

# The Vicar's Nephew; or The Orphan's Vindication

## CHAPTER X.—(Cont'd.)

When Theo had gone Jack brought her up to London, and took lodgings near New Gardens, for himself and her. The daily journey to and from town was a heavy addition to her life, but it gave Helen fresh air to breathe and trees to look at, and enabled him to be with her for the few months left to them.

That winter he failed in his examination; it was the only occasion in his student life when this happened. Before the questioning began he knew that he was going to fail; he had passed a terrible night at Helen's bedside, and his head seemed heaving beneath him.

He shut his eyes; the horror of last night came over him, stifling, intolerable. "Oh, this is no use!" he thought. "I'm good for nothing. But—day! I'd better go." Then he pulled himself together and plunged stolidly into the task set him.

At the end of the day one of the examiners came up to him with friendly concern. "You're not looking your self to-day, Raymond; I'm afraid you don't feel quite up to the mark."

"No, not quite," Jack answered. "I was a fool to come. I have failed, of course."

"I fear so. You look as if you ought to be in bed. What's wrong?"

"Oh, nothing much, thank you. Two or three days afterwards the same examiner saw him in the street and crossed over to speak to him.

"Raymond, Professor Brooks dined with me yesterday, and talked about you. Why didn't you tell us you had been up all night with a cancer patient? You were not fit to go in for the examination. I'm very sorry about it; he tells me you've been having a terribly hard time."

Jack's eyes flashed.

"Yes; and so has the woman that washes the dissecting-room floor. She lost her baby last week, and I found her crying on the stairs over her bread and cheese. But she didn't shirk her scrubbing; people's private troubles have got nothing to do with their work."

The examiner looked at him, puzzled. "I'm very sorry," he said again. "You plenty of friends in London?"

"Thank you; Professor Brooks has been very kind; so has the doctor who attends her. As for friends, there's nothing any one can do."

"Well, if there should be, will you let me know? And as for the examination, don't worry about that; you'll pass it next year. You have the makings of a good doctor."

Theo, meanwhile, had taken Berlin, Paris, and Vienna by storm. The enthusiasm aroused by his playing might have turned a wiser head; but his nature was slightly different. He was not what might have been expected in the case of an impressionable lad of eighteen suddenly springing from obscurity to fame.

His next letter contained a cheque, and a figure dancing on one leg for joy. "Darling mummy," the hurried pencil scrawl began; "there are grasshoppers and crickets to go on with Hauptmann" (the impresario) "has stumped up some money, and there'll be plenty more soon. Hurry, hurry, hurry and get well, and wear the lace I'm sending by post. You might never to scrimp and save and go without things any more; and old Jack Sobersides can buy all the skeletons he wants."

"Mother," Jack said, as he laid the letter down, "it is cruel to keep him in the dark any longer."

"You may tell him if you like, dear; it can't injure his success now." She broke off, then added nervously: "And, Jack—"

"Yes, mother?"

"You'll be sure and tell him it's not such a bad case. You know the word 'cancer' always gives people such a shock; and if you tell him easily he'll be worse. And then the morphia is a great help."

"Yes, I'll tell him."

He wrote, asking Theo to come home as soon as his concert engagement permitted, and telling him, not the whole truth, but enough to prepare him for leaving the rest. A telegram came in answer; Theo was on his way home, leaving the impresario to apologize to an excited Parisian audience.

When the truth was told him at last he bore it with more dignity and patience than Jack had expected to see. The shock seemed to have awakened in him some dormant strain of his mother's character. In her presence he never lost his self-control; but Jack, coming into his room late at night found him sitting by the window in a crouching posture, white and panic-stricken. He sprang up at the coming of the grave, protesting presence, and clung to Jack's hand like a scared child.

"Oh, I'm so glad you've come! I was afraid."

"No, not quite that. I mean—the everlasting presence, the idea of it, always waiting for everything you do. I never thought of till now; it's like a pit the under one's feet, saying: 'Tread over me if you dare.' It is as if we must go through all our life and be afraid to love; if the gods should see, they will take away the thing we love."

Jack sat still, thinking, the sad lines deep about his mouth.

"It doesn't matter," he said at last. "If nothing worse than death happens to the people that a fellow loves, he's lucky. Anyhow, what's the use of worrying your head about that? Look here, Theo; if you get the horrors, or the blues, or anything, don't sit alone this way; hold on tight to me and I'll pull you through somehow."

"Haven't you ever horrors and blues of your own without mine? And, besides, I can't hold on to you all my life."

"Why not? What else am I there for? I can't play the fiddle."

Theo rose with a sigh, stretching both arms above his head. "You may thank the gods for that," he said, as he let them fall. "Did you know old Hauptmann has wired again? He wants me back in Paris to-morrow night for the Beethoven concerto at the Chatelet."

"Yes, and you must go and play your best; it will disappoint mother if you don't. Now tumble into bed and be asleep in five minutes. I'll call you; I shall be up in any case, to look after mother."

Whether Theo's playing of the concerto next evening was up to his best level or no, it was good enough to satisfy both audience and impresario. The excited audience, shouting, stamping, clapping hands and waving programmes, horrified and sickened him; he shut his eyes despairingly.

"Bis! Bis!" they yelled at him. His breath came in quick pants of distress; he was almost ready to clap both hands over his ears and shut out the sound.

He turned to leave the platform, but on the steps the impresario thrust the violin into his hands. He pushed it back.

"I can't—I'm tired."

"Quick! or we shall never be done to-night. It's the only way to stop them."

Theo took the instrument mechanically and returned to the platform. The roar of applause and hand-clapping died down suddenly as he raised his bow. Then came silence, and he realized that he had nothing to play. He looked out over the sea of faces, blankly; his memory was a washed slate; not a note remained on it, not the name of a composer.

Yet he must play something; the people down there with the upturned faces were waiting, waiting; and he had nothing to give them.

He began to play. As for the audience, he had forgotten it; he was playing, not for the concert-goers of Paris but for Jack and Helen. When he played, there was silence; then thunderous applause burst out again. He shuddered as he went down the steps.

In the artist's room Conrad caught him by the arm. "Theo," he said hoarsely, "it's your own fault. Theo looked round him desperately; the maddening sound of applause filled him with terror; there seemed no escape from its malignant pursuit.

"I made it up as I went along. Was it—was it very bad? Uncle Conrad, stop them; make them let me alone! I—"

He was white and shivering. Conrad, too, was pale, but from another cause; he laid a solemn hand on the lad's shoulder.

"Render thanks to God," he said, "for His great gift of genius."

Theo burst suddenly into passion, at sobs. "And mother is dying—"

For the remainder of the winter he took no Continental engagements. The impresario argued, coaxed, and threatened in vain; then resigned himself with a shrug of the shoulders, and made arrangements for London concerts. These, fortunately, brought in enough money to keep the little household in comfort, and to surround Helen with small luxuries which did something to soften the hardness of a hard death.

The last time that she left her room was in the beginning of March. Between two periods of bad weather came a few cloudless spring days, and the earliest flowers burst into sudden bloom.

On the warmest afternoon Jack and Theo laid her upon her couch and carried her out into the Gardens, that she might see the coming of spring before she died.

Helen lay looking out across the crocus field; the stillness of her face made the two lads silent, as in the presence of death.

"Mother," Jack said at last, "I'm afraid you ought to come in now."

The listeners held their breath as they heard; she was like a thing transfigured, full of light.

Long silence followed; then she turned with a sigh.

"Let us go, children; our spring is not yet come."

Jack was silent as they carried her in, and his eyes were very sore.

## CHAPTER XI.

After Helen's death Jack spent two years studying in Paris. He then returned to London for a year's work in the hospitals, before going to Vienna, where he intended to finish his course of study.

One day, soon after his return from Paris, he received a letter, addressed in Molly's hand, but with a London post-mark. It was merely a curt announcement that she had come to town to attend a St. John ambulance course and was now in Kensington, boarding with Aunt Sarah's town relatives, and that if he cared to call on Sunday afternoon he would find her in.

He went, of course, but with a desolate sense of the futility of things. This was the sister for whom he had been pinching and saving, working and planning all these years; and he was going to call upon her ceremoniously, just as he had to call, now and then, on the wives of the professors.

He found her in a terrible early Victorian drawing-room, a tall girl, grave and self-contained, surrounded by thin-lipped, censorious women, whose eyes inspected him with freezing curiosity as he entered. Her own were steadily fixed on the floor, and the thick lashes hid their expression; but her mouth was set hard. He endured half an hour of small-talk, listening for the rare sound of Molly's voice.

When he rose to go, she turned to the hostess.

"Mrs. Penning, I will walk through the park with my brother; I shall be back in time for supper."

Mrs. Penning bit her lip. The Vicar, when entrusting his niece to her care, had warned her that the brother, who lived in London and would be likely to call, was "not a suitable companion for a young girl."

She had no intention of letting Molly walk alone with this black sheep of the family; and to send out a duenna this afternoon would interfere with arrangements already made.

"I am afraid I cannot leave the house to-day, my dear," she said; "but if you are particularly anxious to go, I am sure Mildred will not mind accompanying you. You must be back in half an hour, though, as she is going to evening services."

"Thank you," Molly answered; "but I need not trouble Mildred."

"My dear! I could not possibly let you walk home alone. It is not suitable for a young girl, especially a stranger to London like you."

Molly raised her eyes and looked at Jack. He interposed at once.

"I will see my sister home."

"Yes, of course," said Mrs. Penning nervously; "but I should like to see you better not to go out while she is under my care, except with an older lady. Mr. Raymond is very particular, you know; and I am sure he would not like her to be seen in the park alone with a gentleman."

"Even with her brother?"

Molly turned suddenly, with shining, dangerous eyes.

"No, especially with her brother. You are very kind, Mrs. Penning; but my brother and I have some family matters to discuss, and we would rather be alone. Shall we go, Jack?"

## THE FRUITS OF WAR.

Fifteen Million Dollars for Artificial Limbs.

No industry, considered relatively to its importance, seems likely to profit more by the war than the manufacture of false arms and legs. One American concern is said to have already received orders from the British and French governments for \$15,000,000 worth of artificial limbs. The normal producing capacity of this establishment is 250 legs a month, but its output is expected soon to be multiplied by five.

Another American manufacturer, who has a factory in France, has just returned to secure additional machinery and workmen. To obtain the latter is not easy, for false legs and arms, especially the former, are complex pieces of mechanism, and to construct them properly requires much practice and long training.

The cork leg is familiar in works of fiction. In real life such a thing is not, and never has been, cork being just about the most unsuitable material for the purpose, that could be imagined. Artificial limbs are made of basswood or willow, supplemented to some extent with leather.

Such false legs and arms as can now be bought are of course very modern inventions. It may be taken for granted, however, that artificial substitutes for lost limbs date back to a remote antiquity. Dr. Ales Hrdlicka of the Smithsonian Institution recently dug up in Peru a false foot of wood, apparently prehistoric, which was a mere block with a socket, evidently intended to be fastened to the ankle of a person whose foot had been amputated.

Famous in history is the iron hand of Goetz von Berlichingen, a knight of mediaeval Nuremberg; and there was another nobleman of the same epoch who had an iron foot weighing ten pounds.

Comin' to the Worst.

"Some men have no more hearts," said a tramp to a fellow-sufferer. "I've been a tellin' that fellow I am so dead broke that I have to sleep out doors."

"Didn't that fetch him?"

"Naw. He tol' me he was a-doin' the same thing, and had to pay the doctor for tellin' him to do it."

## "THE ONLY WAY"



THE PROTECTION OF THE BRITISH FLAG ONCE MORE IN GREAT DEMAND.

## KING DISCIPLINED BY CHIEF.

Victor Emmanuel Punished by General Cadorna.

King Victor Emmanuel himself is not exempt from the severe but kindly discipline enforced by General Cadorna, Commander in Chief of the Italian Army. A few days ago the King had this fact sharply brought to his attention by being punished for his failure to obey one of General Cadorna's orders, according to an account appearing in Il Progresso Italo-Americano.

While the fighting along the Austro-Italian front was at its fiercest the Generalissimo issued an order that all his generals who had gone one night beyond the first line of trenches for the purpose of making special observations must return at the break of day to a safe position back of the line. All obeyed, except the King.

The latter, in passing one of the trenches, could not resist the temptation to stop there a while and chat with the soldiers, to the men's great joy and satisfaction.

Just at that moment the Austrians got the range of the trench and dropped a 30.5 centimeter shell into it. Fortunately none of the trench's occupants was killed, but the King had a narrow escape, his uniform being covered with the dirt thrown up by the explosion.

Great was the excitement and trepidation among the officers and men, who had seen their beloved monarch so near death, and the news was immediately telephoned to General Headquarters. In a few minutes General Cadorna was on the scene. King Victor, brushing the dirt from his clothing, greeted him with:

"It is nothing, General. I am not hurt. Don't bother about me."

But General Cadorna, without the shadow of a smile, replied, in a severe tone:

"Your Majesty, I ordered all the generals to retire back of the first line. Why did you not obey? Be kind enough not to visit any part of the front again for five days."

Victor Emmanuel understood and, saluting the general respectfully said: "You are right. I shall obey."

The same day the King left for Verona, where he spent his five days of banishment from the front in visiting the military hospitals.

## DR. GARLIC.

Being Used With Great Success in French Hospitals.

For centuries past garlic—the very sound smells!—has held a place in English cookery, though its favor has been retained amongst Continental dishes. A wise cook, however, knows that one crumb of this famous root adds greatly to the flavor of the family joint.

A map of London reveals the fact that garlic was not once without its staunch supporters—hence Garlic Hill and Garliche Church; and during the days of the Great Plague it posed as a remedy for the stricken. Garlic, too, held its place in our grandmothers' medicine chests, and was considered most efficacious for certain aches and pains.

And now we are again threatened with an invasion. Our French allies have discovered that it is admirable as an antiseptic, and it is being used with great success in the French hospitals at the present time.

It certainly will be a rather quaint revival, for at one time any connection with this plant was considered a disgrace, and the term "garlic eater" was synonymous with "a low fellow."

—London Answers.

Mr. Wright: "Oh, doctor, couldn't you give me something to cure my appendix?" The Doctor: "My dear madam, I wish I could. I'd then cure mine too."

## UNSCIENTIFIC THEORIES.

In the "Man in the Moon" a Woman, Girl or Soot.

A great many curious ideas exist in various parts of the world regarding the dark spots in the moon's disk. In the eastern part of Asia the spots are believed to be a rabbit or a hare; the Chinese, in particular, look upon them as a hare sitting up and pounding rice in a mortar. Most of the Siamese take the same view. Some few, however, see in the moon a man and a woman working in a field. Curiously enough, the North American Indians have almost the same superstition as the Chinese; and on old monuments in Central America the moon appears as a jug or vessel out of which an animal like a rabbit is pumping.

The South American Indians, on the other hand, believe that a girl, who had fallen in love with the moon, sprang upwards toward it, was caught and kept by it, and that it is her figure which is seen on the moon's face.

The Samoa islanders look on the spots as representing a woman carrying a child, and many other southern peoples have similar beliefs, the woman and child sometimes being altered into an old woman bearing a burden on her back. The Eskimos have an original superstition. They say that one day Anig, the moon, chased his sister, the sun, in wrath; just as he was about to catch her, however, she suddenly turned around and threw a great handful of soot in his face, and thus escaped him; and of that soot he bears the traces to this day.

The inhabitants of Northwestern India, who account for the moon's monthly disappearance by declaring that she is burnt up regularly and replaced by a fresh moon, explain the dark marks by saying they are the ashes of the former moon.

Other nations explain her disappearance in various ways; the Dakota Indians have it that she is eaten up by mice; the Polynesian superstition is that the souls of the dead feed on her; according to the Hottentots, the moon suffers from headache, and when it gets very bad she hides her head with her hands and covers up her face from the gaze of the world; the Eskimos maintain that after shining for three weeks, she gets tired and hungry, and withdraws to take one enormous meal, after their own fashion, and then, reappears and begins to shine again.

## SUBMARINE MINE-LAYERS.

A New Danger From German Operations in the North Sea.

The subtleties of the enemy are extremely varied, and their ability to run around any treaties or understandings is notorious. Their latest weapon of war shows that they have lost none of their cunning. The promise to America not to sink liners without warning must be kept if possible, and at the same time they have not doubt felt it desirable to institute a new scheme of attack on our merchant shipping without running so many risks themselves. Hence the new weapon, the submarine mine-layer, says the Liverpool Journal of Commerce.

According to published accounts vessels of this class are now being employed to sow death and destruction in the path of our merchantmen, mines cannot discriminate, but such details have never worried the enemy.

These new submarines have a specifically constructed air-tight chamber into which the mines are placed ready to be sown. When the submarine reaches the selected spot the watertight doors leading into the chamber are shut, and the chamber is flooded. The mines are then mechanically released.

Each mine when placed in the chamber rests on a series of steel "fingers." These fingers constitute the sinker, and this drops to the bottom. The upward pull of the mine forces the sinker into the bottom, and by this means the mine is anchored in the channel.

The new method of sowing mines will, if used at all extensively, greatly increase the work to be performed by our mine-sweeping craft during the coming bad weather. It will also add considerably to the danger of navigating the home waters. Whether the enemy will do any material damage remains to be seen. It depends on the number of vessels constructed, on our mine-sweepers and on other undefinable circumstances.

If the enemy have spent time and money on the construction of a considerable number of submarine mine-layers, then we may take it that they anticipate a certain degree of effectiveness.

## UNSUNK TIGER AND LION.

Two British Battleships That Are Still Fighting Units.

A faintly visible mark on her armor comprises the damage suffered by the Tiger, the British battleship which Berlin reported destroyed in the naval engagement when the German cruiser Blucher was sunk, according to respondents who recently visited the fleet.

The Lion, which received such a severe knock in this action that, as his despatch recounts, when the Admiral shifted his flag to a destroyer he stepped upon its deck from the forecastle of the Lion, is now as well and hearty as Sir David Beatty himself.

A Saving.

"Your wife's dinner parties are always beautiful affairs."

"Yes," replied Mr. Cumrox. "At first people didn't seem to want to come to 'em, but I guess mebbe the high cost of living is making a difference."

## BAGPIPES ON THE BATTLEFIELD

HAVE HELPED IN GREAT BRITISH VICTORIES.

Coolness and Self-Possession of the Pipers in the Hour of Danger.

"As the men bombed their way along the German trenches after the first rush, two of the Black Watch pipers stood upright on the parapet under a terrific fire and played 'Highland Laddie,' the regimental charge of this gallant corps. They stood in a terrific storm of fire with bombs bursting all around them, and flung their Highland battle air to the breeze, until one piper fell dead and the other was wounded.

This was what happened during the British attack on the German lines north of La Basses some weeks ago, and it is one of the many such epics that have been recorded for at least two centuries, says a writer in London Answers.

## Heroes of the Pipes.

It is almost a tradition of our Highland regiments that the pipers have largely contributed to every victory gained by their countrymen, not only by the animating strains of their music, but by the coolness and self-possession of the pipers in the hour of danger.

When the 42nd Highlanders, who formed part of the attacking party that captured Fort Washington, in 1777, scrambled up the precipice determined to have their own share of glory, the first to reach the summit was one of the pipers, who, as soon as he had made good his footing, began to play. He continued sounding his war-notes until at last his body, riddled with bullets, fell from point to point, till it reached the bottom of the rock, mangled and disfigured.

Again, at Waterloo, where the Camerons earned imperishable fame, it was Piper Kenneth Mackay who specially distinguished himself. In the thick of the fighting that raged round the farmhouse of La Haye Sainte, the Camerons charged the French columns. The enemy's cavalry came to the support of the baffled infantry, and the Camerons formed square. And, while the Cuiraissiers came thundering on, Piper Mackay stepped outside the square of bayonets, and, marching around, played the stirring "Cogadh na Sithe."

Instances from History.

It was the strains of the pibroch that brought life and hope to the besieged garrison in Lucknow; it was the inspiration of the heroic pipers struggling up the ramparts of Tel-el-Kebir that goaded the British on to victory; and it was Piper Findlater's playing of the "Cock o' the North" to the Gallant Gordons, while he lay on the ground badly wounded, that carried the heights of Bargaal and won for him the Victoria Cross.

In the present campaign the pipers of the Black Watch have several times distinguished themselves when playing the "kilted warriors" into action.

It was at Loos that Piper David Simpson, of the 2nd Battalion Black Watch, died on the field of glory. "All through the battle roar," wrote one of his comrades, "rang the soul stirring notes of the charge by the piper, at once a stimulus and a rallying call to every man wearing the red hackle."

Three lines of German trenches fell to the fierce assault. Then the command came down the line to have a try for a fourth.

"Piper Simpson at once got his pipes in position, turned to his company with the cry, 'Come on, boys!' and striking up the battle-tune of the Black Watch, again ran, playing, towards the foe. He took ten or twelve paces, a bullet through the breast brought him down, and with the exultant yell of his triumphant comrades in the ears, he died."

Music that Fires the Blood.

Describing the inspiring scene of the passage of a kilted battalion along one of the rocky roads of Flanders with the bagpiper skirling defiantly, a British correspondent at the Front wrote thus:

"The drone of the pipes seem to rouse a cold, calculating devil under the tartan. It is not altogether a pleasant sight to see a Scottish regiment being played into a killing ahead; see it in the grim determination of the men, the thrust of the jaw, the grip of the knotted hands on rifle-butts, and you feel that the wail of the pipes ahead is a battle-cry fiercely urging them on."

"'Mon,' said a sergeant from Dumfries, to whom I mentioned this matter of bagpipe inspiration, 'mon, when I hear 'Th' Cock o' th' North' I could kill yon Germans wi' ma bare hands!'"

A Saving.

"Your wife's dinner parties are always beautiful affairs."

"Yes," replied Mr. Cumrox. "At first people didn't seem to want to come to 'em, but I guess mebbe the high cost of living is making a difference."