

LADY BOUNTIFUL.

A STORY WITH A MORAL FOR SOCIAL THEORISTS TO ACT UPON.

CHAPTER XXIV.—Continued.

'You interest me, Lord Jocelyn? Do you say that your ward has voluntarily given up society, and—and—everything?'

She thought of herself for the moment, and also, but vaguely, of Harry Goslett. For although she knew that this young man had refused some kind of offer which included idleness, she had never connected him in her mind quite with her own rank and station. How could she? He was only a cabinetmaker, whose resemblance to a gentleman she had learned to accept without any further wonder.

'He gave up everything; he laughed over it; he took a header into the mob, just as if he was going to enjoy the plunge. But did you not hear of it? Everybody talked about it—the story got into the Society journals—and people blamed me for telling him the truth.'

'I have not been in London much this year, therefore I heard nothing,' said Angela. Just then the dinner came to an end.

'Will you tell me more about your ward, Lord Jocelyn?' she asked, as she left him. His words had raised in her mind a vague and uncertain anxiety.

Half an hour later he came to her side. The room by this time was all full, and Angela was surrounded. But she made room for Lord Jocelyn, and presently the others dropped away and they could talk. A young lady began, too, a long and very brilliant piece of music under cover of which everybody could talk.

'Do you really want to hear my trouble about Harry?' he asked. 'You look a very sympathetic young lady, and perhaps you will feel for me. You see I brought him up in ignorance of his father, whom he always imagined to be a gentleman, whereas he was only a sergeant in a Line regiment. What is it, Miss Messenger?'

For she became suddenly white in the cheek. Could there be too Harrys, sons of sergeants, who had taken this downward plunge? More wonderful than a pair of Timothy Clitheroes.

'It is nothing, Lord Jocelyn. Pray go on. Your adopted son, then—'

'I had resolved to tell him all about his people when he was twenty-three. Who would have thought, however, that he would take it as he did?'

'You forget that you have not told me what he did do. If I am to sympathize you must tell me all.'

'As far as the world knows, he went away on leave, so to speak. Perhaps it is only on leave after all. But it is a long leave, and it looks more like desertion.'

'You are mysterious, Lord Jocelyn.' 'Are you curious, Miss Messenger?'

'Say am I sympathetic. Tell me as much as you can about your ward.'

Lord Jocelyn looked in his listener's face. Yes; there was sympathy in it and interest, both, as phrenologists say, largely developed.

'Then I will explain to you, Miss Messenger, how the boy did this most remarkable and unexpected thing.' He paused a moment, considering. 'Imagine a boy whom I had taken away from his people at three, or thereabouts, so that he should never know anything of them at all, or dream about them, or yearn, you know, or anything of that kind—an orphan, too, with nothing but an Uncle Bunker—it is inconceivable!'

'But we do not get on,' said Angela, in great impatience; yet relieved to find from the reference of her worthy friend, Bunker, that there was only one Harry. 'What is inconceivable?'

'I am coming to that. I gave the boy the best education I could get for him; he was so eager and apt that he taught himself more than he could be taught; if he saw anybody doing a thing well, he was never satisfied till he could do it as well himself—not better, mark you! a cad might have wanted to do it better; a gentleman is content to do it as well as any other gentleman. There is hardly anything he could not do: there was nobody who did not love him; he was a favorite in society; he had hosts of friends; nobody care who was his father; what did that matter? As I put it to him, I said, 'Look at So-and-so and So-and-so, who are their fathers? Who cares? Who asks? Yet when he learned the truth, he broke away, gave up all, and went back to his own relations—to Whitechapel!'

Angela blushed again, and her lip trembled a little. Then she said softly:

'To Whitechapel! That is very interesting to me. Because, Lord Jocelyn, I belong to Whitechapel myself.'

'Do you?' She might as well have said that she belonged to Seven Dials. In fact, much better, because in his his young days, his Corinthian days, Lord Jocelyn had often repaired to Seven Dials to see noble sports-

men chez Ben Caunt, and rat-killing, and cock-fighting, and many other beautiful forms of sport. 'Do you really? Do you belong to that remarkable part of London?'

'Certainly. My grandfather—did you know him?'

Lord Jocelyn shook his head. 'He had the Brewery, you know, Messenger, Marsden & Company, in Whitechapel. He was born there, and always called himself a Whitechapel man. He seemed to be proud of it, so that in common filial respect I, too, should be proud of it. I am, in fact, a Whitechapel granddaughter.'

'But that does not seem to help my unlucky Harry.'

'It gives one a little more sympathy, perhaps, she said. 'And that is, you know, so very useful a possession.'

'Yes,' but he did not seem to recognize its usefulness as regards his ward. 'Well, he went to Whitechapel with a light heart. He would look round him, make the acquaintance of his own people, then he would come back again and we would go on just as usual. At least he did not exactly say this, but I so understood him. Because it seemed impossible that a man who had once lived in society, among ourselves, and formed one of us, could ever dream of living down there.'

Angela laughed. From her superior knowledge of 'down there' she laughed.

'He went away and I was left without him, for the first time for twenty years. It was pretty dull. He said he would give the thing a trial; he wrote to me that he was trying it, that it was not so bad as it seemed, and yet he talked as if the experiment would be a short one. I left him there. I went away for a cruise in the Mediterranean; when I came home he returned to me.'

'He did return, then?'

'Yes, he came back one evening, a good deal changed. I should not have thought it possible for a boy to change so much in so short a time. He wasn't ill-fed; he hadn't suffered any privation, apparently; but he was changed; he was more thoughtful; his smile and his laugh were not so read. Poor boy!'

Lord Jocelyn sighed heavily. Angela's sympathy grew deeper, for he evidently loved the 'boy.'

'What had he done, then?'

'He came to say farewell to me, he thanked me, for you know what a good honest lad would say; and he told me that he had an offer made to him of an unexpected nature which he had determined to accept. You see he is a clever fellow with his fingers; he can play and paint and carve, and do all sorts of things. And among his various arts and accomplishments he knows how to turn a lathe, and so he has become a joiner or a cabinetmaker, and he told me that he has got an appointment in some great factory or works or something, as a cabinetmaker in ordinary.'

'What is his name?'

'Harry Goslett.'

'Goslett, Goslett!' Here she blushed again, and once more made play with the fan. 'Has he got a relation, a certain Mr. Bunker?'

'Why—yes—I told you, an Uncle Bunker.'

'Then I remember the name. And, Lord Jocelyn, I hope you will be grateful to me, because I have been the humble means of procuring him this distinguished post. Mr. Bunker, in fact, was, or conceived that he had been useful to my grandfather, and was said to be disappointed at getting nothing by the will. Therefore I endeavored to make some return by taking his nephew into the House. That is all.'

'And a great deal more than enough, because, Miss Messenger, you have all out of your kindness done a great mischief, for if you had not employed him I am quite certain no one else would. Then he would have to come back to me. Send him away. Do send him away. Do send him away, Miss Messenger. There are lots of cabinet-makers to be had. Then he will come back to society, and I will present him to you, and he shall thank you.'

She smiled and shook her head.

'People are never sent away from the Brewery so long as they behave properly. But it is strange, indeed, that your ward should voluntarily surrender all the advantages of life and social position for the hard work and poor pay of an artisan. Was it—as it affection for his cousins?' She blushed deeply as she put this question.

'Strange, indeed. When he came to me the other night, he told me a long story about men being all alike in every rank of life. I have noticed much the same thing in the army; of course he did not have the impudence to say that women are all alike;

and he talked a quantity of prodigious nonsense about living among his own people. Presently, however, I got out him the real truth.'

'What was that?'

'He confessed that he was in love.'

'With a young lady of Whitechapel? This does great credit to the excellent education you gave him, Lord Jocelyn.' She blushed for the fourth or fifth time, and he wondered why, and she held her fan before her face. 'But, perhaps,' she added, 'you are wrong, and women of all ranks, like men, are the same.'

'Perhaps I ought not to have told you this, Miss Messenger. Now you will despise him. Yet he had the impudence to say that she was a lady—positively a lady—this Whitechapel dress-maker.'

'A dress-maker!—oh!' She threw into her voice a little of that icy coldness with which ladies are expected to receive this kind of announcement.

'Ah! now you care no more about him, I might have known that your sympathy would cease directly you heard all. He went into raptures over this young dress-maker. She is beautiful as the day; she is graceful, accomplished, well-bred, well-mannered, a queen—'

'No doubt,' said Angela, still frozen.

'But really, Lord Jocelyn, as it is Mr. Goslett, the cabinetmaker, and not you, who is in love with this paragon, we may be spared her praises.'

'And, which is more remarkable still, she won't have anything to say to him.'

'That is indeed remarkable. But perhaps as she is the Queen of Dress-makers, she is looking for the King of Cabinetmakers.'

'No doubt,' said Lord Jocelyn; 'I think the music is coming to an end. However, Miss Messenger, one favor.'

'A dozen, Lord Jocelyn, if I can grant them.'

'He refuses to take any help from me; he lives on work paid for at the rate of tenpence an hour. If you will not send him away—then—oh, then—'

'Quick, Lord Jocelyn, what is it?'

'Tax the resources of the Brewery. Put on the odd twopence. It is the gift of the Samaritan—make it a shilling an hour.'

'I will, Lord Jocelyn—hush! The music is just over, and I hope that the dress-maker will relent, and there will be a wedding in Stepney Church, and they will be happy ever after. Oh, brave and loyal lover! He gives up all, all—she looked round the room, the room filled with guests, and her great eyes became limpid, and her voice fell to a murmur—for love, for love. Do you think, Lord Jocelyn, that the dress-maker will continue to be obdurate? But perhaps she does not know, or can not suspect, what he has thrown away—for her sake—happy dress-maker!'

'I think,' said Lord Jocelyn, afterward, 'that if Harry had seen Miss Messenger before he saw his dress-maker we shouldn't have heard so much about the beautiful life of a working-man. Why the devil couldn't I wait? This girl is an Helen of Troy, and Harry should have written his name Paris and carried her off, by gad! before Menelaus or any other fellow got hold of her. What a woman! What a match it would have been!'

CHAPTER XXV.

AN INVITATION.

Very shortly after the fatal discovery made by the professor, Lord Davenant received the outside recognition—so to speak—of his rank. It is true that no one within a mile of Stepney Green—that is, anywhere between Aldgate Pump and Bow Church—would have had the hardihood to express a doubt on the validity of a claim which conferred a lustre upon the neighborhood; yet even Lord Davenant, not remarkable for quickness of perception, was sharp enough to know that recognition at Stepney is not altogether the same thing as recognition at Westminster. He was now once more tolerably comfortable in his mind. The agonies of composition were over, thanks to his young friend's assistance; the labor of transcription was finished; he felt in looking at the bundle of papers, all the dignity of successful authorship; the Case, in fact, was now complete and read for presentation to the queen, or to any one, lord chancellor, prime minister, lord chamberlain, or American minister, who would undertake and faithfully promise to lay it before her majesty. For his own part, brought up in the belief that the British Lion habitually puts his heroic tail between his legs when the name of America is mentioned, he thought that the Minister of the States was the proper person to present his case. Further, the days of fatness were come again. Clara Martha, in some secret way only known to herself, was again in command of money; once more bacon and tea, and bread and butter, if not coffee, cream, and buckwheat cakes, with maple syrup and hot compote—delicacies of his native land—were spread upon the board at eight in the morning; and again the succulent steak of Stepney, yielding to none, not even to him of Fleet Street, appeared at

stroke of one; and the noble lord could put up his feet and rest the long and peaceful morning through, unreproached by his consort. Therefore he felt no desire for any change, but would have been quite content to go on forever enjoying his title among this simple folk, and careless about the splendors of his rank. How Clara Martha got the money he did not inquire. We, who know, may express our fears that here was another glaring violation of political economy, and that the weekly honorarium received every Saturday by Lady Davenant was by no means adequately accounted for by her weekly work. Still her style was very fine, and there were no more delicate workers in the association than the little peeress with the narrow shoulders and the bright eyes.

Not one word, mark you, spoken of Saturday Davenant—that Roag in Grane—and the professor as respectful as if his lordship had sat through thirty years of deliberation in the Upper House, and Mr. Goslett humbly deferential to her ladyship, and in secret confidential and familiar, even rollicking with my lord, and Miss Kennedy respectfully thoughtful for their welfare.

This serenity was troubled and dissipated by the arrival of a letter addressed to Lady Davenant.

She received it—a simple letter on ordinary note-paper—with surprise, and opened it with some suspicion. Her experience of letters was not of late happy, inasmuch as her recent correspondence had been chiefly with American friends, who reminded her how they had all along told her that it was no good expecting that the Davenant claim would be listened to, and now she saw for herself, and had better come home again and live among the plain folk of Canaan, and praise the Lord for making her husband an American citizen—with much more to the same effect, and cruel words from Nephew Nathaniel, who had no ambition, and would have sold his heirship to the coronet for a few dollars.

She looked first at the signature, and turned pale, for it was from the mysterious young lady, almost divine in the eyes of Stepney, because she was so rich, Miss Messenger.

'Lord!' cried Mrs. Bormalack; 'Do read it quick.'

Her ladyship read it through very slowly, much too slowly for her ladyship's impatience.

Her pale cheeks flushed with pride and joy when she comprehended what the letter meant; she drew herself up straight, and her shoulders became so sloping that the uneasy feeling about her clothes, already alluded to, once more passed through Mrs. Bormalack's sympathetic mind.

'It will be a change, indeed, for us,' she murmured, looking at her husband.

'Change?' cried the landlady.

'What change?' asked his lordship. 'Clara Martha, I do not want any change; I am comfortable here, I am treated with respect, the place is quiet, I do not want to change.'

He was a heavy man and lethargic—change meant some kind of physical activity—he disliked movement.

His wife tossed her head with impatience. 'Oh,' she cried, 'he would rather sit in his arm-chair than walk even across the Green to get his coronet. Shame upon him! Oh! Carpenter! Sh-h!'

His lordship quailed and said no more. That allusion to his father's trade was not intended as a sneer; the slothfulness of his parent it was which the lady hurled at his lordship's head. No one could tell, no living writer is able to depict faithfully, the difficulties encountered and overcome by this resolute woman in urging her husband to action; how she had first to persuade him to declare that he was the heir to the extinct title; how she had next to drag him away from Canaan City; how she had to bear with his moanings, lamentations, and terrors, when he found himself actually on board the steamer and saw the land slowly disappearing, while the great ship rolled beneath his unaccustomed feet, and consequences which he had not foreseen began to follow. These were things of the past, but it had been hard to get him away even from Wellclose Square, which he found comfortable, making allowance for the disrespectful Dane; and now—but it must and should be done.

'His lordship,' said the little woman, thinking she had perhaps said too much, 'is one of them who take root wherever you set them down. He takes after his grandfather, the Honorable Timothy Clitheroe. Set himself down in Canaan City, and took root at once, never wanted to go away. And the Davenants, I am told, never left the village from the day they built their castle there till the last lord died there. In other people, Mrs. Bormalack, it might be called sloth, but in his lordship's case we can only say that he is quick to take root. That is all, ma'am. And when we move him, it is like tearing him up by the roots.'

'It is,' said his lordship, clinging to the arms of the chair; 'it is.'

The letter was as follows, and Lady Davenant read it aloud:

'DEAR LADY DAVENANT,—I have quite recently learned that you and Lord Davenant are staying at a house on Stepney Green, which happens to be my property. Otherwise, perhaps, I might have remained in ignorance of this most interesting circumstance. I have also learned that you have crossed the Atlantic for the purpose of presenting a claim to the Davenant title, which was long supposed to be extinct, and I hasten to convey to you my most sincere wishes for your success.'

'I am at this moment precluded from doing myself the pleasure of calling upon you, for reasons with which I will not trouble you. I hope, however, to be allowed to do so before very long. Meantime, I take the liberty of offering you the hospitality of my own house in Portmah Square, if you will honor me by accepting it, as your place of residence during your stay in London. You will perhaps find Portmah Square a central place, and more convenient for you than Stepney Green, which, though it possesses undoubted advantages in healthful air and freedom from London fog, is yet not altogether a desirable place of residence for a lady of your rank.'

'I am aware that in addressing you without the ceremony of an introduction, I am taking what may seem to you a liberty. I may be pardoned on the ground that I feel so deep an interest in your romantic story, and so much sympathy with your courage in crossing the ocean to prosecute your claim. Such claims as these are, you know, jealously regarded and sifted with the greatest care, so that there may be difficulty in establishing a perfectly made out case, and one which shall satisfy the House of Lords as impregnable to any attack. There is, however, such a thing as a moral certainty, and I am well assured that Lord Davenant would not have left his native country had he not been convinced in his own mind that his cause is a just one, and that his claim is a duty owed to his illustrious ancestors. So that, whether he wins or loses, whether he succeeds or fails, he must in either case command our respect and our sympathy. Under these circumstances I trust that I may be forgiven, and that your ladyship will honor my poor house with your presence. I will send, always provided that you accept, my carriage for you on any day that you may appoint. Your reply may be directed here, because all my letters are forwarded to me, though I am not, at the present moment, residing at my own town house.'

'Believe me to remain, dear Lady Davenant,

'Yours very faithfully,

'ANGELA MARSDEN MESSENGER.'

'It is a beautiful letter!' cried Mrs. Bormalack, 'and to think of Miss Messenger knowing that this house is one of hers! Why, she's got hundreds. Now, I wonder who could have told her that you were here?'

'No doubt,' said her ladyship, 'she saw it in the papers.'

'What a Providence that you came here! If you had stayed at Wellclose Square, which is a low place and only fit for foreigners, she never would have heard about you. Well, it will be a sad blow losing your ladyship, but of course you must go. You can't refuse such a noble offer.'

'Yes, we must go; we must show people that we are ready to assume the dignity of the position. As for my husband, Mrs. Bormalack—she looked at him sideways while she addressed the landlady—there are times when I feel that nothing but noble blood confers real dignity—his lordship coughed—' real dignity and a determination to have your rights, and behave according.'

Lord Davenant straightened his back and held up his head. But when his wife left him he drooped it again and looked sad.

Lady Davenant took the letter with her to show Miss Kennedy.

(To be Continued.)

Cyclops, the German strong man, says: 'I do not want to beat records, but defeat men. I will lift dumbbells with one hand or with one in each hand, and will lift a heavier one than any other man can put up, for \$500 each feat or from \$1,000 to \$5,000 a side.'

Artie Flint, the St. Louis boxer, says New Orleans is full of busted prize fighters. Every street corner in the sporty precincts has a fighter or two holding it up and waiting for some one to come along, so that they can make a touch. The gang is as flat as an opera hat closed up, and they are lucky to get a bed on a chair in a sweat box.

Wednesday action was instituted at Toronto on behalf of one of the shareholders of the Central Bank to procure the arrest and extradition of D. Mitchell McDonald, one of the directors of the defunct institution, on a charge of forgery. The exact character of the charge or the specific circumstances upon which it is based will not be disclosed until the legal machinery has been set in operation in Los Angeles, Cal., where McDonald has been since the failure.