

GRANTLEY MANOR

A TALE

LADY GEORGINA FULLERTON, Author of "Lady Bird," "Ellen Middleton," etc

CHAPTER IX.

"What?—what do you mean?" "Are you not about to inform me, that of all the captivating creatures in the world, your sister is the most irresistible. I am quite prepared for it, I assure you. I hear you are all mad about her; that you father says she is an angel; that Mr. Sydney calls her a saint; and that we shall not have a chance any of us of being ever looked at, much less thought of, by anybody, as long as the fair Ginevra remains among us."

"She is very charming," Margaret answered; and there was such a sad tone in her voice as she pronounced the word. "Maud ventured to say, in a manner that might have passed for a mere joke and innocent inquiry—

"Then you have had nothing as yet but the patte de velours? You are quite sous le charme, I suppose?" Margaret, like all frank people, detested a hint; and being, moreover, predisposed at that moment to irritation, exclaimed warmly—

"Why really, Maud, I wish you would speak out, or not speak at all. What is the use of beating about the bush, and putting unpleasant ideas into my head, for the sole purpose of plaguing me? As they tell people in the marriage-service? do say what you have to say at once, or forever hold your peace."

"O, you have been studying that part of the prayer-book lately? Are you perfect in the responses, and prepared to say, 'I Margaret, take thee, Edmund.'"

"From 'it,'" exclaimed Margaret, with impetuosity; "there is no question of my marrying Mr. Neville."

"The question may not yet have been asked, but it does not follow that it will not," said Maud, "unless—"

"Unless what?" cried Margaret, whose interest in the subject got the better at once of her caution and of her irritation.

"Unless," said Maud, "the game should be taken out of your hands, my dear unsuspecting, confiding Margaret and your young and artless sister should employ her talents and her charms in that direction. Do not turn away from me, do not look so angry with me. Now, Margaret, do be reasonable. What possible interest can I have in putting you on your guard, except that of saving you from the wretched position of a dupe, I know more of the world than you do and I also know more, I am sorry to say of the character of the artifices of a coquette and of the unrelenting manner in which a woman of that description will pursue her object, and gain her end."

"Ginevra cannot be a coquette," Margaret answered in a hesitating manner. "She is so good, so affectionate, so modest,—at least, I think—I hope so."

"You do not feel sure of it, Margaret—you, who have seen nothing to the contrary; but watch her—remember my advice—watch her. I could tell you much on this subject, but I prefer leaving you to your own observations."

"You know more of foreigners than I do, Maud," said Margaret, thoughtfully; "I suppose their manners and ways are always very different from ours."

"In what respect? Cannot you give me an instance of what you mean?" "I mean that what would not be modest as becoming in an English girl might be quite natural and proper in a foreigner."

"Why, in married women that might be the case, perhaps; but young ladies abroad are particularly demure, and silent, and proper, and all that sort of thing."

"Well, so she is in some ways, but—" "But she would not mind walking alone with a gentleman, or writing to him in secret, or—"

"As Maud said these words, she carefully watched her companion's countenance, and almost started herself at Margaret's sudden exclamation. "O Maud! how did you know—how did you guess?"

—that is all; and Ginevra's manner is so unequal, sometimes so very retired, and at other times not quite exactly what—I like; I may remark that, without being jealous, as you call it." "Oh, certainly; and I am glad to hear that you are not jealous, for I have not a doubt that your sister has quite made up her mind to captivate Mr. Neville; and with all your beauty and your attractions, you have not a chance with such a thorough-paced coquette as this charming Ginevra. There is only one way of counteracting her devices—perhaps, if Mr. Neville's eyes were opened to her real character, contempt might guard him against her attractions." "Contempt!" repeated Margaret; "it would not be easy to despise Ginevra. Oh, Maud, even while I say there is something about her which puzzles me, and causes a sort of vague suspicion to dart through my mind, I am angry with myself for having felt it, and still more for having owned it; perhaps she is an angel of goodness, and I—oh, I sometimes think myself too wicked for having such thoughts."

(To be continued.)

The Soldier and the Nun—A Touching Incident.

The following incident was related by Archbishop Ryan, of Philadelphia, recently: "During our Civil War two Sisters of Charity, walking together through streets of Boston, were insulted by a wretched man through hatred of the religious garb they wore. Subsequently this man went into the army as a substitute for some one who had been drafted. He was wounded in one of the battles in Missouri and brought to a temporary hospital in charge of Sisters of Charity, and, of course, was most kindly treated. When about to die the Sister in attendance on him begged him to ask pardon of God for the sins of his life and to prepare to meet his judge. 'Sister,' replied the dying soldier, 'I have been a bad man, but there is one act of my life that weighs more heavily upon me than any other. I once insulted a member of the Order which has treated me so kindly, and sick as I am were she here I could fall at her feet, beg her pardon and die in peace.'

"You have her pardon," replied the Sister of Charity. "I knew you by that mark on your forehead the moment you were brought here, and I pardoned you from my heart long before then." "And why," rejoined the soldier, 'have you been more kind to me than to the others?' 'Because you insulted me, and for His sake,' she said, kissing her crucifix. 'Send for your priest,' said the dying man. 'The religion that teaches this fortitude must be from God.' And the priest and the Sister knelt together as the soul of the dying soldier passed to the God of Christianity—glorious Christianity! The Sister's sweet forgiveness caused the soldier's conversion, but what caused the Sister's forgiveness? It was expressed by the word, 'For His sake,' as she kissed her crucifix."

Proof that There is a Devil.

No more convincing argument of the existence of a devil, and many of them, could be produced than is found in the reports of the outrageously barbarous hazing deviltry of the students at the Ohio Wesleyan University, and young women at that. The untutored savage is not supposed to know any better, but it may well be questioned if savages ever sank so low as the twenty young she-devils of the University of Delaware, who branded seven of their schoolmates on the necks, breasts, arms and hands with a strong solution of nitrate of silver—Soundings.

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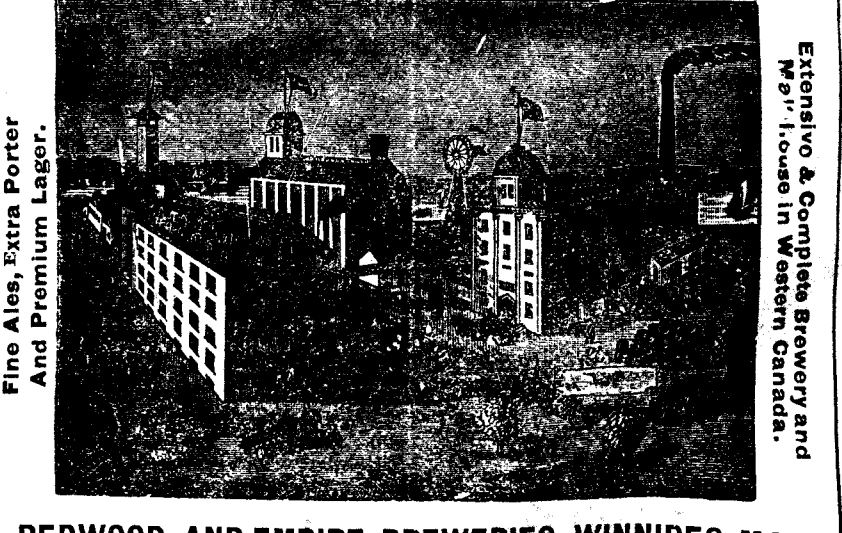
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