



The Heir of Bayneham

—AND—
Lady Hutton's Ward.

CHAPTER XIX.

He was, in his indolent, lazy way, anxious to see the beautiful young countess, of whom all the world spoke, and spoke well. To Mr. Fulton Bertie confided his intense desire of entering into parliamentary life.

"The borough of Oulton returns one member," said Mr. Fulton, "and from all the rumors floating now, I should imagine the country to be on the eve of a general election. I had some thoughts of offering myself as a candidate; but I tell you what, Mr. Carlyon, introduce me to your friend, Lord Bayneham, and we will try if you cannot be returned as the Liberal member for Oulton. I have some influence there, you know."

Bertie Carlyon grew intimate with, and even liked, the gay, good-humored man, who seemed so anxious to further his interest.

CHAPTER XXII.

Under the blue Italian skies, where myrtles and citrons bloom, by the fair German Rhine, by the snow-clad mountains of Switzerland, and in the sunny plains of beautiful France, Lord Bayneham lingered with his young wife. He watched the pale, sweet face brighten gradually. He never suspected any mental suffering, and would have laughed at the idea. He believed his wife to be suffering from the effects of over-exertion and too much excitement. Their winter at Bayneham had been a brilliant one, and she had been a marvellous hostess. He blamed himself for not having sooner perceived her fatigue and languor; but in his own quiet, gentle way, he was doing his best to atone for it. He would not allow any fuss or ceremony. The countess had wished her daughter-in-law to be present at the different courts, and to mingle in the diplomatic circles of each capital they visited; but Lord Bayneham allowed none of this. She had seen enough, he declared, of the world of fashion, and now she should have quiet, and see something of the beauties of Nature.

Under the influence of solemn and beautiful scenery, and of gentle, loving care, which left her no time for morbid thought, Hilda gradually recovered her health. She never forgot her secret; it was before her every hour of the day and night, but its

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weight had grown less. The grand, solemn beauty of nature gave her other thoughts. Everything did not begin and end in this world. She herself had done no wrong, and she knew not why this mysterious burden of sorrow had been laid upon her. High and Infinite Wisdom controlled every event of her life, and she found comfort in resignation. The evils of this world were lost in the great shadow of the everlasting hills. During the whole year they lingered among the fairest scenes of this fair earth. They spent Christmas in Florence, and the spring brought them home. Private letters and public papers brought to Lord Bayneham the news of a general election, and he knew then that his place was in England.

They went at once to London, where the young earl found the leaders of his party anxiously awaiting him. New combinations were forming, great events loomed in the distance, and Lord Bayneham was asked if he had any influence in Oulton; if so, let him use it for the return of a Liberal member. He inquired somewhat carelessly if there was any candidate in the field, and he became all fire and interest when he heard that the man they were anxious to secure was no other than the great political writer, his dearest and best friend, Albert Carlyon.

"You may consider the election as good as made," he said to his chief. "I shall go down to Bayneham and take Carlyon with me. There will be but little opposition."

When that interview was ended Lord Bayneham rushed off in search of Bertie. He found him busily engaged at the office and heartily pleased to see him.

"We may hope Lady Bayneham and Miss Earle will now find their way to London," said Bertie; "they have been at Cowes, I understand, since Christmas."

"Dine with us to-morrow," said Lord Bayneham, "and you will see them both. They will be in town this evening. Now, Bertie, let us discuss business. What is this about the borough of Oulton? You know you may safely reckon on my assistance."

Bertie then told his friend how anxious he was to begin his parliamentary career.

"I feel that my vocation is essentially a political one," he said. "I can serve my country honestly and well. Mr. Fulton, the new man who has promised to do all he can; and I think there is every chance of success."

"I am sure of it," said Lord Bayneham enthusiastically. "I tell you what, Bertie, when the election comes on we will all go down to Bayneham together, and I will ask this friend of yours to join us. Lady Hilda and Miss Earle shall canvass for us. You will come in with a wonderful majority. You shall see if I am not a true prophet."

"You are a true friend," said Bertie gratefully. "I should like to introduce Mr. Fulton to you. Shall you be at the club this evening?"

"I will be there just for that purpose, even if I cannot remain," replied his friend. "You will come to-morrow, Bertie?"

Trying to conceal his delight, Bertie promised, and Lord Bayneham went away.

Evening brought the countess and Barbara, the latter radiant in health and spirits. They were delighted at the change in Hilda. She had grown more beautiful during the year of secret sorrow, and thought gave fresh loveliness to her face, and the dark-violet eyes wore a new expression. She looked taller and more matronly, and in all England one could not have found a more perfect type of a young English wife.

"I did not think time could have added a charm, Hilda," said Barbara Earle; "but it has managed to do so. Change of air and scene has improved you wonderfully."

Lady Bayneham gazed with proud pleasure at her son's wife. Even her critical eye could not see one fault or one cause for remark. They were a pleasant family party, and Lord Bayneham left them after dinner to go round to his club.

Bertie introduced Mr. Fulton to him, and Lord Bayneham, who liked all pleasant things, was struck by his gay, easy, graceful manner, and his flow of conversation.

"I have not many minutes this evening," he said. "Perhaps, Mr. Fulton, you will favor me with a call some

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time to-morrow; then we can discuss the Oulton business at our leisure."

That being settled Lord Bayneham returned home. The ladies were pleased to hear of Bertie's prospects, for the handsome young secretary was a favorite with all. Barbara Earle made no remark, but her face flushed and her eyes shone brightly. She looked serenely fair and calm. That evening, when she stood alone in her room, she took from a little pearl casket a small golden apple and touched it with her lips as though it were something living, smiling as she did so at her own pleasant thoughts.

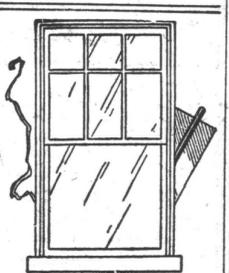
"I am always coming across old friends," said Lord Bayneham to Hilda the day following. "I met your old admirer, Captain Massey, this morning; he is leaving England in the autumn and will dine with us to-day."

It was a party of old friends who met that evening in Grosvenor Square. Lady Bayneham professed herself delighted to see Bertie. Barbara said little; but her greeting was kind and gentle, but that did not satisfy the handsome secretary. Perhaps Captain Massey was less at his ease than some of the others. He had dearly loved Lady Hutton's ward, and her marriage with Lord Bayneham had been a bitter blow to him; not that he thought himself worthy of her or that she ever gave him any encouragement. He loved her hopelessly and humbly. There were times when he raved against fortune and fate, wishing he were anything but a brave captain, with nothing but an honorable name to recommend him. After Hilda's marriage he left London, and had just returned to make arrangements for leaving England on a mission of some importance.

(To be continued.)

Blouses for resort wear are shown in prints. Those of chiffon broadened with velvet and beaded crepes are especially popular this season.

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