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**LOVE AND A TITLE**

Once, just as they are leaving the villa, ground, Verona looks back with a little quiver of her lips, but at the same instant, she glances up at the eager, adoring face above her, and drives back the sigh.

"You are not afraid, darling?" asks Hal, anxiously, for he has noticed her backward glance.

"No," she says, simply; but nevertheless she starts a little as they come up on the phaeton, and George holding the reins, fidgeting with the reins.

"It is only George," whispers Hal. "Do not mind him, darling! He is true as steel—as staunch as a woman."

"No," she says, quietly, but with a loving smile at his "staunch as a woman." "No," and as George touches his hat, she says, in her gentle way: "How do you do, George?"

George does not answer, being too much overcome by her condensation in the thinking of and speaking to him, but he looks from her to Hal with a look that says volumes in the way of devotion.

Hal helps her into the phaeton, takes the reins, George lets go the reins, and jumps up behind, and like an arrow shot from a bow, the impatient horses dash forward.

Then Hal's eyes seem to flash fire, his face glows, his lips part with a long breath of excitement and delight, and notwithstanding the bays are rushing like mad, he fixes one hand and clasps for a moment, the little hand that nestles beside him.

"At last—at last!" he murmurs, and he draws her to him, for hidden behind his hand, George may as well be miles away so far as seeing and hearing are concerned—"at last! I've lived ten years—twenty—in this one morning, and I can't believe it now. Say something, my darling; only a word, or I shall believe it's only a dream. Speak to me, Verona."

She looks up at him and nestles still closer.

"Hal."

It is only a word, but how much is comprised in it.

For a minute, a full minute, there is silence, during which Hal pulls the reins for he is a good whip to let them run themselves out at starting. Then he says, in a low voice:

"Now, tell me how you managed. Where is the count and that whole lot—how did you get away? Steady—steady! Look at them! do you think we are likely to be overtaken? Now tell me how you got away, darling?"

"I—I scarcely know!" she says, with a little smile.

"The count?" says Hal.

"Was asleep. I waited until he went into the drawing room, where he always goes after luncheon, and—then I went up to my room and asked Senora Titella to come with me—"

"You did," exclaimed Hal. "But why did you do that?"

Verona looks down and blushes.

"Because I knew she would not come if I asked her."

Hal looks at her admiringly.

"Love," he exclaims, "I did not think you were so clever!"

"So wicked," says Verona. "Who taught me to be so?" and she looks up at him with a little smile.

But Hal is still lost in admiration.

"Wonderful," he says. "I thought George was a pretty good hand, but that you should be so cute," and he laughs his short, curt laugh. "Poor Senora. How soon will she find out that she was not really wanted—and begin to tear her hair? That sort of people always do tear their hair, don't they?"

"She will, and it out for an hour, two, perhaps—she went to pack for—for—to-morrow."

"Ha," says Hal, with the deepest, fiercest enjoyment. "Let her pack; they can go to Russia now as soon as they like, and stay there forever. Well, darling, go on."

"Is there anything else to tell? I packed my bag and chose those dark clothes, and came down by a back staircase to—to the study."

Hal puts his hand on hers as she falters.

"Go on, darling—I know, you wanted to see him."

Verona's eyes fill, but she wipes them quickly.

"Yes, I could not wish him good-by but I looked it. And he—did not raise his head. Poor papa."

"Don't pity him," says Hal, quickly, almost resentfully: "he shall see how happy you are, and how much he loves you. How unhappy he would have allowed you to be. Who knows, darling, we may go back to him in a little while, or he may come to us."

"Ah, yes," she says, eagerly.

"Well, go on," says Hal. "Did you meet any one?"

"No," says Verona. "No one but Carlo. He seemed to know that I was going to leave him, for he thrust his nose in my hand and whined."

"Don't fret," says Hal, eagerly: "we'll have him with us, George and I will put our heads together and steal him, if it's necessary. There's not much difficulty about that."

"He went back into the house, but, oh, so slowly, and stood wagging his tail and looking after me, until I had got out of sight," says Verona pitifully: "and then I ran across the park, and—that's all."

"Not all," says Hal. "You should have said: 'And there stood a wretched vagabond, who loved me better than all the world, and so I forgot everything I had in London and was happy.'"

country place knowing German. What luck, too, for us!"

The landlady looks over her shoulder as she leads Verona into the house.

"It is not that I am clever, sir; my husband was English, and I learned it of him."

"First rate!" says delighted Hal, in his brusque fashion. "Look here, then; we want some dinner, as good as one as you can manage; and this young lady will remain here. I'm sure you'll see that she is comfortable."

The landlady curtseys again, and looks from Verona to Hal.

"Your sister, sir?" she says, quietly. Hal hesitates a moment, then his hatred of a lie keeps him straight.

"Let the young lady go upstairs," he says; and as Verona goes out with the daughter, he looks the landlady full in the face.

"Look here," he says, "you asked me a question. I could have told you a lie, but I don't think it's the best course; besides, I don't like it. That young lady isn't my sister—"

"I knew that, sir," breaks in the landlady, softly.

"How?"

"Sisters do not look at their brothers as the young lady looked at you, sir."

"Truth is best, after all," says Hal.

"You're right, she is not my sister, but she is more than that to me. That young lady is to be my wife, and that's why we are here this afternoon. If we were not here, she would be married to-morrow to a man old enough to be her grandfather. Now I've trusted you, do you mean to act fairly by us?"

The woman's face flushes and her lips quiver.

"You have trusted me, sir," she says, "and you have done well. You may trust me on, with safety."

And, without another word, she goes out.

Hal draws a long breath.

"That's a good beginning," he says. "She's right; I'd trust anybody with such an honest face. Now for the horses, and from for the priest!"

The stable is a shed, plain enough, but comfortable enough; and he finds the bays already wiped down and George making up a most charming bed, hissing like a box-constructor as he piles the straw.

"Well, sir," he says, looking around eagerly—"all right!"

"All right, George," says Hal, cheerily. "Does this fellow understand English?"

"Oh, yes, sir, he can say 'ros beef' and 'jeeps, yohnee'—that's all. And how is the young lady, sir—begging your pardon?"

"All right," says Hal. "Look here—we've been obliged to take the landlady into our confidence."

"You couldn't have done better, Master Hal," says George, simply; "she's one of the right sort, sir—lay my life; and we couldn't have deceived her, sir; begging your pardon, Master Hal, but a blind woman could see how it was between you and her highness."

"I don't mind that, George," says Hal. "And now will you go in and ask the landlady to tell her highness that I shall be with her and the horses as good as myself."

"Yes, sir, and I've something to say myself."

"Why, I must get her to tell our old friend here that if anybody comes along inquiring for a phaeton and pair, that he hasn't seen such a thing—oh, for years."

"Ah!" says Hal: "you forget nothing, George; but do you think there's much chance of their coming up with us?"

"There'd be every chance if they knew where to come, sir," says George, quietly. "It isn't the distance, Master Hal; it's no distance, it's the roundabout way we've come. If I know 'em, sir, they'll go straight for Baden-Baden, or for the coast; they'll never think of looking near at home, and as to tracking us, how can they? If they hit on one village, they wouldn't hit on the next. No, Master Hal, I was awake all last night studying this map, and there's only one man I'm afraid of."

"Who is that?" asks Hal.

"The marquis, sir," responds George. "Yane?"

"Yes, the marquis, Master Hal. He's got more brains than all the rest of them put together, begging your pardon, sir, and if he gets on the scent—then—then there, Master Hal, they'll come up when it's too late!"

Hal nods emphatically and turns away, but George keeps him for a moment or two to brush the dust from his clothes, and then Hal makes straight for the little chapel, whose ivy-covered tower rises from a little to the left of the main house.

As he expected, he finds beside the chapel a low-roofed little cottage. There is a little garden in front, and as Hal swings open the gate, he sees the priest peering through the bushes, and he strikes at the bottom of the gate, and the cure looks around. He is an old man, and one of the old school, with a face so peacefully set in its long, white locks that it looks like one of the pictured saints. He raises his shovel hat as Hal comes forward bareheaded, and greets him in a silvery voice, whose sweetness strikes at once on Hal's beating heart and stills its excitement.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Hal bends his head with the courtesy of a young English gentleman to the priestly greeting, and says, without much fear, for he has found that nine priests out of ten speak his tongue:

"I am English, sir."

"So I see, my son," says the cure, with a gentle smile.

"And a stranger, sir," adds Hal.

"That also I see," responds the cure, with a still more gentle smile, if that be possible. "Will you enter?" and he motions with a thin, sinewy hand to the door.

Hal hesitates; the cure immediately points to a parlor seat, and as Hal sits down, seats himself. And now, for the first time during the flight, Hal finds himself unoppressed; incredible as it may seem, he has not prepared himself for this, the most important part of the adventure. So absorbed has he been in the one idea of snatching his darling from the claws of the count, that he has not foreseen the difficulties that now arise like mountains, and threaten to crush him.

In silence, profound and exasperating, he looks on the ground for fully a minute, and when he looks up and finds the soft, peaceful eyes of the good old man fixed upon him, with gentle, almost pitying gaze, he blushes like a schoolboy detected in some fault.

It is the cure that breaks the silence. "You are in some trouble, my son," he says, musingly. "Is it not so?"

"I am, sir," says Hal, with a long

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breath, and I didn't think—and I didn't know what trouble I was in until this moment."

"Until you came here. Yes?"

"Yes," says Hal, wiping his brow, "net until I came here"—a pause, during which the old father folds his hands, and looks peacefully, patiently out to the setting sun.

Then Hal bursts out:

"I ought to tell you, sir, I am a Protestant."

The gentle face turns to him with a smile that lights it up as if the sun had shot out a ray full upon it.

"You are in trouble, my son."

Six words only, but what a perfect charity, what a gentle, loving nature they reveal, and how fully they embody the good old man's creed.

Hal is only a boy—a boy whose heart is softened and electrical with love, and his eyes moisten.

"You mean, sir," he says, with a touch of reverence in his voice, that is most musical, "that because I am in trouble and difficulty you will help me?"

"Surely," says the old man.

Then Hal turns to him eagerly, anxiously.

"Look here, sir," he says, "I want to be married."

The cure does not start; he smiles.

"I want to be married, and must be, at once, without delay."

The cure lifts his eyebrows gently.

"Why this haste, sir?"

Hal hesitates a moment—only a moment, then he edges nearer to his confession—for it is nothing more or less.

"I'll tell you," he says, and with hot, eager haste he pours out his confession—for it is nothing more or less.

He tells the whole story from the day of his stumbling over Verona to the present time; conceals nothing, exaggerates nothing, uses no eloquence, and yet—yet the white hand goes up to the gentle eyes, and the old man's lips tremble.

(To be continued.)

## THE LONDON COSTER.

Characteristic Street Type Rapidly Disappearing.

The coster, that picturesque and unique product of old London life whom Albert Chevalier has made familiar to American audiences, is reported to be rapidly disappearing. The coster is a man who sells things from a barrow, and barrow only. He is a street trader, but belongs to a breed by himself, which the shows in the cut of his clothes and the rows of big pearl buttons on his trousers and jacket.

He generally lives in the East End. In his more prosperous days he would occupy a small house with a yard, where he would go to the regular 'pitch' and return again at dusk. The London fruit sellers, Italian ice cream men, flower girls and the like, who have multiplied in late years, are termed costers, too, but it is a misnomer.

The genuine coster would be regarded for two centuries. His decadence is chiefly due to numerous small stores and street traders with horse and wagon, which the daily needs of large areas of London have brought forth. Formerly, children born to costers either took up their father's work or intermarried with others of the same calling, thus evolving a distinct class. Even at the present time it is estimated there are about ten thousand of his race in the British metropolis. In 1901 there were 110 street markets under the jurisdiction of the London County Council. The number of stalls in these markets were 7,055. Famous old Petticoat Lane could boast of 575 stalls.

A claim paid recently to the neighborhood of St. Luke's, in the East End of London, where the genuine 'peas' are mostly in evidence, elicited this naive definition of his calling:

"A coster is a covey wot works werry hard for a werry poor living."

One who claims to have worked in St. Luke's as a coster for sixty years, and whose people for generations were costers before him, lamented the decay of his tribe.

"They costers!" the old man said when the street traders were asked to "not come in." Any bloke could call in the street, but 'e ain't. I've known a good many in me time, but they're dyin' awf' a bit, nah. See me, I've chucked the barrier business, nah, although I m'de me. I seen wot was comin' and I bought this little fish shop, as yer see. Nah, I never put none o' my little ones at the

game; too much competition, me lad. I was born coster, an' I'll die one; but there ain't many costers bein' born nah a-days."

Along with the costers, all the old city apple women and stall holders are gradually going. It looks as if every stall in the great business quarter of London would disappear in time, for no new permissions are granted and the keepers of these stands are dying out, or getting notices to move. Some of the old-timers who still linger are said to have been daily at their stands for from thirty to forty years.

One of the most interesting of the city pavement traders is Walker, an erudite hawk, who sells shoelaces, combs, studs and matches, etc., at the corner of the Bank of England at Moorgate street. Walker has two hobbies. One is looking after others in the same business older and poorer than himself; the other is learning. He spends his evenings at a night school, and recently added a diploma in commercial law to the many that decorate the walls of his simple home. Walker claims that many city men when in doubt on some abstract point of business law, refer it to him, and he also acts as their almoner, distributing their hospital tickets and other contributions, out of which he has a hobby for forming infinitesimal pensions for some who can no longer work.

—London Globe.

## THE RUSH CITYWARD.

Continued Decline in Population of Rural Counties in New York State.

Twenty-one of the sixty-one counties of New York had fewer inhabitants by the census of 1901 than they had by the census of 1890. These counties, which include one-half of the area of the State, showed a falling off in ten years ranging from a few hundreds of inhabitants in some small counties to several thousands in some of the larger ones.

Essex county, in northern New York, for instance, declined from 33,000 to 30,700 in the ten years. Wayne county, in western New York, famous for apples and mint, declined from 46,700 to 43,800.

By many persons this decline in population was attributed to the continuance between 1893 and 1897 of a period of industrial hard times, the general effect of which is to diminish population in rural or semi-rural districts. In such times, the demand for employment being decreased and the provision for public relief in farming counties being small, the larger cities are sought by needy persons, and these conditions are reflected in the ensuing census.

The years between 1900 and 1905 have been marked by prosperity and abundance throughout the State, it was supposed that the decline in population in interior counties would cease, that some of the former loss would be regained, and that, perhaps, improved conditions would be reflected in the census figures of this year, which show the entire population of New York to be more than 8,000,000, an increase of 11 per cent, compared with the census of five years ago.

Instead of this, however, the recently completed state census shows that twenty-one of the sixty-one counties have fewer inhabitants than they had five years ago. Some of these which show the largest decrease in five years are Chemung, which includes the city of Elmira, heretofore one of the largest manufacturing towns in the southern tier, and Steuben, one of the most fertile of the farming counties in the same region. The falling off in Chemung in five years was 2,458 and in Steuben 1,007.

Some of the counties of the State which do not show a decline in five years show at least very little gain. One of these is Dutchess, which includes the city of Poughkeepsie and which is one of the best known of the dairy and farming counties of the State. Five years ago the population was 81,689—a gain of nineteen persons.

Dutchess county, the chief distinction of which is that it includes more prohibition territory than any other county in New York, has increased from 46,416 to 46,788 only during five years of enormous State growth.

Among other counties which have lost population in the last five years are Otsego, famed for hops; Oswego, noted

for starch and starch works; Clinton, which includes the city of Plattsburgh; Schoharie; Cayuga, which includes the city of Ithaca; Greene, which includes the city of Catskill; Hamilton, in the Adirondacks; Fulton and Madison counties in the interior, and Wayne, which increases its agricultural products every year, but continues to lose steadily in population.

No other State in the country has so large a proportion of counties which are falling behind in population as New York, that is, none of the larger States. The explanation of these changes is found probably in the enormous increase in manufacturing interests.

In five years Schenectady has jumped from 46,000 to 71,000 population, Rockland from 38,000 to 45,000, Niagara from 74,000 to 84,000, and Winchester from 184,000 to 223,000.

In fifteen years the population of New York has increased 21 per cent, yet one-third of the counties have fewer inhabitants than they had fifteen years ago.

## DRAUGHTS AND WINDS.

Austrian Scientist Revives an Old-Time Health Theory.

Professor Max Herz, an Austrian scientist, has just published an essay upon the difference between wind and draught, which, says the Chicago Chronicle, is likely to convince the public that the old-fashioned prejudice against draughts is not altogether unjustified.

By a draught is meant the currents of air in an enclosed space. The men of a former generation attributed nearly all the evils that beset them to draughts and they would not have slept in uncurtained beds for anything. Of course, their windows and doors were shut, and house stood far apart, so draughts were nearly inevitable.

But the modern scientific world tries to deny draughts altogether and calls them winds, which are draughts, and even wholesome to a certain degree.

Dr. Herz says that anyone who cares to find out the difference between a wind and a draught can do so in any apartment which has windows on different sides of the house. Let him open a window on a windy day on the side of the house toward which the wind blows.

The air which comes in is quite harmless if the person exposed to it be dressed in warm clothes, and little children may take the air in a room thus ventilated. But let him open a window east which the wind blows and it will be found that the air in the room is moved by a number of currents, all of which strive to reach the opening.

It is the passing wind which sucks up the air in the room and draws it out, and this causes the room to have what is called a draught.

The effect upon sensitive persons is immediately felt, like the forerunner of pain to come. A draught will always be felt as colder than the wind.

Follies of the Follish Rich.

It is exceedingly difficult to comprehend the moral and mental make-up of that class of men and women who compose the so-called fashionable set in our larger American cities, and who in days like these can find no higher or saner purpose for the expenditure of their time and money than in feeding their vanities and indulging their pampered appetites. With millions dying from starvation in Russia, with hordes of men and women desperate with hunger and privation marching through the streets of London, with a thousand appeals for help and service arising from every quarter of our own land, what but a heart incrustured with selfishness and filled with greed and foolish pride could remain obdurate and unresponsive?

Must have been the character of Louis, the fashionable family out-luncheon to a pet dog the other day, with all the accompaniments of a high-class social function. The beast was the guest of honor, and around the board, we are informed, "were persons prominent in society." An elaborate menu was provided, and the dog was served from a silver platter. Of course no blame can be attached to the dog, who apparently had the wisest head of all engaged in this silly business; but as to the other creatures who surrounded "the board," there can hardly be but one opinion among intelligent and conscientious men and women. Their proper status, we should say, was several degrees below that of the dog. It is precisely such exhibitions as these, and such a use of wealth, that furnish ample fuel to the anarchist, and other enemies of the existing social order.—From Leslie's Weekly.

Dream of Thrush With Sovereign.

A correspondent relates a curious dream, an account of which came to him in a friend's letter. It seems this friend health and anxieties subsequent on ill health and anxieties subsequent on reduced circumstances.

The writer says: "I had an odd dream the night before your kind present (a small cheque) came. I dreamt I went to church and Mr. K. was preaching. The people began to go out one by one. I looked around and inquired why they were leaving the church. They said: 'To look for the magic bird in the churchyard.' You will always have luck if you find it." I thought I would try and find back garden, and there among the fallen leaves, and there I found a beautiful speckled thrush and directly I took it up it dropped £1 in my hand. The next morning I told L. my dream at breakfast. After breakfast I went into our back garden, and there among the fallen leaves was the speckled thrush, which had just been killed by a cat. It was quite warm. I took it and showed it to L., saying, 'Here is the magic bird, and the money I know will come by this post.' My brother sent £1 in the morning, and we had your cheque in the evening. I certainly think it was a singular dream."—London Spectator.

Was His Wife.

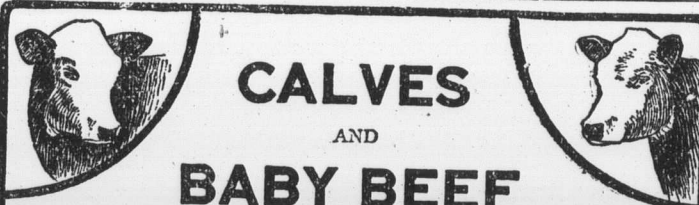
"Dear me," said the good looking female visitor to the superintendent of the lunatic asylum, "what a vicious look that woman has we just passed in the corridor! Is she dangerous?"

"Yes, at times," replied the superintendent, evasively.

"But why do you allow her such freedom?" asked the lady.

"Can't help it," answered the officer. "But isn't she an inmate under your control?"

"No, she is not under my control. She's my wife."



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