A RACE FOR A WIFE!

CHAPTER X.

GLEAMS OF LIGHT

Grenville Rose, to speak metaphorically has been paddling his skiff through troubled waters of late. Mande a short, weebegone Little note of dismissal, and his aunt's indigmant letter, were far from pleasant reading to a man as much entangled as he was in the love god's moshes. He sat and sulked he sat and smoked—he sat and thought—he but and drank; but none of the four processes seemed at all consolatory. They all ended in the same conclusion, that 'thrice-begotten best Pearman would marry his darling Maude, and that he was and ever should be, utterly miserable.' It is his language, if you please, and not mine; but they will speak irrationally, and with vehemence, when they are in that state.

Anathematizing, with an impartiality quite beautiful to witness, everything and everybody, Mr. Rose once more enters his sitting room in pursuit of breakfast. With a 'pish! at his letters-I am afraid the actual expression was stronger, though that will do for this narrative—he, as on the previous occahimmary, does he ascertain the extreme firmness of Coriander in the betting quotations for the Two Thousand. Not that Silky Dallison's feed at Greenwich is any object to him now--he is too miserable to enter into euch things; but he might as well read about that as anything else. Why does the supplement, which he never dreams of looking at, tumble so persistently across his plate?

Let's have a look at the second column, he mutters, and see whether 'X Y Z's' family are still in tribulation about his absence or whether 'Pollaky' is offering his usual hundred for an absconded young lady, aged nineteen, good-looking, and with a rose in her bonnet-jast seen, etc. 'Births'-hum! I don t see much good in them. There once myself, I suppose. Nice unlucky beggar's advent to put in the papers. 'Marriages!' d—n 'em! Suppose I shall see her's before many weeks are over. 'Deaths!'—I feel that's more in my line just now. I hope there a good lot of 'em. How I should like to add one or two to the column—more particularly one. Hallo! what's his? 'At Mannorsley, after a few day's i' sees, in the Pearman, Esq. Wish to heaven it had been his son! muttered Grenville, and then he sat down to think whether this could, by any possibility, influence his prospects in any way.

You must remember that 'his prospects, in Rose's mind, at this time were circumscribed to the relation he and his cousin

It is hard to beleive there is no such thing as destiny. It almost ludicrous at times to think what a trivial incident has turned the whole current of our lives. There is a large and well-known speculator on the turf at this time—a man, doubtless, worth many ignots and much stock and security—whose money-making career dates from the presentation of a case of razors, according to popular report. Who can say? Many such an instance might be quoted. Grenville Ress's life turned on reasing the supplement

liese's life turned on reading the supplement of the Times, it may be said by accident, that particular morning.

I tancy no human being ever saw that generally light-hearted barrister thinking so hard she was upon this occasion. He's was many a good cause since, but on has he had says, 'that was the biggest to was ever engaged in, and no solicitor to draw up t'e brief, mind.

'I y Jeve,' he said at last, 'I can almost swear I saw it. I recollect laughing over it at the time, and thinking what a quant, outer id deed it was. Suppose I'm right—

nucer 1d deed it was. Suppose I'm right-I woulder how it would affect things? must go over and talk to Dallison a bit.

And while Grenville Rose crosses the Taugle Gardens, let me say a few words a George Pallison. He comes athwart the bres of Grenville and Maude but for a ten days. Yet he is destined to be the masthat the quation, the Deus ex machina of that eventul period. George Dallison is a three menture or three yours senior to

Thanks-I'll take a baccy; and now I want to talk to you a bit on business—reason I'm here, said Rose, as he lit his cigar.

I say, confound it all! What the devil did you come to me for? All bosh. I don't understand your business—suppose I ought to say ours—an atom; better go on to Childers after you have had a smoke. Next staircase, you know.'
Shouldn't come to you on a point of law.

'Silky,' but this happens to be a bit of rac-

ing.
'You racing! What do you mean?'
'Have you seen old Pearman's death in
the paper?'

'Lord, yes,' rejoined Dallison once more, relapsing into his usual manner. 'You're thinking of Coriander—makes no difference you know-horse entered in the son's name. 'Suppose, Silky, I could show you that that horse couldn't start without my consent,

or something like it?'
'Come, old fellow, no gammon. I'm on him for the Derby, and am only waiting to hedge my money till he's won the Two Thousand.

'Look here, Dallison; I know nothing

about the turf, and come to you to manage a great game between young Pearman and myself. Will you do so? Of course you myself. Will you do so? Of course you can take care of yourself in the transaction. I can tell you nothing for certain as yet. Will you manage the turf part of the busiwhile I work the legal machinery? As my idea of the case stands at present, I tell you fairly, I think Coriander's starting for the Gumeas will be at the option of myself and clients; but I may be mistaken.

'The devil! Do you advise me to hedge now then?' said Silky Dallison.

'Certainly not. I know nothing about the turf, but, if I am right in my conjecture, the management of Coriander in the market will be, for the benefit of my clients, in your hands before a few days are over. Will you say nothing till I see you again, and give you, as I hope, my reasons why?"

Dumb as tombestones, and reticent as Madame Tussaud's Exhibition, quoth Dallison. 'But look here, old tellow. Racing is business with me; if you're not in for a regular mare's nest there's a heap of money to be made out of this. You say I am to be your agent if it is as you think it. I'll ask no questions; but as you know nothing about that great elaborate system of gambling relept racing—if, as you think, you've control over Coriander, can't whisper it to your carpet bag till you've seen me again. I say this honestly, with a view to doing my best for you. Bring me your case when you've worked it out, and I'll tell you what to do.' 'Many thanks, old fellow! I'm off to

Hampshire to-night. I shall be back the day after to-morrow, though perhaps late. It will be all decided then. I'm playing a good deal bissen etch them. good deal bigger stake than you, Silky-the girl I love, and something to start housekeep-

ing on.'
'Ah,' returned Dallison, 'I like that d—n the second part, if you've got the first stake on you're playing in earnest. I am still in the dark; but, if you see your way to winning the first, I'll bet you two to one, knowing noihing about it, I win enough for you to start housekeeping on.'

That very night, just as they were meditating bed, a loud ring startled the denizens of Glinn. The advent of Grenville Rose seemed to the servants a matter-of-course thing. They immediately commenced the preparation of his usual room. His uncle was also glad to see him; but, to Mrs. Deniison and Maude, the thing was past comprehension. As for Grenville, he seemed perfeetly callous, shook hands with his aunt, and audaciously kissed his consin, accompanying it by a pressure of the hand and a whisper, the combination of which sent the blood to the very roots of Maude's hair. Then he devoted himself, in a most pressio manner, to some cold beef and pickles, pertinaciously sat the ladies out, and, as he handed them their candles, whispered to Maude, 'Hope for us yet, darling!'

'Now, uncte,' he said, 'I want you to come with me to your study. You recollect that old box of deeds and papers you let me rummage through two years back, when I went so deep into heraldry, and spent a good bit of tim tracing the family genealogy?'
Yes, my boy, but you don't mean to say

the verge of. Then, perhaps, as far as it was in his selfish nature to care for any one, he

of that.' 'Oh, you have? May I ask what par-ticular inducements you have to offer that you think it probable Maude will break off the prospect of a good match in your behalt? You may have achieved some unexampled success in your profession; I can only regret that I am as yet in ignerance of it.

'You only sneer at me, and I am talking in carnest,' said Gronville, biting his lips. 'I can't see that that in the least improves

your position. You don't mean to tell me that you've had the audacity to come down here to upset an existing arrangement be-cause you've been egregious ass enough to fall in love with your cousin? By-the-way, do you suppose Maude approves of this? Have you any reason to suppose that she would prefer half of your garret in the temple to being mistress of Mannersly?'

Grenville Rose's face flushed, but he answered steadily: 'All that must be an after consideration. Uncle, answer me two questions fields here. questions—fairly, honestly, and as shortly as you please—and then wait to hear what I have to say to merrow morning.

'If I am to listen, then, you'll be good enough to talk rather more rationally than you are doing to-night. What are your ques-

* Believe me, uncle, I am speaking in your interests Do you owe Pearman money?— Pshaw! I know you do. I want to know how much 21

Really I had no idea you were keeping so watchful an eye over my interests. Prying into the affairs of one's relations was hardly deemed good taste in my day. I think I may safely leave that answer to your own natural acuteness. It seems to have stood you in good stead so far.'
'Good God!' cried Grenville, passionately,

'you can't think so meanly of me? You won't let me help von? That you owe Pearman money requires no espionage to find

out. I do know it—never mind how!

'Probably your philanthropy and increasing practice, then, led you to run down with a view to rescuing your uncle from his diffi-culties?' said Denison, bitterly.

'Yes and no,' said Rose, starting to his feet. 'I have come for two reasons: firstly, to win Maude for my wrfe, if I can; secondly, to release you from all obligation to Pearman, if possible. It I knew what the amount was it would make it easier for me. You don't choose to tell me. I can only let you know to morrow, then, what sum you can raise to meet such claims. Will you answer my other question? Do you honestly wish to see your daughter, a Denison of Glinn, married to Pearman ?'

It was a home-thrust this. The blood rushed to Harold Denison's temples, and his eyes had an angry light in them as he re-

'This, I presume, sir, is a specimen of the easy manner of the young man of the present day. A piece of more internal imper-tinence I don't remember ever encountering. May I trouble you to hand me that bedroom candle? I would suggest that the earlier you can make it convenient to depart to-morrow morning the less risk I can of being insulted, and for the present will wish you good-night.'

'Stop, you must hear me,' cried Grenville. 'If to-morrow morning I can show you a way to clear all Pearman's claims against you, will you listen to me then, and acquit me of any intention of insulting you? Will you still persevere, uncle, in mating your daughter to the son of a bill-discounting solicitor? No. you won't, I know you better than you think. You are too far in Pearman's hands, or you think so, to give yourself fair play in the matter. There oreathes no pronder man than you are. Trust me. Recollect the mouse once saved the hon. As you hope for peace in inture, trust me now.'

Harold Denison paused. He had never seen his nephew bread through his conven-tional, cool, easy manner in this wise be-fore. He felt that he had been terribly in earnest all through their interview. Had he really some clue that might save him? And —yes—he did at the core of his heart bitterly regret that Maude should make what he deemed such a mesalliance as she was on

become of that all-easential parchment. 'It become of that all-easential parciment.

looks bad, but I won't give in. I must harpy now. It is true this paper must be search further. I'll have my head in every box, escritoire, cabinet, or cupboard in all young girl can in a lover. It is the first limb the has been with her in that character. It is the collected that Manda was an early riser. he recollected that Maude was an early riser, so finished his toilet and betook himself quietly to the garden.

It was not long before he caught sight of the flutter of a light dress; a few seconds, and he was by Mande's side. Her face flushed as she met him, and her greeting was evidently forced and constrained.

'I thought, Maude dearest,' he said, 'that I might have the luck to meet you before breakfast. It is the only chance I have of seeing you alone. Can you tell me still that you don't repent what you wrote in an-swer to my letter of some fortnight or so back ?

Oh, Gren, what am I to say to you? Oh, Gren, what am I to say to you? What must you think of me? I never thought you cared about me in that way, you know. And then to write to you as I did! But Gren, dear, I did mean it. I do? They say it rests with me to keep Glinn as a home to my father, and that, if I don't marry Mr. Pearman, we shall be wandon't marry Mr. Pearman, we shall be wan-derers about the word. That would kill them. I am very miserable. You don't know what I had to go through. I didn't give it till I could bear it no longer. Be kind to me, Gren, please.' And the gray eyes, swimming with tears, looked up into Rose's face with a pitcous, pleading expression that half maddened him.

'Don't know what you had to go through, my pet? Hum! I think I can make a pretty good guess.' And, even as he passed his arm round his cousin's waist and kissed her, Grenville Rose's teeth were set hard. 'It makes me mad, Maude, to think that that beast Pearman should ever dare to dream of you. No, child, I know pretty well You wouldn't have proved false to your word, except under unfair pressure.'

'Then you don't think so very badly of

me? asked the girl shyly.
'I don't know,' smiled her cousin, as he bent his his head down to her. 'I'll hear

did you mean?'
'I didn't say that; when you quote what

I say, be good enough to be correct.'
'But you did say so,' said Mande, opening the gray eyes wide, as usual when a thing

pased her comprehension. 'No, Miss Denison; I said "hope for us

yet, darling."'
'Oh, Gren, don't tease me; that's so like your old aggravating ways. Tell

'Well, dearest, I hoped last night to find a paper that would have, at all events, broken off your engagement with Pearman, and left you free to choose again.

A quiet pressure of his arm, and a soft Well?'

'Vell?'
'I didn't find it, Maude, and went to bed as miserable as a man can well do. Your father promised me that Pearman should receive his conge if I could do what I dramed I could. I made sure of finding that receive his government in the study: that paper in the big oak-chest in the study; but, though I went steadily through them all, it wasn't there. Yet I'll swear it was

When did you see it. Gren ?

Don't you remember when I went mad upon heraldry, and was all for putting your genealogical tree to rights? I went through those papers then.'

Stop a moment, said the girl; 'let me think. Yes, sae continued, after a short, pause; 'and you used to bring them up to work at to the schoolroom—don't you recollect? And I'm almost sure, but didn't you throw a few of them into a drawer up there, saying they were no use, but you might make up a maguzine story or two out of them some day?'

By Jove; Mande, youv'e hit it! I did, and that would be safe to be one of them. Come stong, sweetheart mine, and see. No chance of their being disturbed, is there ?'

been so miserable of late—she is so quiet so sweet to be told you are loved at eighteen when that confession is made by the right person. No wonder the girl's face looked bright. 'Now, Maude, quick—which is the drawer? This, eh?' Hurriedly the drawer is gragged out; but alas I though all sorts of odds and ends, a book or two on heraldry, 'Telemaque,' 'Pamela, a French dictionary, etc., are discovered, no sign of lawpapers meets the eye.

*Mistaken the drawer, pet, I suppose!

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exclaimed Grenville, with a look of disap-pointment he struggled hard to conceal; and then continued his search. But, no; even drawer and cupboard of the school-room i ransacked in vain. Many a relic of ther merry old days there comes to light, but nothing in the shape of deed or parchment. Made stood aloot toward the co-clusion of the search, half kanic, half sitting on the table. Her first was serious enough now, and the well in jaced eyebrows rather knit. She felt that the promised smooth water of the morning was y no means realized. Since Grenvill ast sissed her, and personally told her he on she felt endued with infinite powers deffsition to the Pearman alliance.

'It's no use, Maude; the paper I value not here, said Grenville, at length. 'Intersperch elsewhere.'

'So you shall, Gren. Ring the lell I bave an idea.'

Her cousin did as he was bid, and, which stray housemaid in considerable bealtment eventually made her way to feel used room, Miss Denison said, sharply, Mrs. Upcroft she's wanted here directively rectly, mind—and don't let her be at an about getting here as you have been.'

* Now look here, Gren, continuel Manda those papers were there. Nobody but Mr. Upcroft would have dated move them. But you see, she has known me as a child, will am always hard put to it to hold my with her. If she don't happen quite to what you got to say. Do you love me?'

'Oh, Gren!' And Maude dropped her flushed, tear-stained face on his shoulder, and submitted to the abstraction of unlimited kisses with the greatest meekness.

The tears were kissed away, and a smile was on her lips as she said, 'You whitpered last night, 'There is hope for us yet;' what did you mean?'

I didn't are to lear them; but she will kink she ought not to have meddled with the court.'

There was any answer, and won't eventu, to take the trouble to remember. If I am make nothing of her, then you must thus in and frighten ber. Of course she can want to conceal them; but she will kink she ought not to have meddled with the she terms being I and don't like what she terms being I all the can be a she said.

out.'
There was a tap at the door as Manda finished her speech, and her cousin had just time to give a nod of intelligence as the housekeeper entered.

'Sorry to disturb you Mrs. Upcroit, and Miss Denison blandly, 'but I want to kee what you have done with the paper, 23 used to inhabit that drawer?'

'I'm sure I don't know nothing about no papers. You might have been sure of kess, I think, Miss Maude, before you sent fa, and the butcher jest here for orders, an and the housekeeper looked as sulky as the rightly dared. She had for years don't be but liked with Mrs. Denison, and was bitted ly jealous of any interference of Miss Mer.

Encuse me, Mrs. Upcroft, if you know anything about the removal of have papers, you should do so. Things ought to be moved from one room to another was out the knowledge and license of your the Will you be kind enough to recollect was became of those papers? They happen paid now to be of great importance.

That's so like you, Miss Maude. You were just the same as a child. What was ou wanted had to be done right a state I forget about those old papers now and must run away to the butcher; but I's haps think what became of them in a like I'm afraid, though they went to light with; and with a malicious smile the b keeper turned to go.

Mande Denison's eyes flashed, and lips quivered. She laced her closely to er; but all she said was the monosy. Gren.' Small meroy was Mrs. Upon likely to meet with at his hands; her inch had already made Rosse, teeth grates

ence had already made Roses' teeth grate 'Unfortunate, Mrs. Upcroft,' he observed with an evil smile; 'but I am afraid its butcher will have wait for some time better he next enjoys the pleasure of your sec. You see, you have unluckily admitted, but myself and Miss Denison-two with