

and caught Thomas's eye and stopped. She introduced him to her father, and looked at him curiously. She was puzzled and almost troubled by him, wondering what he thought about so much.

"A splendid place!" said Orlando that evening, as he breathed the night air in his friend's room.

"I never believed in maiden simplicity before," murmured Thomas, whose old enthusiasm for romance seemed rather stale to him.

"She is like an awfully nice honest sort of boy," said Orlando, with the air of one inspired. Thomas shuddered. There seemed to him a certain profanity in the remark.

III.

"Smooth runs the water where the brook is deep."

The days went slowly by, and the two friends did not leave the farm by the river. They had not refused to send for their luggage, and, after all, the place was a good central point for lovers of the Thames. Thus it happened that a great change came over the family, who were converted with wonderful ease to Orlando's theory of life. Mr. Dorian took a holiday. He had read "Wilhelm Meister" when a boy, and there was a half-choked spring of romance beneath his ample waistcoat. He was now suddenly possessed by a conviction that wisdom was to be imbibed with air, and that health and happiness were incompatible with a shirt-collar. He began to row with tremendous energy, to lead his family to distant spots, and to wonder in the solitude of his own room why exercise made him stouter. In the school-room lessons were forgotten. Jo added a stupendous chapter, in which was related the tragic story of Miss Tubb's attachment to the bargeman, by whose side the Farnese Hercules was a puny whisper; and Miss Tubb herself, after many tears of possible improprieties, invested secretly in a little manual of training. The headlong zeal and superb example of Orlando inspired the community. Early rising, though cynically regarded by the servants, became a custom; and to greet the rising sun with a shout, assumed the character of a religious observance. To ride, to shoot, to speak the truth, seemed once more the whole duty of man, and the hardy Norseman found a home upon the gentlest of rivers. The courage of the men was matched by the endurance of the women, who made an exercise of hair-brushing, and scorned to shriek at the split point of a hair-pin. Simplicity was the fashion, and practical Letty manipulated her bed with so much dexterity, that she could almost lie in it as she had made it. All things began to be viewed with the eye of the athlete. It was observed for the first time that the butler was beginning to stoop, and it was suggested that he should for the future carry the tray of coffee-cups on his head. Miss Tubb fell into feeble ecstasies over the wing-muscles of the birds, whom she had previously regarded with merely sentimental interest as feathered songsters of the grove; and the very sunlight, which had been little more than a caress, gained new interest as a tremendous species of force. Thomas alone was cold. He congratulated his friend somewhat dismally on his successful preaching of the brutal life.

"Brutal life!" cried Orlando; "I wonder that you can use such coarse expressions."

"Why, it was your own word," said the other, staring.

"Say simple life, or Greek, Homeric, heroic," said the prophet, whose voice grew louder with each epithet. Thomas smiled as he recognised the refining influence of the despised sex. He was acquiring the habit of smiling sadly. He took part in the common occupations, but often moved away into solitude. Sometimes he was discontented among the eager crowd, and having left them, was more discontented still. He hovered on the borders, hearing a little and imagining much, half actor, half spectator, as comfortable as a hypochondriac jammed in a draughty doorway. One eye observes the sweet treacherous moonlight without, the other a warm, wide sofa within, but the draught on the neck is undeniable. So was Thomas dissatisfied with the world and with himself, as he interpreted the words and actions around him according to his theory of the situation, his tale of the hero who saved the lovely woman from the water. So, too, it happened that when Miss Dorian, who preserved a becoming moderation even in this new life, came, as she often did, to ask his advice about some book or some subject for the pencil, he was infinitely touched by so much thoughtfulness and courtesy, and made great efforts not to damp her joy. At her request he read to her in his most dulcet tones, but stopped at the bottom of every page to make sure that she was not bored. He received her kindness with diffidence, and perplexed her by smiles which were at once pathetic and intelligent.

"I can't understand your friend," Miss Jeanie said one day to Orlando, who had been telling her anecdotes about him. "He seems to be always thanking me and forgiving me at the same time, and both for nothing." Orlando laughed, and declared Thomas to be a preposterous but delightful person, deeply tainted by medievalism and incapable of classical simplicity; and so, shouting a sonorous line of Homer, he betook himself to his hollow boat.

"You think us very foolish," said Miss Jeanie to Mr. Thomas, with a little nod of decision, as he drew near with a book under his arm.

"No, indeed I don't," he answered, eagerly. "I envy you, and—and I think you wonderful."

You keep the whole thing straight, and yet you don't offend the enthusiasts."

"It is fun, if it is silly." "But it is not silly. I know you think me a pig, and I daresay I am. Orlando is a much finer fellow. I envy him, and—"

Here he broke off, and thought within himself how he had envied his friend the chance of a fine deed and the favour of a fair lady. He thought that he would give much for the opportunity of risking his life. As they talked, they had strolled across the farmyard, and the young man's gloomy thoughts were interrupted by a cry of the maiden. Was it possible that his chance had come? He looked quickly at her face, followed the direction of her eyes, and saw the turkey-cock. He could not be mistaken; it certainly was not a bull. Yet, bird as he was, he knew the one weak point in Miss Dorian's character. He stood terrific, in ruffled plumes as the fretful porcupine, scratching the stiffened wings, blushing ever more fiercely red about his chaotic countenance, and sounding notes of war, such as are heard when some apologetic gentleman gulps thick soup at a railway station, and the bell clangs, and the light porters are hustled together.

"Don't turn," cried Jeanie; "he will fly at our backs; oh, pray go first."

Thomas stepped forward, but there was bitterness in his soul. He had no stick; so he pushed his foot somewhat clumsily at his opponent, and said, "Get out!" The bird gave way a few inches, threatening war, Jeanie slipped quickly by, and the young man followed her. He could not run, but he was conscious that the bowl was close at his heels; he was therefore obliged to proceed in a crab-like manner, now and then pushing his foot out sidewise at the pursuer, and well aware that the action was far from graceful. In this way he drew near to the farmyard gate, and was aware of Jo shaking on the top bar, and stifling her laughter at the risk of her life. Had that turkey been a bull, Thomas had rent him with his bare hands. However, he was only a turkey.

Miss Jeanie, when on the safe side of the gate, was ashamed of her fears, and inclined to be angry with Jo for laughing at her defender. Indeed so vexed was she, that she straightway remembered that music was too important a thing to be neglected, and marched off her youngest sister to the piano.

Thomas, as he lay under a tree and stared at his book, was soon marching to marches which quickened unexpectedly, waltzing to tunes which whirled him in all sorts of circles, and polking to others which breaking off suddenly left him with one leg in the air. He had a sensitive ear, which rebelled against Jo's playing, and he wondered at the virtue which kept Miss Dorian near the instrument. At last the music came to an end, and the musician leapt through the window like an india-rubber ball, and vanished in the shubbery. Thomas turned to look at the house, but her sister did not follow her. Then he fixed his eye sternly on his book and made up his mind to become absorbed in constitutional history. After some time he found himself repeating with a frown the word "Witanagemot," and wondering whether his hostess was better by daylight or candle-light. Another half-hour had gone, when he awoke to the fact that he had not turned a page. A minute insect was busily surveying the word "Witanagemot," which still stared the reader in the face; but the reader's thoughts had wandered thence to the House of Lords, thence to the Eastern question, thence by an easy transition to the farmyard. If but for one short hour that bird had been a bull!

When Thomas had closed his book in despair, he saw that the sun was already low in the sky. From the new order of things dinner had disappeared, and supper, a charming institution in the country in summer, had taken its place. It was growing late. The young man was turning towards the house when he felt a light fluttering touch on his arm, and looking down beheld Miss Tubb, terrified by her own audacity.

"Pray, excuse me," she gasped, glancing nervously round in her great fear of her youngest charge. "I daresay I am very foolish—"

"Can I do anything for you?"

"Oh, I daresay it is nothing—only my fears;" and Miss Tubb showed wavering signs of drifting away.

"What is it?" asked Thomas.

"Oh, only Miss Dorian."

"What?" cried the young man, so sharply that the governess gave a convulsive leap, and remained quivering as though she would melt into air. He put out his hand to support and detain her.

"Only your friend Orlando—I mean Mr.—"

"Orlando!" cried he, and again the governess jumped.

"He came," she went on trembling and in a great hurry—"he came, and I was sitting behind the copperbeech, and said something about its being already, and having brought the boat to the steps, and—"

"But why did you say that?"

"I didn't say anything. I couldn't think what to say till afterwards. I did say 'Athem!' but they didn't hear me."

"They! Who?"

"Why, Mr. Orlando and Jeanie—Miss Dorian," said Miss Tubb, mildly exasperated.

"Orlando and Miss Dorian!" repeated Thomas, with a sensation of sinking.

"Yes. He said that the boat was ready; and she asked if something was safe; and he only laughed, and then she said that she was not afraid with him."

"She was not afraid with him!" echoed Thomas again.

"Yes; and I think they are just going. And it is too late for the water; and I am so frightened: though of course it is nothing; and I hope you will excuse me."

Thomas made no answer. An awful suspicion was taking shape in his mind. Was this to be the end of the romance? What might not his wild friend attempt? Was he playing the barbaric Norseman or the Homeric hero? Would he snatch a maiden from the hearth? And she had said that she was not afraid with him. With himself she had trembled before a turkey-cock.

Trifles light as air came thick upon him, as he assured Miss Tubb that it was nothing; and his heart beat quick as he darted to the landing-place. He was too late, and he saw them travelling down the stream. He shouted, and Orlando, as he answered, seemed to quicken his stroke. He looked for the Dorians' gig, but it was not in its place. He was sure that he had divined the truth. It was the necessary end of the story. He trusted his fancy as an inspiration. As he started down the river, Mr. Dorian came gliding in his boat from above. "Come in," cried the elderly athlete, cheerily; "take the other sculls and get an appetite for supper."

"All right; quick; down stream!" cried Thomas; as he stepped in. With a great effort he kept his awful suspicion to himself. He would spare this new Lord Ullin as long as possible. "Orlando is just ahead," he said; "let us try to catch him—just for fun, you know."

"You are hurrying the stroke," said Mr. Dorian, who prided himself on his Oxford swing. The younger oarsman was sculling his strongest with his head over his left shoulder.

"Quicker!" he cried, or "we shall be shut out of the locks."

"Steady," said Mr. Dorian, making gallant efforts as became his character of athlete, and growing hot with the ardor of the race. They were flying along, when Thomas gave a sudden cry and stopped in amazement.

"What is it?" gasped the veteran, as his sculls rattled against his friend's.

"They are going down the weir stream," Mr. Dorian felt a glow. Wealth was a little thing; the responsibility of the father of a family was nought; all his youth rose from the depths of his being, and flashed from his lips in the words, "If he shoots the weir, we will too. Come on."

Thomas replied by a stroke, and the boat leapt forward. He saw that it was their only chance of hindering this folly. The runaway match must be stopped, even if it spoiled the story. On flew the boat, and crossing the end of the lock-cut swept through the gathering shadows towards the rapids. They had gained on the fugitives, and Thomas, looking around, could see Miss Jeanie sitting upright and guiding the boat steadily to the open part of the weir. In an instant it flashed from his sight.

"Sit firm," said he, in a low voice. As he spoke, he felt an unexpected current catch the boat and sweep it towards the stakes. He rowed fiercely with his right hand, and wrenched the bows round to the open space. They were clear of the wood-work, but the rushing stream hurled them on before their craft was straight. She seemed to pause on the brink, then jumped like a horse; and Thomas felt a cold wave on his back, as she righted herself with a convulsive effort below. Clear above the rush of the rapids rang the inextinguishable laughter of Orlando. Thomas was dumb with amazement. Close beside him was the classic robber resting harmless on his sculls, and the hapless maiden was radiant with excitement.

"Oh, papa," she said, "how could you be so rash?"

"Dear me! What are you doing here?" asked her father, surprised.

"But why did you stop? I mean, what did you do it for?" asked Thomas.

"For fun," said Orlando; "we have been discussing it for the last week."

Thomas said no more. He was silent while they went through locks, and even when the veteran spoke of supper. He sculled mechanically, and wondered why his life was a tissue of delusive excitements, and why, if the world of romance was a fool's paradise, it was always his lot to be the fool.

"Wrong as usual," he muttered, as he tied up the boat, and as his eye caught the flutter of a gown he added, "Thank heaven." It was clear that the tale must find some other end.

(To be continued.)

THE Grand Duke Nicholas is credited with the remark that he intends to float the double eagle standard along the streets of Constantinople before his legions return to their northern homes, that there is no intention of holding that, but that the Turk cannot be made to feel that he is crushed until his capital is in the possession of his conquerors.

HENRY WATTERSON says upon his honor that he believes that the assassination of Abraham Lincoln is lamented in the South hardly less than in the North. When Henry talks on his honor it is customary to take off the hat and remain with the head bowed and uncovered during the space of two minutes and a half.

The Boston woman who was sent to prison was cruelly refused permission to take her piano with her, and took her two pet cats instead. The strained official ear delights in scientific mew-sick.

FUGA MUNDI.

"Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The heart ungalleyd play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep:
Thus runs the world away." *Hamlet.*

Like snowy lilies, fleet as fire,
Whose fragrant course is run;
Like dewdrops on the eglantine;
Like frost-work in the sun;—
So vanish youth's delightful dreams;
So beauty's charms decay;
For nothing is, but only seems:
Thus runs the world away!

Like foam upon the billows bright;
Like sunset's gorgeous dyes;
Like moonbeams shedding silver light
Over the jewelled skies;—
So swiftly from our vision glide
Hope's plans and projects gay;
Alone we roam at eventide:
Thus runs the world away!

Of friends whom ruthless Time destroys
We're day by day bereft;
The spectres of our perished joys
Are all the comrades left.
Love's chain is broken link by link;
We sing this mournful lay,
Forlorn upon the river's brink,
"Thus runs the world away!"

CHARLES J. DUNFEE.

BURLESQUE.

THE DEACON'S CONUNDRUM.—"Boys!" said Deacon Green—according to a writer in the last St. Nicholas—to a group of red-cheeked fellows, the other day, "I never see a healthy, go-ahead crowd of young folks like you, that I don't say to myself, 'here's a chance for practical religion, do you know the reason?'"

"Is it a conundrum?" asked three of the boys in a breath.

"Yes," said the Deacon, with the air of a man who had intended to make a speech, but had suddenly decided to keep it to himself. "It is a conundrum."

Then the Deacon, gave a pleasant nod, and walked off.

"Now, what *did* he mean by that!" said one of the fellows.

"I know," cried Bob King. "He meant that some folks think that religion is intended only for Sundays and for sick people, and the Deacon would like to see more well people trying it on week-days, that's all."

"Humph!" said John Salters. "You know a heap—you do!"

"The Deacon does, anyhow," answered Bob, meekly. "You can't get around that."

SHE MEANT BUSINESS.—Alderman Sam Wood sat contentedly in his easy chair, dozing the pleasant hours away. Business—Well the magistrate rolled up his ears at the thought, not a decent case for two weeks. He was suddenly awakened by a clatter as of an army rushing up the office stairs, when the door flew open and a little stuffy woman, having in tow a big six footer of a countryman, waltzed in.

"I suppose you hitch persons up here?" spoke up the little woman, while the fellow gaped in open-mouthed dismay at the perfect sang froid of his companion.

"Yes, if by hitching up, you mean getting married," replied the astonished magistrate.

"Come, John, step up like a little man until the justice makes us one flesh," said the little woman coolly, but John grew very red in the face, shuffled his feet uneasily, shifted his hands, stared at the woman, then at the ceiling, and acted very unlike a happy prospective bridegroom.

The woman surveyed him carefully, her under lip became firmer, and a look of sternness lit up her eyes as she ironically said to the magistrate, "You must not think hard of John, dear fellow, he always was timid and out of sorts when from the farm. Besides I am older than he is and have been married three times, but I am a lone widow now, all three died, and when I saw John wanted a wife, I spoke to him and we made up our minds to hitch, didn't we, dear?"

"Wa-all, ya-ass I s'pose so, if the Justice be willing, slowly stammered the bridegroom elect coloring up fiercely.

"Now take hold of hands and face me. No, not that way," said the Justice as the fellow confusedly turned his back to the woman.

"I say Jeedje, what be the charges for hitching up, times be pesky hard—"

"Never mind his prattle, Judge, tie up and be quick about it, and I'll pay you," interrupted the woman pulling a small United States Treasury note from the folds of her dress.

"How much be there, Sally?" eagerly inquired John, his eyes lighting up like the headlight of a locomotive.

"Indeed I shan't tell, it's all mine now," and then insinuatingly, "but when we are married—"

"All right, Jeedje, tie us up as fast as the law will let you, we're ready," broke in John excitedly.

In three minutes, city time, the twain were made one. As they were going down the stairs the breezes wafted to the ears of the magistrate these words, "Now, Sally, how 'bout that ere money."

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