

A WOMAN'S LOVE

OR, A BROTHER'S PROMISE

CHAPTER XVI.—(Continued.)

Then within a quarter of a mile of the admiral's ship, as the red light proclaimed her, the Governor of Lagos broke, at a signal, into a Crystal Palace set-piece of flame. In a second half a hundred searchlights picked out every bolt of her, every button of her captain's pea-jacket. Across the narrow space of water came a bellow through a megaphone, and in answer the British flag was run up and dipped. And from the bridge of the Governor of Lagos went a brother bellow of 'important dispatches for the admiral.'

In what seemed to the Orange King a mere couple of seconds he was being shot in a steam launch to the colossal Bahia Blanca, the heaviest battleship of the Argentine Republic, in another mere couple of seconds he was standing on her deck awaiting the will of the admiral, and in still another mere couple of seconds he was facing that autocratic gentleman himself in his cabin wondering how it was possible that an Argentine sailor could boast such magnificent red whiskers.

"I bring your Excellency a most important dispatch. Perhaps your Excellency does not speak English?"

"O, yes."

"And I shall be proud to be the bearer of your Excellency's reply."

Without a word the admiral held out his hand for Maddalena's letter. He read it, and he re-read it, and again he read it for a third time. Then he waved Mr. Smith to a chair, and seating himself read the letter for a fourth time. Then he turned to the Orange King.

"Who are you, sorr?"

Smith started. The tongue was unmistakably Irish.

"My name is Smith—Thomas Smith. I am a merchant and ship-owner of Liverpool, and at the present moment I have the honor to be the envoy of her Majesty, Maddalena, Queen of the Palmettos. And I have the honor to address—"

"Admiral O'Hara, sorr, commanding the combined fleets of the Free States of South America."

"O'Hara! By all that's wonderful! You used to be captain—I thought I knew you—captain of the Parthenon, Smyrna trade, from Liverpool, in '78, didn't you?"

"That's me, sorr. Your hand, Mr. Smith. You're a bit older since I saw you last, an' so am I, worse luck!"

"Well, of all the startling—"

"Now, sorr, me toime is short. Tell me the meaning of all this?"

"Tell you in a word, Hispaniola swindled the Palmettos out of their country near a hundred years ago, and she's treated them about as badly as she's treated Aruba. They're up in arms, and they've brought back the rightful line. The Hispaniolans are besieged in Palm City, and just need one more hard kick to give in. Your people can't want the island. Help us here and you help a good cause. I'm in it myself up to the ears, and a bit over."

"If you're in it, sorr, it's good business."

"I tell you the moment you show your guns Stampa surrenders. You needn't fire a shot."

"And then I'm to hand over the place to this new Queen?"

"Tell me. Do your people want the place?"

"No. My orders are to shell the city and take any troops there prisoners."

"What are you going to do with your prisoners?"

"Send them back to Hispaniola. There's ships in Palm Bay, I reckon."

"Not a ship. But if you want transports they'll be there on the nod."

"Where'll they come from?"

"From Liverpool. They'll be at Palm City to-morrow—if wanted."

"O! you're a deep wan, a very, very deep wan."

"It won't cost you a penny."

"You'll bleed Hispaniola?"

"For certain."

"Then it's done, sorr. Shake."

They shook.

"Ye'll understand this, sorr. I deal with Hispaniola, with Stampa. I know nothing of your Maddalenas at all. What happens after I cart away Stampa an' his throops is no concern of mine. Burn the place if ye like—it's nothin' to me. Ye take me, now?"

"I take you for a gentleman, Admiral O'Hara."

"I won't write a loine, sorr, but Fergus O'Hara's word is Fergus O'Hara's bond. Tell the lady I'll do me best for her, for the sake of the beautiful letter she's written me. Good-bye, sorr—an'—hurry up yer transports!"

CHAPTER XVII.

As Hector stood before the four-century-old portrait of the Bayard of Palmetto in the Royal Gallery of Palm City, he knew why Asunta had called him Don Baldassare. Apart from the difference in dress—such a material thing as it may sound—the painted figure was Hector, a swarthy Hector to be sure, but unmistakably the essential man; and Hector—he was Don Baldassare

de la Luz come to life again; the steel corselet cast aside and the royal white and purple of Palmetto glowing in its stead. He stood dumb before his simulacrum, amazed at the eerie fidelity of feature that repeated him as in a mirror.

Don Augustin called him out of the spell with a light touch on the right arm, still in its sling, for the wound had been troublesome of late.

"You remember," he said; "you remember that you asked how it came that I was persuaded you were the man for my purpose, the man to lift Palmetto out of servitude. I answered that I would show you on the day when Maddalena was crowned in Palm City. That was but half an answer: to-day, you see the whole of it. Was I right?"

"It was a little thing to go upon—a mere chance likeness to a picture."

"Ah! but I was justified. Four months and a half—and the thing is done, that's how I prove my case. In four months and a half the money is found, the field is taken, the fight is won, and Hispaniola is gnashing her teeth when she thinks how she has had to restore the fairest treasure she ever stole. Four months and a half! That's my case. You did it."

"O! no, indeed, Don Augustine, you magnify. I did not. Where should we have been if the Orange King had not—?"

"True, true. But you found him and convinced him; that was the chief difficulty—finding the man and persuading him. But you do not mean to say you have been idle since then. Bah! my friend—Palmetto knows otherwise, for Palmetto has seen her Majesty who owes you her crown. But I did not rely on this picture-likeness only. For months I studied your character; I made inquiries about you. I could find nothing to your discredit. On the contrary, I grew confirmed in the conviction that I had found another Baldassare de la Luz. You will see, you will see." He fumbled with a pocket and drew forth a slim volume, some twenty tiny pages of spidery italics bound in parchment.

"Read here and see. You have still an hour. Read, Hector, my son. Some of your own life is here—let as hope, let us pray, it is not all here."

And placing the book in his hands, Don Augustin left the gallery with an affectionate backward glance. When the door had closed Hector turned and gazed again wonderingly at his old-time double; and then, with somewhat of reluctance, born of Don Augustin's parting words, he opened *The Life, Death, and Deeds of the Illustrious and Virtuous Knight, Senor Don Baldassare de la Luz*—all this, as was the whole book, in Latin of the cloister—"apud Venezia, 1513," so far had his fame travelled. A barbarous woodcut faced this title-page, and then came the monastic preface, in which praise was given to God, the Virgin, and a round score of forgotten saints, that they had seen fit to send such a star of chivalry to "light the southern sky." Followed then a crabbled but happily brief chapter of genealogy, which Hector, his mind set on more actual and immediate things, skimmed ungraciously.

Through tortuous circumlocutions he followed the old monk to the kernel of the matter, which, freely read went thus:

"So fair a childhood and so studious an adolescence, under the tender auspices of Saint Bernardino, led him not unwilling to the gate of manhood, which opened, to reveal beyond the road of honor glittering with feats of chivalry, and bordered with the rich fruits of a high soul.

"After all these great deeds, which raised him to the king's royal favor and to notable fame with the common people, he, having wearied somewhat of achievement and the pleasures of the Court, betook him to his castle, Isleta la Bella. The fine ladies, to whom his courtesy was as noised abroad as was his prowess—but, indeed, to all women was he the pink—languished for him and sought his love; but of him, save courtesy, got they nothing. For God had so made him that his heart in love as in honor, aimed only at the highest, and in his soul was he bound to the High and Mighty Princess, Immanuel, the King's youngest daughter, whose beauty and wisdom and modesty were so bruited, that the report of her fired the King of the Sicilies to send envoys, humbly demanding her in marriage. But this matter did Don Baldassare keep in his heart, showing it only to the eye of God which seeth all things, because she, being a princess, could not, according to the law, mix her blood with aught that was not royal.

"Thus, when the envoys from the Sicilies were being made much of by the King, and they looked for his favor, Don Baldassare sat in his castle, Isleta la Bella, dreaming of mighty deeds done in his lady's honor. And, walking on an evening on the battlements, musing, some dream, greater than all others, took him, and the end being happy, in

the dream he laid his prize at the feet of his lady, uttering her name; the which was heard of his equire, one Martinus Quexada, who, for a merry jest, made mention of the matter in a writing to his sister in the City of Palms. And she, having previously made not maidenly offers of love to Don Baldassare, the which he courteously put from him, and being therefore roused against him, took pains to tell the story to her gossips. This she did little witting that the Princess Immanuel, being fashioned by God of a like high nature to Don Baldassare, had looked upon him with eyes of love, the which she veiled in sorrow by reason of the law.

"Now, while the envoys from the Sicilies were being entertained in fitting fashion by the King, there came an expedition from Hispaniola to make war, and from all parts of Palmetto the knights gathered with their men. And the invaders were driven back to the ships after many hard blows and bloody combats, and chiefest of all that bare arms was Don Baldassare, surpassing in prowess brave knights double his years, and his were five and twenty. Him, too, did the envoys commend in especial as the noblest knight and the most worthy; and out of honor to them, as well as of his own grace, did the King set Don Baldassare by his right hand at the feast.

"At that same feast did the King hear whispered the matter Senor Quexada had written of to his sister and with hot words did demand of Don Baldassare to speak truth forthright; who, changing countenance with sorrow before so great a gathering, yet spake truth boldly. Whereupon the King upbraided him, and to make the more scorn of him, demanded of the Princess Immanuel how she did regard his so great presumption. To which she, with sweet grace and modesty: "Dear father and my lord, I cannot find it in me to speak so harsh a word. Rather do I count it honor to be loved by knight so perfect." And the King, watching her close, saw that her heart spoke, and he laughed bitterly. "And thou?" he cried; "and thou?" To which the Princess: "Yea, father, I do me honor in that I do love this man."

"Whereat the King bade end the feast. And in the night he sent certain men privily to slay Don Baldassare, and him they slew. And the Princess the King sold unto the Sicilies, whence, after not many days, she followed him she loved into the glory and peace of the saints."

(To be Continued.)

PASTIMES IN JAPAN.

How the Japanese Children Amuse Themselves.

The pet pastime for boys and men at holiday times in Japan is kite-flying. The kites of Great Britain may be scientific, but the kites of Japan are gorgeous, and they sing.

Little contrivances fastened to the strings cause strange, whirling sounds, which remind one of the aeolian harp. Some of them are of enormous size, as big as two doors and require a group of men to raise them.

In ancient Japan, it is alleged, large kites played the part of the modern balloon in estimating the forces of the enemy during war time.

The kites are in a variety of shapes—birds with expanded pinions, ogres, flowers, butterflies. A favorite style is a simple square shape with the face of a national hero. The lads glue bits of glass to their strings and wage aerial wars, endeavoring to manoeuvre their kites so that the pieces of glass sever the strings of those attached to their rivals.

They are experts in piloting their kites, and can raise them as far as their cords will reach without shifting their position more than a yard or two.

The lasses, reinforced by their elders, gather in bevy to play battle-dore and shuttlecock. They are powdered perfectly white, with a bit of vermilion on their lips. Their hair is wrought into bows and butterfly shapes. They wear brilliant heavy girdles and gay robes.

MEANING OF HARD WATER.

Due to Presence of Carbonate of Lime in Solution.

Rain water, as it descends from the clouds, is practically free from mineral impurities, but so soon as it reaches the earth, and begins to percolate through strata, it is charged with various mineral and earthly matters. If the strata be chalk or limestone, the water, through the medium of carbonic acid gas which it contains, takes up the lime in solution and forms carbonate of lime, and it is the presence of this mineral in an excessive quantity in the water which gives to it the peculiar property of "hardness."

The degree of hardness varies, and is determined principally by the proportion of lime and the length of time the water is in contact with it.

This hardness is called temporary, because it can be reduced by boiling, as is seen by the crust in a kettle or boiler, when the water deposits the lime it contains. There is also a permanent hardness caused by the presence of sulphates, chlorides and nitrates of earthly metals.

"Her voice was tried by a famous singing-master." "Was it found guilty?"

KOREAN CURIOSITIES

There are no bankruptcy courts in Korea. Once a Korean contracts a debt, he can never escape from it.

Korea is the only country where the marriage certificate is equally divided, one half being given to the husband, the other to the wife.

Every Korean husband is answerable for the conduct of his wife. Should she break any of the ordinary laws, he must suffer in her stead.

No Korean may go upon the roof of his house, not even to repair a leak, without legal permission and without giving due notice to all his neighbors.

The most important duty of every housewife in Korea is to keep alight a perpetual fire, which is sacred to the dead ancestors of the household.

Paper enters largely into the construction of every Korean house. The interior is lined with paper. It has a paper roof, paper floorcloth, and paper walls.

The Koreans love medicine. The rich take pills of incredible size and richly gilded. Very many take medicine regularly and systematically. They seldom suffer any injury, however.

Only the poorest women in Korea go about unveiled, and then they move rapidly, looking all the while on the ground. The women of the middle-class wrap an ordinary dress about their heads and shoulders.

Snakes and serpents are treated by the Koreans with veneration and tenderness. No one ever kills a snake. The poorest and hungriest Korean will share his meals with the reptiles that crawl about his garden.

Every bachelor in Korea, no matter his age, is regarded as a child, dressed as a child, and treated as a child. Even if he be seventy, he may not knot up his hair in manly fashion or assume the garb of a man.

Every Korean hides his house from the public gaze by a number of screens. The poor man employs hedge and fence; the rich man has many high walls. Between the walls are grown gorgeous flowers; lotuspods are also to be found there.

In every Korean village there is one, and in every Korean city there are several, appointed listeners. These spies, called by the Koreans "messengers on the dark path," inform the King of everything that happens. Not a word is said about the King without reaching his ears.

No Korean couple would think of marrying without consulting the sage, who fixes the happy day for them. This he does simply by adding the bride's age to the bridegroom's, and, after determining which star rules the destiny of the united ages, he decrees that the wedding shall take place upon the day sacred to that star.

Koreans are very great on signposts. One is to be found at the corner of every country road. Each sign-post is shaped like an old-fashioned English coffin, topped by a grotesque, painted, grinning face. All the faces are alike, however, and are the countenances of Chang Sun, a great Korean soldier who lived a thousand or so years ago.

When the King of Korea goes into the streets he is preceded by a Secretary of State, who carries a "mercy-box." Into this box are placed all the papers upon which the Koreans have indited their petitions or grievances, and which are thrown from over walls, or hung on strings from windows. The King himself reads every paper.

In some parts of Korea, and among some Korean families, it is the custom for bridegrooms to dwell under the roofs of their fathers-in-law until the first son has been born and attained to years of manhood. Should any Korean, however, stay in the house of his bride's people for more than three days after his wedding, he is compelled to remain for an entire year.

Only the King of Korea may rear goats, or have round columns and square rafters to his house, or wear a coat of brilliant red. Only the King may look upon the face of the Queen's hundreds of attendant ladies, or have any building outside of which there are more than three steps. Four steps would be high treason, and would cost their owner a traitor's death.

All men and women in Korea, whatever their age or station, smoke tobacco incessantly. The bowls of their pipes are so small that they only hold a pinch or two of tobacco, and the stems are so long that the smoker is unable to apply a match to his own pipe. The coolie carries his pipe thrust down his neck between his coat and his back; the Korean gentleman carries his in his sleeve.

At night, Korea is a blaze of bonfires. There are hundreds of them, and each is a signal to the Korean people that "all's well." On a hill just outside Korea's chief city are four great lights, from which the attendants in charge of all other lights take their cue. Should war or invasion be threatened, extra fires are lighted. One extra fire means that an enemy has been sighted off the Korean coast; two that the enemy have landed; three, that they are moving inland; four, that they are pushing towards the capi-

tal; and five, that the enemy is even at the city's gates.

At a Korean marriage, everyone rides on horseback and in single file. First come a manservant, who carries in both hands an imitator life-sized wild goose, covered by a red scarf. Then come the bridegroom, his friends, and all the servants he possesses or is able to borrow. At the bride's house the servant first deposits the goose on a bowl of rice; then everyone dismounts, and, leaving outside their outer robes, their hats, and their boots, enter the house, and make as much noise as they possibly can. The pandemonium does not cease till the guests are paid to go away. A feast follows, and then the bridegroom is taken to his bride, whom he sees for the first time.

YOUR SKIN CHANGES.

Every Month the Human Epidermis is Renewed.

It takes but four weeks to completely renew the human epidermis. You have new eyelashes every five months; you shed your finger-nails in about the same period, and the nails of your toes are entirely renewed annually.

The white of the eye, known as the cornea, is in a continual state of renewal, being kept clear and clean by the soft friction of the eyelids.

These are a few manifestations of the restorative powers retained by man, who is less fortunate than the lower animals.

Crabs can grow fresh limbs, the snail can renew even a large portion of its head; with eyes and feelers, lizards do not worry about the loss of a tail, and if you make a cut in the caudal appendage of some of these last-mentioned creatures they will grow another tail straight away, and rejoice in the possession of two!

But man still possesses the wonderful restorative little cells which scientific men call leucocytes. They are always coursing through the body to renew and to defend the body from its enemies—the harmful bacteria of various maladies. These cells generate anti-toxins to kill our enemies. They do battle for us in hundreds of ways, and yet the majority of us know nothing of these great services rendered by our tiny friends inside.

ANTS IN SURGERY.

Ants with long and powerful mandibles have been successfully used for making surgical stitches. The majority of Greek surgeons keep stock of them, and upon the arrival of a person suffering from a clean cut the ants are brought into use. The edge of the cut are brought together with the fingers of one hand, while the ant, held with a pair of forceps, is brought close to the wound with the other, its mandibles biting through the flesh on both sides and holding the edges together. At many as fifteen or twenty are some times used for a single cut, and they are usually left on for three or four days. The removal is then far easier than the withdrawal of the wire ordinarily used for that purpose.

THE CRY OF THE CLERGY.

The service held at St. Paul's Cathedral in connection with the Queen Victoria Clergy Fund drew attention to the conditions under which thousands of clergymen do their work. Within the last ten years over 100 clergymen of the Church of England have been admitted to the workhouses and pauper lunatic asylums in England and Wales. More than half of the vicars and rectors are living on incomes not one of which exceeds £3 10s. a week, and 1,341 of them would gladly exchange their revenues for a weekly £2.

NO RED-HAIRED GIRLS.

A San Francisco man advertised a few weeks ago for "320 red-headed girls, must be good looking," and not one response was received. A few days later he advertised for "320 golden-haired beauties," and before the paper had been out two hours the street in front of his office was crowded with just the style of beauty he wanted.

TATOODED PIGS.

Two \$125 prizes for a new pigment for tattooing black-eared pigs are offered by the German Economical Society. The tattooing of white-eared pigs is well known and successful, but a dark color is useless for dark ears. An additional £5 is given for every year the tattoo last beyond the first year.

Teacher—"What is the meaning of parvenu?" Johnny—"An upstart." Teacher—"Give me a sentence in which the word is used." Johnny—"When a man sits down on a bent pin he gives a violent parvenu."

Minister (to widow)—"I hope the dear departed was prepared to die?" Widow—"Oh, yes; he was insured in three good companies."

"How long shall I boil the eggs, ma'am?" asked the cook. "I don't exactly know," replied the young housewife, "but cook them until they are quite tender."