

had at the table at Field's, Alan Conrad was announced, and she had risen to go. Henry had tried to detain her; then, as he looked down at her, hot impulse had seemed to conquer him; he caught her, irresistibly; amazed, bewildered, she looked up at him, and he bent and kissed her. The power of his arms about her—she could feel them yet, sometimes—half frightened, half enthralled her. But his lips against her cheek—she had turned her lips away so that his pressed her cheek! She had been quite unable to know how she had felt then, because at that instant she had realized that she was seen. So she had disengaged herself as quickly as possible and, after Alan was gone, she had fled to her room without going back to Henry at all.

How could she have expected Henry to have interpreted that flight from him as disapproval when she had not meant it as that; when, indeed, she did not know herself what was stirring in her that instinct to go away alone? She had not by that disowned the new relation which he had accepted as established between them. And did she wish to disown it now? What had happened had come sooner and with less of her will active in it than she had expected; but she knew it was only what she had expected to come. The pride she had felt in being with him was, she realized, only anticipatory of the pride she would experience as his wife. When she considered the feeling of her family and her friends, she knew that, though some would go through the formal deploring that Henry had not better birth, all would be satisfied and more than satisfied; they would even boast about Henry a little, and entertain him in her honor, and show him off. There was no one—now that poor Uncle Benny was gone—who would seriously deplore it at all.

CONSTANCE had recognized no relic of uneasiness from Uncle Benny's last appeal to her; she understood that thoroughly. Or, at least, she had understood that; now was there a change in the circumstances of that understanding, because of what had happened to Alan, that she found herself re-defining to herself her relation with Henry? No; it had nothing to do with Henry, of course; it referred only to Benjamin Corvet. Uncle Benny had "gone away" from his house on Astor Street, leaving his place there to his son, Alan Conrad. Something which had disturbed and excited Alan had happened to him on the first night he had passed in that house; and now, it appeared, he had been prevented from passing a second night there. What had prevented him had been an attempted robbery upon the street, her father had said. But suppose it had been something else than robbery.

She could not formulate more definitely this thought, but it persisted; she could not deny it entirely and shake it off.

To Alan Conrad, in the late afternoon of that day, this same thought was coming far more definitely and far more persistently. He had been awake and sane since shortly after noonday. The pain of a head which ached throbbingly and of a body bruised and sore was beginning to give place to a feeling merely of lassitude—a languor which revisited incoherence

upon him when he tried to think. He shifted himself upon his bed and called the nurse.

"How long am I likely to have to stay here?" he asked her.

"The doctors think not less than two weeks, Mr. Conrad."

HE realized, as he again lay silent, that he must put out of his head now all expectation of ever finding in Corvet's house any such record as he had been looking for. If there had been a record, it unquestionably would be gone before he could get about again to seek it; and he could not guard against its being taken from the house; for, if he had been hopeless of receiving credence for any accusation he might make against Spearman while he was in health, how much more hopeless was it now, when everything he would say could be put to the credit of his injury and to his delirium! He could not even give orders for the safeguarding of the house and its contents—his own property—with assurance that they would be carried out.

The police and hospital attendants, he had learned, had no suspicion of anything but that he had been the victim of one of the footpads who, during that month, had been attacking and robbing nightly. Sherrill, who had visited him about two o'clock, had showed that he suspected no other possibility. Alan could not prove otherwise; he had not seen his assailant's face; it was most probable that if he had seen it, he would not have recognized it. But the man who had assailed him had meant to kill; he had not been any ordinary robber. That purpose, blindly recognized and fought against by Alan in their struggle, had been unmistakable. Only the chance presence of passers-by, who had heard Alan's shouts and responded to

them, had prevented the execution of his purpose, and had driven the man to swift flight for his own safety.

Alan had believed, in his struggle with Spearman in Corvet's library, that Spearman might have killed rather than have been discovered there. Were there others to whom Alan's presence had become a threat so serious that they would proceed even to the length of calculated murder? He could not know that. The only safe plan was to assume that persons, in number unknown, had definite, vital interest in his "removal" by violence or otherwise, and that, among them, he must reckon Henry Spearman; and he must fight them alone. For Sherrill's liking for him, even Constance Sherrill's interest and sympathy were nullified in practical intent by their admiration for and their complete confidence in Spearman. It did not matter that Alan might believe that, in fighting Spearman, he was fighting not only for himself but for her; he knew now certainly that he must count her as Spearman's; her! Things swam before him again dizzily as he thought of her; and he sank back and closed his eyes.

(To be continued.)

NERVOUS EMPLOYER: "Thomas, I wish you wouldn't whistle at your work."

Office Boy: "I ain't working, sir; I'm only whistling."

HE—Of course, women should vote. They deserve suffrage as much as men—more, because their minds are purer and cleaner.

She—Of course their minds are cleaner, but how do you know that?

He—Because they change them so much oftener.—Puck.

THE EVOLUTION OF MIRANDA

(Concluded from page 18.)

said when she got back. "I'd be kidnapped entirely, m'm."

So thoroughly scared she seemed to be that Miranda did not for many weeks venture down town again. She gradually accustomed herself to the busy shop-rooms of the west end where the shops ran only in two directions. She went to church, Sundays and evenings, and at home sang Moody and Sankey hymns. Her religion was of the emotional sort.

"I've been brought up perfect," she said. "I sang in the choir back 'ome, m'm."

She promised to join the choir. This was very auspicious. Choirs, prayer-meetings, and sewing-circles would soon make her a citizen. She had an amazing appetite for them all. She even hobbled with the Salvation Army, although technically she belonged to the English Church.

And when she was not out to one or other of those spiritual and social means of grace, Miranda was by no means lonesome. Within a month she had developed a powerful interest in the butcher's delivery boy. He brought her candy along with the meat-orders; and the cat in Miranda's kitchen was fed meat good enough for a king.

The butcher boy was soon supplanted by a series of soldier admirers, some of whom seemed to hail from Miranda's part of the world and some of whom she picked up with at church meetings—so she said.

One by one they trailed away, the butcher boy grew weary, and Miranda became the sole object of passionate intention to a young man who came four evenings a week and threatened seriously to interfere with her attendance upon other means of grace. The affair between this lonesome maritime girl and

the young city lad became fast and furious. Miranda's kitchen became a rendezvous. It was no longer a mere place to sing the Glory Song and to make her floors spotless in the evening after littering them all day. It became a seance. Miranda was the centre attraction. A curious little knot of folks came there, night after night, both sexes. Miranda was the animated centre of interest for them all. No longer was she silent and glum and lonesome. She became a young witch of great interest. Often she went trooping out with her entourage to the shops, and came back at any hour between 10 o'clock and midnight. Sometimes she came alone, a clatter of swift feet on the side pavement, a grand rush into the kitchen and a breathless,

"Oh, m'm, I was chased-home by a man, I was. Oh, I'm that frightened!"

Poor Miranda! She could not foresee what her sequel would be. The day came when she was missing from the kitchen without extra clothes or notice of leave. The evening came when she did not return. The telephone rang. Inquiries for Miranda. So many friends wanting to talk to her in the evening. Strange! None of them knew she had left.

And before her mistress could begin to understand it all—Miranda herself and her young man appeared at the back-door. He had found her. She went to bed. In the morning she was up as usual. At breakfast time there was no breakfast. Miranda had flown, taking her good clothes with her.

And the last we heard of her she was chief waitress in a negro restaurant with the young man as assistant. Miranda had developed. She had burst her shell. And her mistress is now looking for another maid—but not for an experimental foundling like Miranda.

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