

her cheeks, so that her cousin thought he had never seen her look so beautiful. Still somehow she did not seem to him the same Madeline whom he had left in New York, and he fancied she must have changed, which is the ordinary excuse one offers for our own inconstancy. Guy Ralston had imagined himself at one time irrevocably in love with his cousin, but he was only three and twenty and, while on going to Canada he was wretched for a whole week, he gradually awoke to the fact that there was more than one woman in the world, and that Annette Chartreuse was really very pretty, and her French manners most fascinating. Have you not heard the same tale before, and is Guy the only one who has transferred his affections from the one sole woman he could ever love, to the other sole woman who has his heart? Who will first cast the stone, and should we all remain true to our first love? God forbid! Neither you nor I, sir, could very well conceive having the girls we first "spooned" with seated in the place of the present partners of our joys. So Guy looking at Madeline admitted she was very lovely, but as to caring for her, except as a cousin you know, that was absurd. At one time it is true he had thought—but that was long ago, ever so many weeks in fact, and so thinking but chatting lightly upon indifferent subjects, Guy and his companions soon found themselves at the Windsor Hotel again when they separated to prepare for lunch.

Madeline was unfeignedly glad to see her cousin, and Van Higgin who, in some mysterious way had much to do with railroads, found John Dugdale very well informed upon many points of mutual interest, so that the time quickly passed, and father and daughter joined together in extending the invitation to dinner.

"One of our rooms overlooks the Square," said Madeline, "and we can all have a splendid view of the storming of the ice palace, which is fixed for this evening."

"Yes, and I would like to have a few words with you Mr. Dugdale, regarding the branch of the C. P. R. from Sudbury to the "Soo," remarked Van Higgin.

So the matter was arranged. In the afternoon they drove round Mount Royal, calling at the Victoria Rink on their way back, to watch some fancy skating which had been provided as one of the attractions for carnival visitors.

By this time Madeline had talked over everything with Ralston, and turned to converse with Dugdale. It was curious to note the contrast between the pair; the fashionable New York belle, so dainty in all her appointments, so particular as to the outward appearance of herself and others, and the Lancashire engineer, so utterly oblivious to mere personal adornment, as far as he himself was concerned, reminding one of unpolished granite, both for roughness and strength.

"How do you like Canada Mr. Dugdale?" said Madeline. "At this season at all events it must be very different to India, where I understand you lived for some years."

"I hardly have made up my mind whether I like Canada or not just yet," replied Dugdale, to whom Madeline was a sort of fairy vision out of a Christmas Pictorial weekly. "It seems to me a trifle slow, and there is as much bother in securing half a dozen laborers here, as there is in engaging three hundred coolies in India. I have not shaken off some of my Eastern ways altogether, and should have found the time hang heavily of late, had I not been lucky enough to meet your cousin."

"It was fortunate also for him too Mr. Dugdale," said Madeline smiling, for she liked him for the remark about Guy. "Does not that man Rubenstein skate magnificently? Of course you have no skating in India. I am well acquainted with Europe and even Egypt, but India is an unknown land to me."

"And yet India has a history extending back to ages before Europe was merely inhabited by wild savages. Where we talk of our hundreds of years she talks of her thousands."

"Oh but you know the world is barely six thousand years old Mr. Dugdale, Madeline remarked, with a sort of religious dogmatism.

"That is according to the biblical method of calculation," returned Dugdale, "but there is where we are at such a disadvantage, in arguing upon the antiquity of certain historical proofs—we are bound to a very limited space of time—whereas the Hindoo says the bible is only the history of one people, and that some of their Brahmins are acquainted with the records of events which occurred long prior to the advent of our first parents in Eden."

"You should pay a visit to my country," said Madeline dashing off at a tangent to escape what she was beginning to feel was dangerous ground. "You should pay a visit to my country, where there are no mists of antiquity to confuse the mind."

"But only visions of the present to gladden the eye," replied Dugdale with a bow.

"Thank you, that is very nice. Seriously, however, I am sure you would find a great deal to interest you in the United States."

"Well may be I shall try shortly Miss Van Higgin, as your father has been kind enough to promise to look out for something to suit me when my engagement is up with the C. P. R."

"You will like New York I am sure," was Madeline's rejoinder.

"I do not think New York was the point Mr. Van Higgin had in view," said Dugdale smiling; "he mentioned something about Denver."

"Oh my! that is a long way off; you might as well be in India almost."

"If you could import some of the Indian atmosphere inside this rink, I for one

should not be sorry" observed Dugdale, and as this appeared to be the opinion of the whole party, they adjourned back to the Windsor forthwith.

They dined together, and no fault could be found with either the viands or the champagne, for Van Higgin had long since emerged from the American "feeding" stage, and could enjoy a good dinner as well as anyone. He was not one of those who would "live like a dog in order to die rich," and if he gained his money easily, he spent it freely, and perhaps just a trifle ostentatiously, but still with generous hospitality.

"Fill the glasses waiter," he cried, "and bring another bottle. Did you drink much champagne in India Mr. Dugdale?"

"Now and then; we called it Simkin there," replied Dugdale.

"Not many hotels like this I guess," said Van Higgin.

"It is a little better fitted up than a dak bungalow" was the answer.

"Are there not light as well as "dark" bungalows?" asked Madeline, at which Dugdale laughed, explaining that Miss Van Higgin had made an unconscious pun, and that dak bungalow meant post or rest house.

After dinner Madeline retired to arrange the room for viewing the ice palace, while the gentlemen descended to smoke in the rotunda. Have you ever reader seen the ice palace at Montreal? None of our party had before the present carnival, and this evening was the first time they had witnessed it lighted up with the electric light, the effect of which was both weird and beautiful, reminding one of a large iceberg, with the aurora borealis shining through it. No doubt the so-called storming of the ice palace has been described by abler pens than mine; how the army of snowshoers, descending from the mountain, with their torches of various colors, formed on the Square, in front of the palace, and how another party of snowshoers manned the icy battlements, to defend that palace to the last drop of their blood! How at a given signal a hundred rockets go up from the besiegers, which call forth a similar number from the besieged; then Roman caudles are lighted, and as the attacking party rush forward, amid showers of different colored fire balls, the battle cry resounds along the whole line, and is responded to by a shout of defiance, and a blaze of artillery from the palace. There is a check to the advance, and the besieged sally out and drive back their foes, but it is only for a brief spell, for the palace is attacked in the rear, and a voice roars out, "What, ho there! Back for your lives! Close the port cullis! Ha! by the beard of my father, a narrow shave!" I say all this, and much more has been related with greater talent than I possess, and I must therefore leave what is really a fairy like scene for the most part to your imagination, merely observing, that after unheard of feats of valor, and a resistance unsurpassed in the history of any country, the palace was stormed and taken, but the defeat was as honorable as a victory, et cetera, et cetera. As a finale, the palace is supposed to be set on fire, and the lurid flames are rendered tenfold more vivid by their reflection, both on and through the ice walls, until at last the lights die out and you believe you see the palace a mighty ruin. But lo! as you look again you perceive the structure shining across the Square, as it did before the assault, cold, calm, but brilliantly beautiful.

(To be continued.)