

## COLLABORATEURS.

By S. D. SCHULTZ.

## CHAPTER III (Continued).

SHE bent over the table and touched the bell, intending to have her father "called," when the portiere parted and Mr. Harold Grant entered.

"Why, father, you're looking positively ill. Shall I send for Dr. Graham?" Ethel enquired in alarm.

"Oh! I'm all right. Just a touch of insomnia. All this poet talk of Morpheus being 'Nature's soothing nurse' doesn't apply in every case," Mr. Grant grumbled in a fidgety way, and he seated himself, and poised a knife over an orange, preparatory to slicing it in half.

Ethel watched her father under lowered lids, and wondered at his changed demeanor. Usually complacent, and never for a moment parting with easy self-control, lately he had been betraying restlessness and even agitation. She studied him now with a view of diagnosing the change.

Mr. Grant was tall and commanding, clean shaven and sharp featured, with a determined looking mouth and full chin. Not a gray hair silvered the glossy black in evidence of his sixty years and over.

"Did Dr. Graham say when you might give up his starving medical diet, and go in for something substantial?" her father asked, at the same time reaching for another orange.

"He told me that I was a perfectly free agent, and specially enjoined me to take up steady physical culture, beginning, of course, in a quiet way," answered Ethel.

Mr. Grant's eyes stole furtively from the orange across the table to Ethel. He leaned back in the high-armed chair, and vacillatingly said, a feeling, half agony, half annoyance, evanescently causing his lips to tremble and pursing his brow:

"Ethel, would you feel much put out if that Florida trip doesn't materialize? I know how anxious you were to go, and believe that it would benefit you much. But business is very bad. Those failures of late are pushing me, and I must retrench."

Ethel left her chair, and walking over to her father's side, put her arms lovingly around his neck. "Don't let that concern you. I would rather summer in California. I have a letter from an old school friend at Alameda, saying that Los Angeles and Santa Barbara are perfect paradises. Besides—you suggested Florida—a horrid old place, with alligators and risk of yellow fever," Ethel answered with an affected pout, and a sparkle of mischief playing in her dark hazel eyes.

"Bye-the-bye, Ethel," Mr. Grant said suddenly, stroking the hand that had playfully taken hold of the horse hair

neck chain, from which his gold-rimmed spectacles dangled, "Have you seen any of the morning papers?"

"No! I haven't read any. Here they are," responded Ethel, going over to a settee, and picking up the dailies.

"I hope this North-West disturbance will pass over without a bullet. You're not a bit patriotic," Mr. Grant spoke between pauses, as he unfolded the *Gazette*, spread the sheets before him, and glanced swiftly at the head lines.

"Oh! you know how anxious I am. This morning, though, the rebellion slipped my mind," Ethel said, taking one of the papers and hurriedly skimming over the columns.

"There's nothing in the *Gazette*, anyhow," her father presently said with an air of relief.

"And I can't find anything in the *Observer*, either," Ethel answered lightly.

"Clear and fair to cloudy and rain, and later, lightning and thunder," Mr. Grant read from the weather report. He went to the window, and took a survey of the sky. "Not a suspicion of a cloud. This is the Queen's Birthday. I'll drive you to the races at the Woodbine. What shall it be, the dark bays or the grays?"

"Oh! that will be just splendid. I'm quite up in current turf gossip, and I see that Dorothy, the Hamilton mare, is the favorite for the plate. I hope she distances the American horse Osceola," came from Ethel gleefully, her face animating with anticipation of a delightful "meet."

"What an inconsistent mortal you are, Patriotic enough when it comes to a Canadian mare giving dust to a Yankee record-breaker, but entirely oblivious of those young fellows fighting in the North-west," Mr. Grant said with a bantering air, carrying a shade of reproach.

Ethel evaded argument, for with the vanity of her sex, something more important to the feminine mind engaged her attention.

"Shall I wear my dark-brown with otter boa, or pearl grey shot with,"

"Wear anything warm," brusquely interrupted Mr. Grant.

There was a ring at the door bell, and soon after Daisy Fielding was announced.

"Oh! Daisy, what a delightful surprise! So glad you've come," and the cordial greeting that shone in Ethel's eyes made Daisy realize, that her presence was indeed welcome.

"I feel that I've passed in everything," the visitor began. "We finished writing yesterday, I had a close call in chemistry, but I'm not shaky at all, and feel that I will be a full-pledged senior for next term, and then, Ethel, we can work for the finals together. Mind, you must coach me, for you've been over most of the work already."

"Spethal edithun Gathette, all the latheth about the Rebellwin," lispingly

shouted an urchin on the opposite side of the street.

Mr. Grant rushed to the front door. "Here, youngster, hurry," he excitedly cried.

Daisy Fielding held her breath. Her face was without a trace of color. She leaned forward with anxious dread portrayed in every feature. Ethel stood trembling with nervous fear, as Mr. Grant came in with a single *Gazette* sheet before his eyes, and reading quickly. "Poundmaker defeated—The Indians routed—Gallant conduct," Mr. Grant thought only of the victory. He continued reading Archie's "special," which had been much delayed in transmission. Jacques, the mail carrier had been forced to make large circuits and go in hiding to avoid the rebels, and a cyclone had damaged the telegraphic service. Mr. Grant was racing through the article with lightning speed, and without any warning rattled off the list of dead. At the sound of White's name, Daisy Fielding gave a gasp, and blanched to the lips. She was numbed and dizzy. The blow, though stunning, had been robbed of its terrors. Since parting with Frank White the grim spectre of death had fronted her daily vision. The dread news was only the realization of constant anticipations of fatality. She knew it would come—robbing her future of all its possibilities of joy and happy devotion. She rose, and said in a scarcely audible, cold, constrained voice, "I'm going home."

As she walked haltingly across the room, Daisy marvelled how she had spoken so composedly, and veiled her emotions so cleverly, when she felt like giving away to an abandon of despair. Mr. Grant, not having noticed Daisy's words or departure, continued reading with breathless interest the details of the Cut Knife Creek fight.

In moments of abstraction, in the presence of some great grief, or whilst in a frenzied state of apprehension of coming dread, it is a psychological fact, that often sensations reach the realm of consciousness seconds after the direct external cause has ceased. The mind is so preoccupied in such phases of emotion that sensation only develops into perception long after passing over the nerve channel. Thus it was with Ethel. Her head had been buried in her hands, and the tears were trickling through her fingers. She suddenly jumped up with a startled look, and the echo of Daisy's words "I'm going home" resounding in her ears. She passed hurriedly through the dining-room into the hall, and drew back with a cry of horror, as she saw Daisy Fielding lying prostrate near the front door.

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Mr. Grant drove to the races alone that day.