

## COLLABORATEURS.

By S. D. SCHULTZ.

## CHAPTER VI (Continued).

HOWEVER, society is not entirely influenced by motives of self-indulgence, self-appreciation and self-sufficiency. Sometimes in the higher world, there may be found philanthropy without ostentation—but rarely; sometimes may be found that true nobility, that effaces self and gives for the pure love of giving—but exceptionally. Oftener, the plutocrat purchases posthumous glory, and seeks to shed borrowed lustre on a life of grinding greed by an insignificant legacy, as if paltry thousands could atone for years of stolid indifference to the misery of fellow-beings. The dry crust ungrudgingly shared by suffering penury weighs more in the moral balance than the millions of the magnate offered merely as a memorial to the giver.

Most of the follies, though, that bring society into disrepute are to be attributed to those who, bereft of reason by sudden accession of wealth, forget everything—and, most of all, their past—in their frenzy to pass from indigent obscurity to conspicuous opulence.

The great formative influence, constantly going on for the amelioration of the conditions of humanity do not germinate among the delicate exotics of the conservatory, but are patiently nourished into maturity in the work-a-day fields of struggling necessity.

What mattered it, then, whether society should bar its portals to Ethel or not? She was beginning to taste the exhilarating joys of activity—energy—work. She felt that she was a factor, however small, in the march of social betterment. Woman's sphere was enlarging. Disabilities and invidious distinctions were crumbling before the crusade of enlightened demand. Even law and the church, ever zealous in maintaining the fancied bulwarks of society, perpetuated the primitive ideas of paganism. For both, animated by the erroneous assumption that woman needed artificial propping, relegated the gentler sex to a position of unthinking subserviency. Orthodox religion still ordains implicit obedience, but the fiction of the law, that the wife's identity is merged in the existence of the husband, is giving way to the recognition of equality.

Ethel, though far from advocating extreme opinions, was still an enthusiast in everything looking to the enfranchisement of her sex. She continued writing her woman's column, and her paragraphs, for a wonder, did not go into unbounded ecstasies over marvellous female achievements, and paint man as a conservative, intolerant wretch. She had scant sympathy for that class of fair journalists, who could exultingly cite as an example of woman's advancement, the picture of a mother elected to the mayoralty chair, and with a baby in arms, and a tribe of neglected offspring at home, officiating at council meetings.

Ethel's platform revealed a simple creed. She desired unrestricted opportunity in every calling, so that genius and inclination, irrespective of sex, could find open paths to honor in the professions, in literature, science and even in the affairs of government. Still, she felt that womanly graces had ample scope in the domestic

sphere. Whilst enthusiastic over reform, she was far from being actuated by the fierce aggressiveness of the rampant female suffragist.

It must not be thought that Ethel's labors were merely perfunctory, and that she only took extracts from Archer's reports. Her concurrence in his suggestion gave her the opportunity of reading for the university examination, but she did not altogether absent herself from the debates in the House. She sent to her paper gossip criticisms of speeches and measures, and at the same time enlivened her woman's column with graphic pen pictures of the prominent people of Ottawa, both in official and unofficial life.

In a way, Archer half regretted volunteering such ready assistance to Ethel, for, under existing arrangements, he saw very little of her. They had ventured out into the suburbs a few times—long, quiet rambles, in which he had walked by her side as in a trance. She did most of the talking, whilst he kept a pace in the rear, and was blissfully contented in the privilege of feasting his eyes on her graceful figure, and worshipfully watching the play of varied expression on her classic features.

However, he had spent some very enjoyable evenings at the Downleys. Ethel's piano playing was a treat to listen to. Gifted with a flexible execution, her interpretations were enhanced by the charm of original treatment. And then there was that indescribable something about her management of the pedals, imparting the coloring of appropriate light and shade—an inborn faculty, which the teacher can only vaguely hint, but cannot convey. These impromptu musicales presented a most indiscriminate variety, and Ethel would sequel the intellectuality of a Beethoven sonata with the airy giddiness of a skirt dance. She also possessed a well-cultivated soprano voice, and had often sung at charitable entertainments. Archer was passionately fond of music, and their many chats on the styles of the various composers, and the traits of certain favorite pieces, proved their harmony of taste, and cemented their friendship.

The Governor-General's ball, the function of the year had taken place just after Christmas holidays, and there was nothing left but teas, receptions and private dances. Invitations had been issued for a large private ball at the Haverley's, and Archer, hearing that Ethel was going, decided to accept. She had promised to keep a couple of numbers for him, and, as he had never danced with her, the prospect of holding her in his arms, and floating through the maze of a dreamy waltz, transported his being to the acme of felicity.

## CHAPTER VII.

The windows of the Haverley mansion flashed forth effulgent glories of welcoming light. Guests were arriving in a continuous stream, for Haverley "At Homes" were red-letter events in the calendar of fashion.

Archer's name was announced among the earliest arrivals. He had just finished exchanging a few formal courtesies with the hostess, and was looking around in quest of familiar faces, when he was slapped on the back with a vigor hardly in keeping with the studied politeness of a conventional greeting.

"Well! Archer, old fellow, how are

you?" exclaimed Harry Seymour, as Archer turned around quickly, and extended his hand in a hesitating manner, as if he could not believe his eyes. Seymour did not give him time for reply, but proceeded with joyous volubility:

"Quite a surprise, isn't it? You have no idea how happy I am to run across you again. Just caught a side view of your face, from the other end of the room, and recognized you at a glance. I often thought of writing, but hardly knew where to find you. You seem to roam everywhere, and even visited the outlandish Province of B. C. What sort of a place is it, anyway? When I get through medicine, I think I'll go out there, and practice."

"An excellent field," suggested Archer, as Seymour paused for breath.

"But," continued Seymour, going off at a tangent, "there must be some magnet drawing you here; for, if I remember rightly, you used to revile social functions. Let me see now; you had some pet phrase. Oh! yes—now I recollect. Something about 'the vitiated atmosphere of society sterilizing the loftiest motives.'"

"Variety is the spice of life," tritely remarked Archer. "I believe in moderate views on every question. I had a grievance against all swiftness once—but why should a fellow forego those gleams of sunshine in our ordinary mundane monotony—dancing and bright, interesting maidens? But about yourself, Seymour, you seem to be fully recovered. When I saw you after the fight, you looked a 'goner.' When did you come to town?"

"We arrived by this afternoon's train. Allison is with me. You haven't forgotten him, have you?" questioned Seymour.

"Not by any means," replied Archer. "He belonged to the ambulance corps, and distinguished himself by venturing out in a hot fire, and carrying you in, after you had been shot down. He was dangerously wounded, too, and was mentioned in the despatches for gallantry. Where is he? I like pleasurable surprises, and I can assure you, it is a great treat to unexpectedly meet you and Allison this evening."

"Yes!" answered Seymour, "I owe a lasting debt of gratitude to Allison. We both got awfully tired of lectures and study, and I suggested a run to Ottawa. I spent a portion of a summer vacation with the Haverleys once, and when they heard that Allison and I were visiting for a few days, invited us for to-night's affair. Archer, I'm horribly bored. I am introduced as 'Mr. Seymour who was dangerously wounded in the charge at Cut Knife Creek,' and everyone insists on a full recital of everything that happened in that gallant rush at the rebels. You would laugh to hear my gory accounts of that affair. You know there were only eighteen of us, and before I get through with my narrative, I kill wound, maim and mutilate them all, and talk of rivulets of blood flowing down the hill-side, hand-to-hand bayonet conflicts with whooping savages, and ever so many other things that never occurred. If I ever get old enough to be ranked as a veteran, my yarns of the reckless intrepidity exhibited in that Cut Knife charge will turn Balacava heroes green with envy."

The conversation was interrupted by Allison coming up, and he and Archer went into a frenzy of hand-shaking and

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