

There, I have just finished," he said, answering my appeal, and putting away his block, washing out his brushes, and otherwise making himself ready for a quiet chat; for it was a curious thing about Melton, that whenever he could get a pencil or a brush, he could not refrain from using it, and if he began to use it he had soon got so absorbed as not to be able to attend to anything else. I refrained now put brushes and pencils away, so as to enable him to devote his whole attention to the little chat I had desired.

"What do I think of our quarters, you naked one," he went on. "I like them; the town is clean and neat, the barracks are comfortable, and, above all, the scenery is very pretty. I shall luxuriate in sketching while we remain here."

"Yes," I answered, rather pettishly, "that's all you think about, but the fishing is best, at least as far as I have seen to-day; and the hunting season is such a long way off that there is no comfort in looking forward to it, while I haven't a chance of getting off after the grouse this year to while away the intermediate time."

"My dear fellow, I really am sorry for your want of success this morning, and I dare say you'll do better next time, and if you'd take my advice, you'd try again after lunch with a lighter fly. Stay, you have a few feathers with you, pass them over here, and I'll tie you one I think will do."

I did as he told me, and feeling sorry for having spoken so crossly to him, I watched his nimble fingers as he proceeded to dress a very artistic-looking fly.

"Now," said he, as he finished, "try that in the dark pool over there, and I think it will rise something before long; but first let us take our lunch now we are together."

We lay down in the shade, feeling very lazy and luxurious; and while we are discussing the sandwiches of which our lunch consisted, let me tell you who Hugh Melton was, and also a little of his history, besides describing his personal appearance for the benefit of my lady friends.

First, then, his appearance, which I hope may not disappoint you, though I do not know that he was so much handsome as distinguished-looking. He was unmistakably a gentleman, and, by-the-way, it is not every one even among those who really can lay claim to the title that looks so nowadays. Tall and well knit, with good hands and feet, and a face that I never thought of calling handsome, though I always admired it more than any other I had ever seen. Imagine a square broad brow surmounted by wavy light hair, from under which looked out dark hazel eyes, usually soft and caressing in expression, though I have seen them flash with the light of hate and defiance.

For the rest, his nose could lay claim to a particular type, and his long fair moustache had a mouth from which gleamed a very perfect row of teeth. There was great determination and inflexible will in the straight eyebrows and square-cut jaw, and one could imagine that his mind once made up on any subject, he would not easily be induced to change it. Altogether, his would not have been the pleasant face it was but for the rare softness and sweetness of the dark eyes, that seemed to caress one with a look, and that always made me wonder how our colonel could have the heart to be down on him when those grave gentle eyes met his. As to his story, it was sad enough as I then knew it, namely, that he was the only son of very poor parents; in fact, his mother's had been a runaway match, and her relatives, wealthy people, totally refused to have anything to say to her as long as her husband lived, yet for that matter they might well have been proud of the connection, as he was, though poor, of old and noble family. He died, however, when Hugh was about fourteen, and then one of his mother's brothers condescended to give her a small year-

thinking of marrying again. Now the person she has chosen is a merchant in the City, very wealthy; but the connection does not suit my uncle's taste, and he has sent me a message through the colonel, who is a great friend of his (being doubtless afraid to broach the subject himself), that if I will write to my mother, refusing my consent to her marriage, and farther saying that in the event of her persisting in her determination I must decline having anything more to say to her, he will then not only purchase all my future steps, and make me the very handsome allowance of £800 per annum, but also declare me his heir. That's a bribe worth having, Charlie," he continued, turning toward me, and speaking in a light tone that belied the fierce flash in his eye and the dark frown on his broad brow.

"What did you say? is the question," I replied, thinking, however, that I knew the answer pretty well.

"I told the colonel," answered Hugh, "that it was very well my uncle had sent his message by him; for if he had come in person, I doubted much if I could have refrained from the pleasure of throwing him out of the window. The request alone would have deserved such an answer, still more the bribe."

"And what did Armstrong say?"

"Oh, he pool-pooled my sentimentalism, as he was pleased to call it, and laid before me all the advantages of being friends with my uncle and pocketing his £800; what a figure it would enable me to make in the regiment, and all the rest of it. Then, seeing me unmoved by that, he went on to state that in the event of my refusing to do as he wished, my uncle had determined to have nothing more to do with me, but to leave me in future to sink or swim, as best I could. To this I replied, that while I repudiated the charge of sentimentalism, it was my earnest wish to try and do what I saw manifestly to be my duty, and that in no way could I feel it to be my duty to prevent my mother providing herself with a comfortable home in her old age to gratify my uncle's pride. My duty lies to her, not to him; and while I consider her quite right in the course she has chosen, if she loves man she intends to marry, I can in no way perceive the right either of my uncle's interference or the manner of it."

"Well done, old fellow! I knew you were true steel," I answered, raising myself on my elbow and looking at him, wishing the while I had his gift with the pencil, that I might transfer that animated countenance, with its sparkling, flashing look of defiance and disdain, to paper. What a splendid fellow he is, and how he must have electrified old Crasty, if he looked and spoke like that to him! I thought as, having finished my pipe, I rose to try Melton's fly in the place he had recommended. He took up his position for another sketch, and we both bent to work. I had not been long at it when I got a bite, and soon was very busy playing a remarkable fine trout. He was a big one—over ten pounds' weight—so that it took me some time to land him, when, greatly encouraged by my success, I continued whipping the water diligently, and in two or three hours had taken about a half a dozen fine trout.

"Why, Cairnsford, that's splendid!" said Hugh's voice close to me, as I landed my last, a fine three-pounder. "What luck you have had! One doesn't often get such sport as that."

"Nor should I to-day if you had not given me that fly. How is it, old fellow? You know everything, and yet one never sees you shooting or fishing?"

"I used to go in for both once on a time, when we lived in Ireland, before my father's death. I was very young then, but the little knowledge I picked up about such things has staid by me, and I am very glad it has. I am of use to you to-day, Charlie. Now you can take the conceit out of that stupid fool, Southman, who is always talking about his doings in Norway, and who has not looked a minnow here yet."

"I should never have guessed it," I replied; "the face looks mirthful rather than serious. How came she by such methodical opinions?"

"I don't mind telling you all about it, Cairnsford, though I would not tell every one, but this is how I became acquainted with her, and how she came to give me advice. A good many years ago now, soon after I first joined, I was quartered near M—, in Ireland, and as there were never many officers in that part a time, the few who did go there were entertained very hospitably and made much of. There was in particular one gentleman, a Mr. Meares, who lived in a small place near M—; he had one daughter, this girl whose portrait you see here."

"What," I exclaimed, interrupting him, "is that Miss Meares the heiress, of whom I have heard so much?"

"Yes," he answered. "At that time they were poor enough; since then, however, she has come into a large property, and is one of the richest heiresses in England. However, as I was saying, at that time they lived near M—, and I was a frequent visitor at her father's house. I need hardly tell you the owner of that face was clever, original, spirited, without being in the least fast; she could dance and ride quite as perfectly as most Irish girls do—some, indeed, thought she excelled most of them in those accomplishments—and besides many other talents possessed no mean skill with her pencil. You may imagine that I, then young and impressionable, easily fell under the spell of her beauty and accomplishments; I spent almost my whole time at Belvor (their place), and her mother, a charming, handsome woman, seemed to see no harm in our intimacy. Day by day we went out sketching about the place, never going far from the house, but as the scenery around was lovely, always finding plenty to do. I, though acting as instructor, often found it difficult to equal my pupil's productions; and from day to day her winning, sprightly ways and clever, amusing conversation made me more and more deeply in love with her. For her society, and in order that I might sit near her and watch her, and for the hope of touching her hand at meeting and parting, I now neglected everything; my duties were shirked whenever I could prevail on anybody to undertake them, and my art, of which before I had been a devoted student, was now entirely thrown aside, except during the sketching expeditions I have spoken of. Once or twice in that that happy time I found Miss Meares looking at me with a curious, half-puzzled, half-anxious expression, and I wondered what brought so troubled a look to her sunny face, half-hoping and half-fearing I must be the cause of it. Happiness such as I then enjoyed was, however, too great to last, and for some days I saw the cloud approaching which was to blot out all the fair dreams I had woven for myself during those long, bright summer days. Latterly Maude—for I had begun to dare to call her so in my own thoughts—had appeared sad and disheartened, rousing herself with an evident effort to laugh at the merry sallies I now and then made in the vain hope of dispelling her melancholy. I was pained at this, as I always was pained by anything that gave her sorrow; and as her manner towards me had a tinge of mournful tenderness in it, I determined to take courage, and speak the decisive words that should settle at once the position we must in future occupy toward each other."

"It was one fine bright morning, when, as usual I had come over armed with my sketching apparatus, that I came to this resolution. For some little time she had appeared to avoid these excursions, once so pleasant to both of us, and that day, when I came toward her in the garden, she said, with the gentle, joyless smile which of late I had seen so often on her radiant face, 'I don't think I can sketch to-day, I don't feel inclined for a walk.'"

Upon this I spoke. "Why is it," I said,

been obliged to live in great poverty to provide me with a good education and those few comforts which our means afford, is now naturally anxious to enter on the enjoyment of this fortune, and insists on my giving this young man such a promise as shall insure our possession of the property, though it will not be necessary for me to marry at once. I can now only beg of you, Mr. Melton, not to judge hardly of me for having in this matter taken the initiative, and overstepped those boundaries of reserve usually observed by women; my only excuse is that I hoped to save you pain."

"But," said I, when she had finished speaking, "do you consider this for me worth more than the love I have to offer you? You guessed aright what I had to say. I do love you; but if you prefer a miser's gold to the earnest, faithful affection I feel for you, then I would not utter one word to induce you to alter your choice, for in that case you are not worthy to be my wife, or to take the first place by right in my heart, which you have already usurped there." I spoke defiantly and bitterly, for it seemed to me from the firm, decisive way in which she spoke that she had made her choice, and, that loving me as much as her cold heart could, she yet preferred the gold.

"She answered faintly, 'Sit down; I want to talk this over with you. I have no one to whom I can go for counsel; my father and mother both have but one opinion on the matter; now I will hear yours, and try to decide between them. My earnest desire is to do what is right; but now I don't see the right. I am like a person wandering in a strange place in thick darkness—I see nothing, and when I stretch out my hands for something to lean on, I find only empty space.'"

"How can you hesitate a minute!" I answered, boldly and hotly, thinking I was sure of victory, and pressing on with an eagerness that perhaps caused my failure. "Is it not your duty if you love me, and knowing I love you, to give up everything for the sake of completing and filling my life, as well as insuring happiness to your own? Plainly your first duty is to the man you love."

"Yes, if he were my husband," she answered; "but until then all my duty lies to my parents, and their commands are strong on me; besides, I could not marry without their consent. Yes," she added, with a dreamy, far-off look, "I see my duty now: they have sacrificed themselves for me while I was helpless and they were strong, it is my turn to sacrifice myself for them now that they are getting old and want the comforts they have denied themselves hitherto. And you too," she continued, turning and looking at me, with a kind of enthusiasm lighting up her face—"you too have some object in life, some duty to perform, other than spending your days in careless enjoyment. With your talents you might be famous, and confer a benefit on your fellow-men; and yet how little you have achieved! See, I will confer a greater boon on you than if I had granted your request; take for your guide through life my motto, *Fais ce que dois adieu que pourra*."

"I will take no advice from you," I answered, angrily. "You yourself deliberately disobey your fine precept; you have determined to sell yourself for gold; for you love me—you know you do." Then, as anger and grief mastered me, I went on boldly and madly, "Only say you love me, and that you would marry me if you could; it will be some poor comfort for me to take with me into my banishment."

She opened her mouth to speak, and I leaned forward, listening breathlessly for the avowal my heart told me would follow; but after an instant she shook her head, and said, "You would, indeed, have cause to reproach me for not keeping my precept if I answered you. It is precisely because I ought not that I will not reply to your question. How should I be acting toward Mr. Cameron, whose promised wife I am, if I

table at mess, but, indeed, I need not have wondered, for his feelings were often too plainly visible on his face to need any expression in words, and the now arrival very soon became aware that for some reason or other 'that dark-looking fellow, Hugh Melton' (as he called him), bore him no good-will. The time now drew near when some steeply-classes which he had got up were to come off, and throughout the whole camp nothing was talked of but the merits of the respective horses and their riders. There was one horse in especial that all the judges declared must win, if only his abominable temper could be kept under, or got rid of for the day; but even his greatest admirers were afraid to trust their money on so ill-tempered a brute. Templeton of 'ours' was to ride him, and in this fact lay the consolation to his backers for they thought if any man in the service could master him it was that dashing 'light weight'."

Every one who had once seen Templeton sitting back on his chestnut thoroughbred, his hands well down and his head up, riding in the first flight with the Pychley, or, better still, flying along in the front at the Grand Military, will recollect him: a small, spare, boyish-looking young fellow, with pale, fair complexion, large, prominent blue eyes, drooping moustache, and a *nil admirari* expression of countenance. But to those of my lady friends who may not have seen him in his favorite career, let me recall the same slight figure leaning languidly against the wall in a ball-room, looking so intensely bored that you are reminded of a death's head at a feast, and long to ask him why he came there, when the festive scene seems so little to his taste. You must have seen and pitied him, gentle reader; recall him to your mind's eye now, and have before you the intended rider of Spitfire (so the horse was called).

Cameron, who, by-the-way, hardly knew a horse from a cow, had a pot of money on him, so had Southam and one or two more. I didn't like his temper, and so backed Jack Masterman, the second favorite, for a small sum. The race was to come off on Wednesday, the 28th of July; but on the Friday before, as we came in to mess, I observed an unusual excitement on Southam's generally stolid face, and on looking round, perceived that Cameron, Templeton, and Hemmings, the owner of Spitfire, were all absent.

"What's up?" I inquired of Percy Langham, who sat next me.

"Why, haven't you heard? That idiot Templeton has gone and sprained his wrist with those confounded gymnastics he was always bothering about, and so Spitfire must either be scratched, or some one else must be got to ride him. They do say that Cameron has nearly gone out of his mind since he heard of Templeton's accident, and I hear he will be ruined if that horse doesn't win. He has gone now to the stables to find Hemmings, who went over there some time ago, and they say that he intends to ask permission to ride the horse himself sooner than let him be scratched."

"But why? Wouldn't it be much better for him if the horse was withdrawn? He could then make a new book, or he needn't make any at all."

To be continued.

It is an error to suppose that the Arabian horse is bred in arid deserts and owes its power of endurance which he possesses in his adult state to the hardship he endures while he was a colt. The real fact is that the Arabs select for their breeding places some of those delightful spots known only in countries like these, where, though all may be dry and barren around, there is pasture unrivalled for its succulence and its nutritious and aromatic properties. The powers of the young animal are afterward developed by the mingled influence of plentiful and healthy food, and sufficient exercise.