

"Not at all probable, Eva; but at any rate it would make but little difference to Mr. Fleetwood."

"Why so, Allie; have you determined to behave better to Fred in future?"

"Not at all, dear—why should I? You know I have never given him the right to feel aggrieved at anything I may choose to do. I admire Fred very much; he is a noble fellow—but what then?"

"I wish you could love him, Allie; he is so good, so brave, and kind. Why does not my little sister see him as he is?"

"Perhaps I do, Eva; but I cannot make myself love him—that should come without effort. Some day it might. You know I like and respect him, but so I do others; and I could not give him any other answer than I already have."

"Poor fellow! have you seen him lately?"

"Yes; I met him this evening shortly after I passed Mr. Bowker. He was in uniform; I suppose the Queen's Own turns out to-night."

"Probably; what an interest he takes in his company. My favourite will make a brave soldier, Allie, should his services unfortunately be called for."

"Yes, that I am sure he will—a brave soldier and a noble one too; but Eva let us go inside—it is growing chilly, and, besides, yonder is Harry Bowker; and if I am not greatly mistaken, Mr. Arkwright is with him."

"Indeed! they are coming in at any rate—now for the introduction. Take care of your heart, Allie."

*La belle* Alice laughed gaily. "Never fear, Eva; it is all my own as yet, and likely to remain so—in spite of the fascination of the new Cræsus!"

It is probable that Philip Arkwright, had he overheard the above conversation, would have supposed that the Fates were propitious, and that he had at least a clear field in which to prosecute the task he had assigned himself. Certainly there appeared to be no serious obstacles to encounter at the outset; still, I think, if Alice Weldon had examined herself more closely, she would have found that far down in the depths of her heart were sown the seeds of a warmer feeling than respect for Fred Fleetwood. Whether these seeds shall wither and die, or spring into life and bloom, depends upon circumstances and Fleetwood himself.

Some men, no matter how noble their character, and kind and generous their disposition, are not successful wooers. My friend, Fred, was not; and, upon my word, I think it is a disgrace to him. He is a tall, handsome fellow; and Mrs. Sanborn only did him justice in the testimony she bore to his qualities of mind and heart. He had long loved *la belle* Alice, yet she still proved obdurate; and were it not that my heroine is capable of appreciating nobility of character I should say that his case is hopeless. As it is, I believe, notwithstanding her assertions, that he has a chance; but let him bestir himself, for a formidable rival, as we have seen, is about to enter the list.

My heroine was right—it was Philip Arkwright who accompanied Mr. Bowker, and the ladies had scarcely entered the drawing room ere the two gentlemen were announced. No sooner was the ceremony of introduction over, than Harry entered into conversation with Mrs. Sanborn, leaving Arkwright at liberty to devote himself to Miss Weldon, which he did with marked assiduity. He could talk well enough when he chose; and there was a species of fascination in his free and open manner, not without its charms to Alice. I don't think he knew much of Tennyson, or Longfellow, or Byron even, but he had brought with him a fund of anecdote and small talk from his European tour, of which he knew well how to avail himself. With a little skilful manœuvring the conversation drifted across the Atlantic, and Philip Arkwright felt himself upon firm ground.

"You have never been home, Miss Weldon?"

"Never; but I do hope some day to have the pleasure of standing upon English soil. My mother was an Englishwoman, Mr. Arkwright;

and I think I have inherited all her love for the dear old land."

"I cannot claim so immediate a descent, but still I do not think I would yield even unto you in admiration for England. It is a noble country, and to my mind, one of its greatest charms consists in the fact that almost every acre of its soil is historic."

"I should scarcely have expected that you would have been attracted by so intangible a charm, Mr. Arkwright."

"May I be permitted to ask why, Miss Weldon?"

"Certainly," answered Alice with a smile; "gentlemen generally regard what they see from a more prosaic point of view!" she might have added: but she did not—*millionaires* especially.

"Then I must be an exception, Miss Weldon; for England, separated from its glorious past, would be no longer England to me."

"I quite agree with you; but surely there must be much in the England of to-day to challenge our admiration."

"Undoubtedly; to one, for instance, accustomed to the wildness of Canadian scenery, there is an inexpressible charm in the garden-like aspect of England. How exquisitely golden corn fields contrast with parklike expanses of meadow land—whilst, ever and anon, peep out from embowering trees, mansions which date from the Tudors, or picturesque ruins of grim castles, or more peaceful abbeys."

"Did you travel much in England, Mr. Arkwright?"

"I think I may answer your question in the affirmative, Miss Weldon; for there is scarcely a place of any note that I have not seen."

"How delightful! I really feel disposed to envy you the pleasure you must have enjoyed."

"It was very great, certainly, Miss Weldon; but allow me to add that it did not equal the happiness I enjoy in being permitted to converse with one who loves old England so well."

"Thank you!" laughed Alice; "but I fear Mr. Arkwright is disposed to flatter."

"On my honour, no! It is an accomplishment I have yet to learn. When Miss Weldon knows me better, she will see that I am, at least, honest in any admiration I may express."

"I give no quarter to flattery, Mr. Arkwright."

"And I expect none, when proved guilty; but I am quite sure that Miss Weldon will never punish me until I am convicted."

"I do not know," answered Alice with a smile; "but let us talk of England—you visited the lakes of course?"

"I did, Miss Weldon, and was delighted with their calm loveliness—so different to the wide unpicturesque expanse of our own Ontario and Erie. I have at my room a fine series of views, not only of lake scenery, but of almost every point of interest visited by the tourist in England; and I shall be only too happy, if permitted the honour, to bring them over for Miss Weldon's inspection."

"Oh! thank you, Mr. Arkwright; it will give me much pleasure, I am sure, and Mrs. Sanborn also, for she shares all my love for our mother's native land."

The space at my command, as well, probably, as the reader's patience, forbid that I should chronicle more of this conversation. Let me add, however, that by degrees Arkwright drifted to Paris, the Rhine, Switzerland, and Italy, and succeeded, ere the conversation became general, in placing himself on an easy footing with Miss Weldon. When Harry Bowker gave the signal for departure, Philip received from Mrs. Sanborn an invitation to visit the villa whenever he could make it convenient to do so; and further, he intimated to *la belle* Alice his intention of bringing the views for her inspection on the following day. He had stripped to his work.

"How do you like Mr. Arkwright, Allie?"

"I can hardly tell you, dear; he seems agreeable enough—but I fancy he shares a failing common to most wealthy men."

"Rather egotistical, eh! Allie? I wish poor Fred were a little more so."

"Well, Phil, what do you think of your thousand dollars now?"

"Why, that I shall keep them in my purse, of course; but, by Jupiter, Harry, she is worth the winning. Congratulate me, old boy! for I can't fail, when pride and fancy are both interested."

#### CHAPTER III.

The following morning Philip Arkwright appeared at the Sanborn villa, with his portfolio of views. They were chiefly photographs, taken in the highest style of the art, and both Mrs. Sanborn and Alice felt really interested in looking through them; and I am bound to admit that the pleasure they experienced was heightened by Philip's animated remarks. He was, as our Yankee friends would say, "fully posted" as to the points of interest connected with each view, and made the most of what he conceived to be a favourable opportunity for displaying his superiority to his new friends. A more modest tone would undoubtedly have served him better, but my Cræsus was one of the last men in the world to see that. You know my opinion of him, and will not be surprised when I tell you, that I believe he thought it impossible to dwell at too much length upon the merits of Philip Arkwright, Esq. Neither will you be surprised, probably, when I say that dating from that morning he was a constant visitor at — street. I cannot affirm that Mrs. Sanborn encouraged him; for beyond the fact that she did not take very kindly to the man of money, she had Fred Fleetwood's interest too much at heart to wish him constantly near Alice.

And *la belle* Alice herself—what of her? Well; I don't know. If she was amused at Philip's egotism, she was far too amiable to permit her amusements to become apparent, and besides egotistical as Arkwright was, his attentions to herself were marked and persistent. All women, it is said, love admiration; and my heroine must be pardoned if she did feel somewhat flattered at the attention of a man so courted and caressed as was Philip Arkwright. Besides, there was that certain "*dash*" about the fellow, which is not generally without its influence upon ladies. And then there were the money bags—but if Philip expected much aid from them in his siege he was building upon the sandiest of sandy foundation; for Harry Bowker was quite right when he said that my heroine would never give her hand unless her heart went with it. I know that many of pretty Alice's maiden friends looked askance upon her about this time, and sneered at her privately as a heartless fortune-hunter. The poor immaculate dears might have spared their ill-natured remarks; for love of wealth, not that she undervalued it, was certainly not a sin with which my heroine could be charged. Not if Philip Arkwright is to win her it must be by earnest effort and true knightly devotion. He must emulate the gallantry of the soldier who carries a fortress by storm.

Will he win her? Upon my word, I think his chances are fair. He opened the campaign, as we know, in a spirit of reckless bravado; but I must do him the justice to say that as he warmed to his work, he was thoroughly in earnest. Ere a month had elapsed it was not chiefly his pride that was interested, he became more the lover than I believed his nature would have permitted him to be. Beyond his visits at — street, he was the constant attendant of Mrs. Sanborn and Alice, at the concerts, parties and balls they attended. He drove out with them—devised pleasant surprises, and earnestly strove to anticipate my heroine's every wish and thought. Decidedly he was becoming a dangerous rival was my "*hey*" *millionaire*!

I have purposely kept Fred Fleetwood where his unfortunate retiring disposition usually placed him—in the background.

A braver man does not live than he, and yet amongst women generally, and towards Alice Weldon particularly, he was an arrant coward. If the fellow had possessed one half of Philip Arkwright's self-assertion I verily believe his goddess would have surrendered months ago. I used to tell him, half bitterly sometimes—for Fred had no secrets from me—that I wondered how he