

REDMOND O'DONNELL;

LE CHASSEUR D'AFRIQUE.

CHAPTER VII.—CONTINUED.

Just this—that she has some secret in her possession which you are afraid she will tell, and the secret concerns my mother. She is trading on that secret in forcing herself into this house, for you dislike her as much as I do, Sir John Dangerfield, only you won't own it. I am to be kept in the dark, it seems. Very well! I don't want to pry into your mysteries, only you can't expect me to shut my eyes to what goes on before them. That woman has some secret which you are afraid she will tell, and you pay her large sums for keeping it, and that secret concerns my mother. Don't look so thunderstruck, papa! I won't turn amateur detective, and try to find it out, and I will be as civil as is in human nature—such human nature as mine—to be, only don't try to pass off that creature as an old friend or anything of that sort. And get her out of this house as soon as you can, for all our sakes.

And when Miss Dangerfield walked out of the room in offended majesty, Sir John was left to enjoy the times as best he might after learning his sharp-sighted daughter's discovery. Katherine turned in her saddle now and looked after her pony phaeton and its occupant. "How I do dislike that woman, Gaston!" she exclaimed. "And you're an uncommonly good hater, ma belle," Mr. Dantree answered, coolly. "You can love, but you can hate also. In the blessed days to come, when I am your lawful lord and master, it shall be my Christian endeavor to teach you better morality. I know several people whose enmity I should prefer to yours."

"I could never be an enemy of you, Gaston—never! Do what they might, I never could hate those whom I once loved. My likes and dislikes came at first sight. I detested that woman from the moment I set eyes on her."

"Feminine instinct, I suppose. There is no love lost between you, darling. I've caught her looking at you at times when she thought no one was watching her, and—well, it wasn't a pleasant look, either, to give or receive. She smiles a great deal, but it isn't a very mirthful smile, and she's the sort of woman to present you a dose of arrychnon and a kiss together. What does she do at Scarswood? An old friend of his, I think Sir John said. He didn't look at her in a very friendly manner, by the bye, as he said it she is a most unwelcome intruder, it is easy to be seen, to Sir John as well as to you. Why, then, does he not give her her come?"

"Ah, why, indeed?" Katherine repeated, with a frown; "I wish some one would tell me why. There is some secret understanding between them that I can't fathom. I wonder if papa ever committed a murder, or a forgery, or some interesting crime of that sort, and that this little human cat has found it out, and holds the secret like the sword of Damocles—his name—suspended over his head by a single hair. That would be like the plot of a modern novel."

"Like the plot of a modern novel, perhaps, but not in the least like Sir John Dangerfield. Still I think you're right, Kathie; there is a secret understanding, and if that understanding relates to a crime, I don't believe Sir John ever committed it. The dear old dad doesn't over and above like me, my darling; still he's a game old bird, and never did mortal man or woman will wrong in his life. I'm positive. Doesn't your lordly widow often sit in an odd sort of way to your mother, Kathie? Now, it strikes me the secret—for there is one—involves her."

"I think it very likely, indeed," responded Katherine, "and I told papa so only yesterday."

"You did! And what did he say?" "Nothing satisfactory—only told his temper—chronic low with him since Mrs. Vavasor's death. He used to be the dearest old love, but he's become completely demoralized since that woman's been in the house. He always talks as if she had been an intimate friend of his mother's, and papa, I think, and never says a word. Mistakes may be very interesting," said Miss Dangerfield with a frown, "but I'd rather have them neatly bound in cloth than live in the house with them. One comfort is, she is going to leave Scarswood to-morrow."

Katherine blushed, and laughed, and broke off. "Well, ma belle, before when?" "Before—oh, well, before we were married! Now, Gaston—on the public road, sir, don't let all very well to know that the sins of the fathers shall be visited on the children, and all that, but it's nowhere in the catechism, that the inconvenient friendship of the mother shall, and I devoutly wish our visitor in Joppa! I never saw my mother that I can recollect. I never heard papa speak much about her, and everybody tells me I don't look like her in the world like her—I don't look like papa either—Colonel and the late Mrs. Dangerfield were both handsome. No, I don't want a compliment—not even your eyes, Gaston, can make me out other than middle and plain. And, with a little droop of the head, a little fatter of the young voice, I never wished in all my life as I have wished to be beautiful since—I have known you."

"My dearest Kathie," Mr. Dantree said, smiling, "struggling with a yawn, for a very sensible girl, as this girl, you can talk precious nonsense sometimes! Sallow and plain! I confess I should never have found it out if you had not told me. You don't want to be seen in the world of the stereotyped British young lady, I hope, with a face like a pink and white wax-doll, and a head more hollow. I can only say if you had you would never have bewitched me."

only wanted Pauline for her fortune, until he proved his disinterestedness. Of course they say I'm a fortune-hunter and adventurer—I would be very greatly surprised if they did not. Your father thinks so—Mrs. Vavasor, knowing how she would act in my place, thinks so—your cousin Peter, furious with his late rejection, thinks so. But you—Kathie—my darling—she bent his pathetic liquid dark eyes upon her—"You surely do not; if you do—then here—this moment bid me go, and I will obey."

"Gaston—what nonsense! If I believed, I would bid you to stay here. I should die if I doubted you."

Mr. Dantree laughed a little cynically. "No, you wouldn't die, Kathie. Broken hearts went out of fashion with Paul and Virginia and our great grandmothers. You'd not die, Kathie—you'd forget me in six months for—what you could easily find—a better man."

Mr. Dantree was right, it would have been very easy to find a better man, but Katherine Dangerfield was seventeen, and the glamour of a melodious voice, of Spanish eyes, and a face like some R-brandy picture was upon her, and her whole heart was in the words. "I would never forget. When I forget you—true or false—I shall have forgotten all things earthly."

Something in her tone, in her eyes, moved him. He lifted one of her hands and kissed it. "I am not half worthy such love and trust as yours. I am a villain, Kathie—not fit to kiss the hem of your garment. My life has been one long round of—"

"Reckless days and reckless nights—Unholy songs and tipsy fights!" But I will try—I will—to make you happy when you are my wife. And the sooner that day comes now the better. Miss Dangerfield, retaining his customary careless tone, "are you aware it is beginning to rain?"

It had been a stifling October day—now sun-gleams, now gray gloom. Katherine looked up at the sky, and one great drop, then another fell upon her face. The whole sky was dark with drifting clouds, and growing each instant darker. The storm which had been brewing all day was close upon them.

"And we are five miles from Scarswood, and in five minutes the rain will descend in torrents. Gaston, what shall we do? I had rather not get drenched, papa will scold!" "And I had rather not get drenched even with a papa scold. Drenching includes influenza, watery eyes, and a tendency to talk through ones nose, and is not an interesting complaint. Can't we run to cover somewhere? You know everybody in this neighborhood. There's Major Marchmont's—won't those the ivied turrets of Marchmont Place I behold through the trees?"

"Yes, dear, I understand your hesitation. The gallant major did his best to snub me the other day, but I'm of a forgiving turn and don't much mind. I think I could endure that old officer's grim looks more easily than the ragged elements on the open downs. Shall we make for Marchmont?" "No," said Katherine; "if you can endure Major Marchmont's insults, I can't. We can do better than that—we can go to Bracken Hollow."

"With all my heart. Where is Bracken Hollow?" "Not a quarter of a mile off. This way, Gaston, or we shall get the drenching after all. The place belongs to my old nurse—she came with us from India, and papa gave her the place to end her days in, and to get rid of her; she and Nixon, my maid, led a perfect cat-and-dog life. Quick, Gaston! Good gracious, what a deluge!"

The rain was falling in torrents now. It fell fairly fast before it—and Mr. Dantree followed his leader. They were close to the coast; far away the white foaming sea heaved its dull booming on the shore mingled with the rush of the rain.

"I've heard of Mr. Gaston Dantree—yes, Miss Katherine, and I'm glad you've brought him to me."

"You don't seem to be very cordial to see it then; you don't say you're glad to see him."

"I'm not a fine lady, Miss Katherine—I don't tell polite lies. I'm not glad. You're going to marry him, they say—is it true?" "Well, yes," Katherine laughed, good-naturedly, "I'm afraid it is. You pity him, nurse, don't you? You took care of me a decade of years or so, and you know what he has to expect."

"I pity you!" Old Hannah answered, with a second sorrow, prolonged stare at her nerving lover; "I pity you! Only seventeen, and trouble, trouble, trouble before you!" It was not an easy matter to stare Mr. Gaston Dantree out of countenance as a general thing, but his eyes fell now before old Hannah's basilisk gaze.

"Confound the hag!" he muttered, turning to the widow; "what does she mean?" Katherine was fond of her old nurse—too fond to be irritated now by her croaking. "Don't be disagreeable, Hannah," she said; "and don't stare in that Gorgon-like way. It's rude, and Mr. Dantree is modest to a fault. See how you put him out of countenance. Sit down here, like a dear old thing, and tell me all about the rheumatism, and what you want me to get you for the winter; you'll have lots of time before the rain holds up."

"The rain is holding up now, Kathie," her lover said. "I knew it was too violent to last. In ten minutes it will have ceased. Come, we can go."

He could not account to himself for his feverish haste to leave this place—for the sudden and intense dislike he had taken to this old woman.

"I'll go and see to the horses," he said, and smoke a cigar in the porch, while you talk to your nurse."

He quitted the room. Katherine looked after the graceful figure and negligent walk with eyes full of girlish admiration; then she turned to Hannah. "Isn't he handsome, nurse? Now confess; you're sixty or more, but you like handsome people still, don't you? Isn't he just the very handsomest man you ever saw in all your life?"

"He's rare and handsome, Miss Kathie," the old woman said, slowly; "rare and handsome surely. But, my little one, don't you marry him. It's not the face to trust—it's as false as I'm false."

"Check!" Mrs. Vavasor cried, sharply and triumphantly, a few minutes after. "Your razor never always except—when they have a Vavasor for an enemy."

"Try again, Peter," she said; "a Dangerfield never yields!" "I fear I must; I am no match for Mrs. Vavasor. Ah! here is Dantree—lucky dog! I must go over and congratulate him. It's not every day a poor devil drops into eight thousand a year and the finest place in the county."

"Katherine dear, suppose you try," Mrs. Vavasor gaily exclaimed, "and vindicate the honor of the Dangerfields. I play chess pretty well, but who knows—you may become more than a match for me."

"Well," Katherine said coolly, "I think in the long run I will. I have a great deal of determination—ostentatious perhaps you might call it—and when I make up my mind to do anything, I generally do it."

"Such as marrying a handsome tenor singer. Don't be angry, Katherine. Mr. Dantree is worthy of you, I am sure. Now, then, for a pitched battle between you and me, and we to the conqueror!"

There was a sneering defiance underlying her words—a sardonic gleam in her black eyes that Katherine understood. There was more at stake than a simple game of chess; they looked at one another steadily for an instant, then began the game.

The two gentlemen approached. Peter Dangerfield took his place behind the chair of the widow; Mr. Dantree leaned lightly over that of Kathie. They stood like two seconds watching a duel, and neither spoke. A profound stillness filled the long, velvet-hung, lamp-lit drawing-room, in which you could hear the light falling on the cushions in the grate, the ceaseless beating of the rain on the glass. Which would win?

The widow, it seemed. In the gleam of the lamp-light there was a flush on her cheek that was not all rouge, a sparkle in her black eyes, not belladonna. She wore a wine-colored silk, décolleté, and her plump, white shoulders and arms shone like marble; thick, ruby-red jewels flashed on her fingers, on her neck; a bracelet of fine gold and rubies encircled her wrist, and a crimson rosette nestled in the shining, luxurious blackness of her hair. All crimson and black—with a fiery intensity of purpose flushing her face—and that peculiar glittering smile of hers on her thin lips. Gaston Dantree thought of some beautiful Circe—some fatal siren come on earth to work ruin and darkness.

"And yet, after all," he thought, "I believe in my soul Katherine is more than a match for her. How coolly—how to-oughtly calm and self-possessed she sits, not one pulsating the quicker—while the eyes of her enemy are on the with her devilish determination to win. In a long-drawn battle of any kind between these two, I'd back the heiress of Scarswood."

Then more and more absorbed in the game he forgot even to think. He bent over until his crisp black curls touched Katherine's cheek. She glanced up at him for a second—her still face brightening—a faint color coming in her cheeks.

strike is the one that proves him the traitor and fortune hunter he is. I believe in my soul it would be her death."

"I shall strip her of all—all—lover—father—name even—I will wait until her wedding-day and strike home then. When her cup of bliss is fullest and at her very lips I shall dash it down. And, my brilliant, haughty, high-spirited heiress of Scarswood, how will it be with you then?"

Sir John was in his place—a darkly moody host, amid the lights, the flowers, and the wiles. Mrs. Vavasor was even in higher spirits than usual. Mr. Dangerfield was talkative and agreeable, Katherine was happy, and disposed to be at peace with the world and all therein, even Mrs. Vavasor. She loved, she was beloved—all life's greatest happiness is said in that. For Mr. Dantree, he was simply delightful. He told them inimitable stories of life in the Southern States, until even Sir John relaxed into interest, and after dinner in the drawing room sang for them his favorite after-dinner song. "When the Winecup is Sparkling Before Us," in his delicious voice, that enchanted even those who hated him most. The piano stood in a shadowy recess down at one extremity of the long room—Katherine and he had it all to themselves. Mrs. Vavasor was busy with some flimsy feminine handwork. Mr. Dangerfield sat beside her, turning over a book of photographs and Sir John, lying back in his easy chair, kept his eyes closed as though he were asleep. His face wore a worn look of care—he was watching those two shadowy figures at the piano, and as he listened to this man's voice, so thrillingly sweet, as he looked at his face—the beautiful streamer on his dark, S-amen beauty, he scarcely wondered at Katherine's infatuation.

"Fairer than a woman and more unobtainable than water," he thought, bitterly, "and this is the real she has chosen to lean upon through life! My poor little Kathie, and I am powerless to save you—unless—I speak and tell all. If—ever help you if this man ever finds out the truth?"

"Sing me something Scotch, Gaston," Katherine said. She was seated in a low fauteuil, close beside him, her hands lying idly in her lap—her head back among the cushions. It was characteristic of this young lady that she had never done a stitch of fancy-work in her life. She was quite idle now, perfectly happy—listening to the howling of the October storm in the park, and Mr. Dantree's exquisite singing.

"Sing me something Scotch—a ballad. If I have a weakness, which is doubtful, it is for Scotch songs."

Mr. Dantree heard but to obey. He ran his fingers lightly over the keys, emitted slightly to himself, and glanced half-maliciously at the girl's supremely contented face.

"How well pleased she looks," he thought. "I wonder if I cannot change that blissful expression. Many women have done for the honor to tell in love with me, but I don't think any of them were quite so hard hit as you, not even excepting Marie."

He played a prelude in a plaintive minor key, wonderfully sweet, with a waiting undertone, quite heart-breaking, and sang. His face changed and darkened, his voice took a pathetic tone of his hesters and ever back before.

"A weary lot is thine fair maid—A weary lot is thine fair maid—To part the love that brow to braid And press the rue for wine. A little more of me, a little more of me, A little more of me, a little more of me, No more of me you know, My love, No more of me you know."

heaven. Then came New Orleans and my now, and I flattered myself, taking cognomen of Gaston Dantree, my literary ventures, and their success in their way. And then after three years more came old De Lamoignon and Marie—poor little Marie. I thought I had found the purest of Fortunatus then, when, lo! the old fool stood up and got married. And, as if that weren't enough, there must follow an heir, and add to all Marie's hopes and mine. Then I crossed the Atlantic to try my luck on this side the pond, and I believe I've accomplished my destiny at last, as Lord of Scarswood, at eight thousand a year. I believe I shall be a square peg, fitting neat and trim into a square hole. A handsome and a drawback—erecting and romantic, and all that bosh—but everything as we wish it is not for this world below. The old gentleman will go to rest shortly. I shall take the name of Sir Dantree Dangerfield, slink the Gaston, and live happy for ever after."

Mr. Dantree was still sitting that ballad of the faithless lover as he ran lightly upstairs to his room. He threw off his wet overcoat, poked the fire, turned up the lamp, and saw on the table a letter.

Now a letter to the handsome tenor singer was not an agreeable sight. Letters simply meant done or else—He snatched it up with an oath. This was no dun; it was something even worse. It was superscribed in a woman's hand, and was post marked New Orleans.

"From Marie, by Jupiter!" he exclaimed, blankly. "Now, how the dev—ah, I have it. It came to my address in London, and the publishers have forwarded it here. Shall I open it, or pitch it into the fire unread? Hence take all women. Can they never let a fellow alone? What a paradise earth would be without them!"

He did not throw the letter into the fire, however. He threw himself into an easy chair instead, stretched forth his splashed riding boots to the blaze, and tore it open. It had the mark of being brief at least, and remarkably to the point.

NEW ORLEANS, Sept. 18th, 1858. GASTON—Are you never going to write to me? You never coming back? Are you ill or are you faithless? The last, surely, I would be loath to believe with all the rest. Does your dear absence mean that I am deserted and forever if so, only say it, and you are free as the wind that blows. I will never follow you—never ask such of you. No man alive—though he were ten thousand times more to me than you here come—shall ever be used for flimsy lies like these. Come or stay as you choose; this is the last letter I shall ever trouble you with. Return this and all my other letters to my publisher, or, if am deserted, only, oh, Gaston! Gast! I have I deserved this? Marie.

That was all. The woman's heart of the writer had broken forth in that last sentence, and she had stopped, feeling to trust herself. Mr. Dantree read it slowly over, looking very calm and handsome in the leaping light.

"Plucky little girl!" was his finishing comment; "I is hard lines on her, after all that's past and gone. But there's no help for it, Marie. I have learned to love another—I have broken every vow—we have parted from each other—and your heart is lonely now" and "I that sort of thing. I wonder if I ever had a heart! I don't it. I'm like Minerva, a heart was left out in my make-up; I never was really in love in my life, and I don't want to be. Women are very well as step-lungs-stones to fortune, fame, and ambition; but for love in the abstract—bah! But poor little Marie! If I ever did approach the spooner, it was for her; if I have it in me to care for anything or anybody but myself, it is for her."

And then Mr. Dantree produced a little black pipe, loaded to the muzzle, struck a match, and fell back again to enjoy himself. He looked the picture of a luxurious Sybarite, lounging negligently among the cushions before the grate fire.

CHAPTER VIII.

A LETTER FROM NEW ORLEANS.

MR. DANTREE dined at Scarswood, and rode onward through the wet darkness somewhat before midnight. It had been a very pleasant evening, and the Louisiana was in the best possible spirits as he rode back to Morecombe. The day was drizzling and when more splendid about than Morecombe would be his when he had ridden up the Scarswood Park.

"Mr. Dantree mused. "After thirteen years of hill life in India his liver can't be the size of a walnut—and then he's a prople. Your short-necked, bird-faced, healthy-looking old buffers are always fragile blossoms; it's touch-and-go with them at any moment. And he's taking his daughter's engagement to my noble self desperately to heart—he's been breaking every day since. I wonder what's up between him and the little widow? It wouldn't be pleasant if she should turn out to be a first wife, or something of that sort, and at his death produce an interesting heir or heiress and out Mr. Dantree. It looks suspiciously like it; she's got a strong claim of some kind upon him, and he's more afraid of her than he ever was of the savagiest Sepoy out yonder. I wish I could get at the bottom of the matter, before I commit myself further and slip the ring over Miss Dangerfield's finger. Not that it matters very greatly—neither matrimonial nor any other terms ever could bind me. It may all turn out right, however, and I may reign grand seigneur of Scarswood. Rather a change in a few months, for a penniless penny-linger. Marie's the only drawback. If ever she finds this out, there'll be the devil to pay in New Orleans."

Miss Dangerfield had been rather surprised when on entering the drawing-room that evening, after her wet ride from Bracken Hollow, she found her cousin Peter playing chess with Mrs. Vavasor. It was the first time since their quarrel that he had entered the house. She went over to him with the frank, girlish grace that always characterized her, and gave him her hand.

"Welcome back to Scarswood, cousin," she said; "I began to think you had quite deserted us. Is it to the claims of kinship on the part of Mrs. Vavasor, or to the fascinations of Mrs. Vavasor we owe the present visit, I wonder?" "A little of both, Kathie, and a cousinly desire to offer my congratulations to the future Mrs. Dantree. I wish you both every happiness."

"Check!" Mrs. Vavasor cried, sharply and triumphantly, a few minutes after. "Your razor never always except—when they have a Vavasor for an enemy."

"Try again, Peter," she said; "a Dangerfield never yields!" "I fear I must; I am no match for Mrs. Vavasor. Ah! here is Dantree—lucky dog! I must go over and congratulate him. It's not every day a poor devil drops into eight thousand a year and the finest place in the county."

"Katherine dear, suppose you try," Mrs. Vavasor gaily exclaimed, "and vindicate the honor of the Dangerfields. I play chess pretty well, but who knows—you may become more than a match for me."

"Well," Katherine said coolly, "I think in the long run I will. I have a great deal of determination—ostentatious perhaps you might call it—and when I make up my mind to do anything, I generally do it."

Follow-up's Ointment and Pills.—Coughs, Influenza.—The soothing properties of these medicines render them well worthy of trial in all diseases of the lungs. In common colds and influenza the Pills taken internally and the Ointment rubbed externally are exceedingly efficacious. When influenza is epidemic the treatment is similar, except that the blood is removed all obstructions to its free circulation through the lungs, and the overworked air tubes, and render respiration free without reducing the strength, irritating the nerves, or depressing the spirits. Such are the ready means of saving suffering when afflicted with colds, coughs, bronchitis, and other complaints by which so many are seriously and permanently afflicted in most countries.

THE LAW OF GRAVITATION.

Lying beneath an apple tree Sir Isaac Newton saw an apple fall to the ground. His engraving mind led him to investigate the cause, and the result was the promulgation of the theory now known as the law of gravitation a system which at once won the assent of the learned world, and by means of which the motions of all the known heavenly bodies are explained, and those of the yet unknown are determined. A singularly comprehensive principle is that propounded and carried into practice by HOLLOWAY. He divides all the usual diseases into two classes—those arising from imperfect action of the digestive organs, and those proceeding from impurities of the blood. These two classes of disease he treats by means of his celebrated Pills and Ointment, two skillfully prepared remedies which have been most successfully used in all the habitable parts of the globe. His unparalleled success has made his name a household word not only in his native land, but throughout the length and breadth of the world. Countries where proprietary medicines are forbidden by law have relaxed their stringent regulations in his favour. True merit is always at length recognised. The rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, physicians, statesmen, monarchs, a nation of enlightened freemen, has sanctioned, used, and extolled them. They are fixed facts in medical history. Is not this better than having light under a bushel? If anything is worth knowing it is worthy of being universally known. So thinking, HOLLOWAY has made his virtuous of his medicines through the press, and fortune, fame, and gratitude of millions have been his reward. It makes these statements, we are guided by a earnest wish to benefit the sick and suffering of all nations; and in directing their attention to the well-attested curative properties of HOLLOWAY'S remedies, we only relate facts and opinions which are patent to three-fourths of the civilized world.—Lancet's Indicator.