bunker—Bunker the Great?

'He used to be a sort of a factotum to old Mr. Messenger,' said Mrs. Bormalack. 'His death was a sad blow to Mr. Bunker. He's a general agent by trade, and he deals in coal, and he's a house agent, and he knows everybody round Stepney and up the Mile End Road as far as Bow. He's saved money, too, Miss Kennedy, and is greatly respected.'

'He ought to be,' said Harry; 'not only because he was so much with Mr. Messenger, whose name is revered for the kind associations of beer and property, but also because he is my uncle—he ought to be respected.'

'Your uncle?'

'My own—so near, and yet so dear—my uncle Bunker. To be connected with Messenger, Marsden & Company, even indirectly through such an uncle, is in itself a distinction. You will learn to know him, and you will learn to esteem him, Miss Kennedy. You will esteem him all the more if you are interested in beer.'

Miss Kennedy blushed.

'Bunker is great in the Company. I believe he used to consider himself a kind of a partner while the old man lived. He knows all about the big Brewery. As for that, everybody does round Stepney Green.'

'The Company,' said Joseph, gloomily, 'is nothing but a chit of a girl.' He sighed, thinking how much went to her and how little came to himself.

'We are steeped in beer,' Harry went on. 'Our conversation turns forever on beer; we live for beer; the houses round us are filled with the Company's servants; we live by beer. For example Mrs. Bormalack's late husband—'

'He was a Collector for the Company,' said the landlady, with natural pride.

'You see, Miss Kennedy, what a responsible and exalted position was held by Mr. Bormalack.' (The widow thought that sometimes it was hard to know whether this sprightly young man was laughing at people or not, but it certainly was a very high position, and most respectable.) 'He went round the Houses, Harry went on. 'Houses, here, mean public-houses; the Company owns half the public-houses in the East End. Then here is my cousin, the genial Josephus. Hold up your head, Josephus. He, for his part, is a clerk in the House.'

(To be Continued.)