

her insolence Marie Ivanhoff has dared to inflict bitter wrong. She stole my lover from me, and though it is not yet a year since he died gloriously for Russia in Sebastopol, already this Englishman takes his place. Do you know what these Ivanhoffs are? Unscrupulous adventurers destitute of all sense of honour and principle. The brother a gambler and duellist, the sister an intrigante, who plays with men's hearts as a conjurer with balls. What Marie may purpose to do with the Englishman I do not know—marry him perhaps if he is wealthy. To save your friend I would not stir a finger, to thwart Marie Ivanhoff I would spend the last rouble I possess. Captain Fleming is a free man at this moment, although he does not know it. The Jezebel, whose slave he is, has contrived to keep back the order for releasing him from his parole. If you wish to see him, be in the same place, at the same time, to-morrow night.

"VASHTA."

"Well," thought Tom, after he had read it, "I've always known women to pick each other to pieces a bit, but for command of polished Billingsgate, it strikes me 'Vashta's' about top form. However, whether all she says of Mademoiselle Ivanhoff is true, or, as is very probable, not half of it, the sooner Master Hugh clears out the better for him. I'll be here to-morrow, and, if I can, take him away."

Tom's conclusion, as he came to find out afterwards, was pretty accurate. If Mademoiselle Ivanhoff was a born coquette, and plunged from one flirtation into another, she was very far from being as bad as the *soi-disant* Vashta painted her. The two had been fast friends once, but had quarrelled, and there was now bitter enmity between them, enmity too, of the most malignant kind on the part of Vashta, who lost no opportunity of magnifying the peccadilloes of the Ivanhoffs into crimes. Alexis Ivanhoff, for instance, was a gambler certainly, like most of his countrymen, and he had also been out, but professed duellist he was not, still he gave quite sufficient occasion for his detractors to blacken his character.

At a villa in the environs of Simpheropol a lady was seated looking out across the Steppes, and musing in somewhat melancholy fashion how this episode in her life was to end.

"A few days," she murmured, "and I must set forth for my return journey to St. Petersburg. What am I to do with my Englishman. He is very nice, and I am very fond of him. I'm not very conventional, and not given to be afraid of what the world says, but I can't quite travel over half Russia with a gentleman who is not my husband. Shall I marry him? I can't make up my mind about that?"

The door opened, and the subject of her meditations stood before her; one glance at his face told Marie that he knew of her treachery.

"I thought it very odd," he said, "that no answer was made by the Governor to my application. You told me it was always the case with all official business in your country, that those in authority could not be hurried."

"You might have known that all officials expect to be paid for speed."

"You do them injustice. I am told that my freedom was restored to me some days since. How is it that the letter has never reached my hands?"

"How should I know," she replied, with a slight shrug of her shoulders. "The Orderly sent with it perhaps got drunk, perhaps lost it. What does it matter?"

"It matters a good deal," he replied quietly, but with a hardness in his tones to which she was totally unaccustomed. "I've business to do in England which brooks no delay."

"You cannot think of that, Hugh, till you have seen me safe to St. Petersburg," she murmured in her softest tones, and with a glance of her dark eyes, calculated to turn any man's head.

Not two minutes ago and she had pretty well made up her mind that she and Hugh must part, but now, all the inborn coquetry of her nature was aroused, and she could no more bear the idea of losing her lover than a cat could bear seeing a

mouse escape from its claws. She was, too, just at present, very fond of Hugh, and it had been solely from prudential motives that she had rather sorrowfully come to the conclusion that they must part. Now, passion had conquered prudence, and she had determined to detain him, cost what it might.

"I regret," he said, "that I am compelled to deprive myself of that pleasure. I have no right to be absent from England an hour longer than I can help. Where is that letter?"

"Hugh, dearest, you will see me to St. Petersburg, will you not?" she replied, gently laying her hand upon his arm, and utterly ignoring his last question.

"Where is that letter?" was his sole reply.

Marie Ivanhoff's eyes began to sparkle, and it was with some little asperity that she rejoined:

"I have told you I know nothing of it."

"Excuse me, you are mistaken. I have been to the Governor's office. I have seen the Orderly who brought it. He did not lose it, but delivered it here at this house. I must trouble you to remember what you have done with it."

Mademoiselle recognised too clearly the suppressed anger in his tones. What could it be that made him so anxious to get to England? Was this the man she had thought so completely in her thrall, so securely compassed by her chains? Could it be possible that she had been beaten at her own game? That this Englishman had been staking counters all the time against her own gold pieces? Her cheeks flushed, and the dark eyes flashed ominously, as, still ignoring his question, she asked:

"What is it you are so anxious about in England?"

"To ascertain the safety of one I love," he replied, harshly. "The letter?"

"Of one loved dearer than any!" She half unconsciously quoted, and as she spoke the dark eyes gazed into his, as if to read his very soul. "Stop; do not speak, I can read my answer in your face," then crossing the room rapidly, she opened an escritoire, and exclaimed, "Here is your letter, Monsieur."

"And what right had you," he asked fiercely, as he took the letter from her hand—

"Stop," she cried, drawing herself up to her full height, "spare me further humiliation. Your devotion to me has been all a farce. With your troth pledged to some white-faced English girl you have dared to amuse yourself with me. It is well for you that my brother is not at hand to call you to account for the affront you have put upon me. I have only now, Monsieur, to congratulate you on the complete recovery of your health, and to wish you *bon voyage*," and, having bestowed upon him a stately courtesy, Mademoiselle Ivanhoff swept from the room.

Nothing could be more sarcastic than the inflexion of her voice, as she alluded to the recovery of his health. Hugh could not but recall how much she had contributed to it. What a fool he had been in his wrath to all but blunder out that unlucky question. Did he want to tear the last shred off the woman's vanity, to whom he, humanly speaking, owed his life. But for such love as there had been between them he had not to hold himself much to blame. Mademoiselle Ivanhoff was no girl in her teens, but a young lady of wide experiences, and Hugh could honestly say that the temptations most decidedly came from her side in the commencement. He felt uncomfortable, nay more, to do him justice, he was much distressed at the idea of so parting from his nurse, but he vowed to himself that he would never swerve from his loyalty to Nellie Lynden. Men are apt to be casuists in such matters, but I think it was perhaps as well for Hugh Fleming that Miss Lynden was not called upon to sit in judgment upon his case at the time. The most merciful of women would, I fancy, have thought the offending too deep to be passed over lightly. As for Mademoiselle Ivanhoff, although she was for once defeated with her own weapons, no one could say that her retreat was not conducted with all the honours of war. But don't believe nevertheless that her guardian

friend and betrayer did not know that her thrust had gone home, and exult in her own power accordingly.

(To be continued.)

Dragged From His Horse.

An English exchange has at this late day discovered authority for an incident of the battle of Waterloo, that has probably never before been in print. It says:

The only prisoner made by the English reserve at Waterloo was a French general, whose capture was due to the cool head and stout heart of a young brigade-major, anxious for an adventure.

During the battle several regiments of cavalry and infantry were kept in reserve, under a heavy fire from the French guns. Great was the havoc, and neither men nor horses relished the passive attitude to which they were condemned.

While a group of young officers, in front of the left wing of the reserve, were discussing the situation, their attention was attracted to a French general and his staff, all on horseback, who were looking through their glasses at the Englishmen. One of the group was Captain Halkett, a young brigade major, mounted on a thoroughbred. Suddenly he exclaimed: "I'll lay any one £5 that I will bring that French general over here, dead or alive. Who'll take my bet?" "Done, done, done!" shouted several officers.

The captain examined the saddle girths and his pistols. Then shouting "good-bye" and putting spurs to his horse, he dashed at a furious pace across the plain between the British and French lines. His comrades followed him with their glasses, not speaking a word. The Frenchmen opposite seemed puzzled. Believing that the Englishman's horse had bolted and that the rider had lost control of him, they opened their ranks to let the runaway through. Halkett steered his steed so as to graze the mounted general on the right side. At that instant he put his arm around the Frenchman's waist, lifted him bodily out of the saddle, and, throwing him over his own horse's neck, turned sharp and made for the English lines. When the general's staff realized the meaning of the bold rider, they dashed after him, but he had a good start, and not a Frenchman dared to fire for fear of killing the general.

Half a squad of English dragoons, seeing Halkett chased by a dozen French officers, charged them. They opened their ranks to let Halkett pass through, closed them up again the moment he was in the rear and then forced the Frenchmen to turn swiftly and seek shelter under their own guns. Amid the maddening cheering Halkett stopped in front of the British lines, with the general half dead but securely clasped in his strong arms. He jumped from his horse, apologized to his prisoner for the unceremonious way in which he had been handled and, in reply to the congratulations of his comrades, said simply, "Praise my horse, not me." The captured general was treated with the utmost courtesy and consideration.

In London.

A curious association has been formed in Kentish Town, a suburb of London, and is called "The Neighbourhood Guild," for the promotion of social intercourse among the inhabitants of that northern suburb. It is strictly non-political, and free from religious bias, and one of its aims is to provide its members with rational amusement, and to put them in the way of helping and benefiting each other. Its operations comprise the organization of entertainments to suit all tastes, lectures on scientific and literary subject, concerts, games, debates and dancing. There is a circulating library, with reading-room, and it is contemplated to establish a co-operative store, a benefit club, a "savings society," and a country or seaside residence. There are five clubs in connection with the institution, for young men, young women, adults of both sexes, little girls and little boys, and the motto adopted is, "Order is our basis, improvement our aim, and friendship our principle."

MR. O'BULL ON THE WEATHER.—"Bada! this has been a quare season intirely!" observed Mr. O'Bull the other day. "All the foine weather has been pouring wet, and now the summer has gone without ever coming at all!" —*Funny Folks.*