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To run upstairs and put on her jacket and bonnet—she always wears a bonnet as being more decorous, she says—as a fact, she is at home here—and to walk down to Cutforth Hall takes half an hour, and Maria, being found in the library arranging her husband's books—she always manages her husband's books when he is away—Bella pours out her grievance with eloquent tongue.

"It is impossible, isn't it? You wouldn't hear of it, would you? Just consider? That girl of all others, no man's name, or comfort, would be safe with her. Why? angrily, 'don't you speak, Maria? You have so often told me that you would not sanction such an engagement, that—'

"I've said a lot of things in my time," says Maria, solemnly, flicking the dust to and fro, and occasionally very close to Bella's nose. "And have you, I daresay. But I have learned to believe that neither you nor I can prevent Stephen from doing just as he likes, either in the way of choosing a wife, or anything else."

"You mean to give in, then?" gasps Bella. "To let him destroy his whole life by marrying this girl, oh? The goddess as though too overfilled with righteous indignation to give voice to another syllable. But presently she rallies. And you thought her eyes are now flashing with a fire that has something vindictive in it. 'You who profess to be a leader of men—to manage the people round you!'

"She has turned her glance full on the great Maria, as though expecting and preparing for an explosion from her—but to her surprise it never comes. Cutforth-Boss, as though not hearing her, is looking up at the cornice, and drumming her fingers on the table. She is evidently lost in thought. Not unpleasant thought, by any means, judging by the curves of her masculine lips."

"And you really think there is something in it?" says she at last. "That Stephen actually means to marry her? She brings her eyes down from the cornice to look at that intruder's breast. 'Oh, beyond doubt! Beyond any doubt! Alas! says she, 'I don't know unless someone comes forward to prevent Stephen from taking this fatal step, he will within an hour be married. I will not be a party to it. She looks eagerly at Maria. Surely this is strong enough. 'No, I don't think so, to the rescue! Maria has gone back, however, to her calculations, and is again smiling. After a moment she says slowly:

"My friend, as Geoffrey's aunt. After all, then, he will be married. I am in some sort of a way before—say you say—the year is out?"

Nell's relationship to the child has all at once reconciled her to the marriage. Surely it is children who sway the world."

Bella, with one withering glance at Mrs. Cutforth-Boss, rises to her feet. The game is up. "Ah! one can see now," says she, in her softest, most deliberate tones, and with her little head bowed and eyes cast down, "but with a glance that is meant to cut the other to the very heart's core, 'what a grief to me to find you here, with no children of your own!'

She recalls Mrs. Chance for a moment with a scornful eye, and she says: "Those who live in glass houses should not throw—What, going already?"

But Bella vouchsafes no reply; marching out of the room she closes the door finally behind her. The next day sees her far from Bigley-on-Sen, and I don't know that anyone there has up to this regretted her.

CHAPTER LXIV.
Wortley here in the garden with Nell is feeling sad and depressed. The true lover is ever slow to believe in himself or his own chances, and the advent of Grant, younger than he is by some years, and handsome, and earnest—so very evidently in earnest—has damped his spirits. Up to this, ever since her illness, Nell has seemed so altogether his own that he can scarcely bear now to see another come in to divide his honors with him. It was nothing to him that the girl had refused cake from Grant, and had accepted bread.

CHAPTER LXV.
The Very Finest In the Land . . .

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and butter from him, though if he had heart to remember, he might have consoled himself with the recollection that Nell is as fond of a cake as a child of five.

But Grant had come, looking so handsome, so brilliant, and the girl had received him with such cordiality as seemed to Wortley but the continuation of a love begun in happier days. Besides, you must admit, the true lover is always a little stupid. And Wortley's stupidity goes so far, that even now when Grant has gone—ever glad to the gate by Cecilia and Gaveston, who quite understand his state of mind and are truly sorry for him—he cannot see that Nell is in a way relieved and glad of his departure. The fact that this relief takes the form of silence, perhaps adds to his mystification.

For a long time he does not speak, and then at last, seeing that neither Cecilia nor Gaveston mean returning, and that the night air is drawing near with a chill within its train, he so far rouses himself as to say gruffly:

"It is growing too late for you to be out here. You must go in."

"Yes, I think so," says Nell. She gets up from her cushions, always so carefully arranged for her upon her garden chair, and with the help of her stick takes a step forward, then she catches hold of the arm of the chair, laughing softly, in a little nervously.

"My feet don't seem quite my own yet," says she. "I have sat here too long, perhaps. And this stick is no good; you must give me your arm, I'm sure."

"You have sat out here far too long," grows he. "I don't know how they get you to do it. As for that stick—"

He puts it aside in a masterful way, and taking her up in his arms, carries her—as he has so often done before—in her hopeless days—through the open window into the drawing-room.

Here he lets her go, slowly, until her feet touch the carpet, and even then it seems so hard to let her go.

All at once, as she feels his arms loosen, they tighten round her again, and she knows that he is straining her passionately to his breast.

"How can I let you go?" says he. His tone sounds suffocated. "But I'll have to. I know it. It's the only way, even when he came again. There, don't mind me."

He releases her, and would have pressed her tenderly into a lounging chair near by, but she, closing her slender fingers on the sleeve of his coat, prevents him. Leaning back from him, she looks up into his face, and he looks down at her, with his strong, kind, rather ugly face very white and set.

"There is a long pause, and then at last: 'Don't let me go!' says she. 'I almost pushed him from her when the dreadful words are said, and I think she would have fallen but that he catches her and holds her. 'On!'

His voice is trembling, his heart beating with an almost cruel haste. He is bending over her, pressing his cheek against the pretty head now lying on his breast."

"Nell!" says he again. But she is crying nervously now, and it is quite futile before she can be got to speak. And then her next sentence knows no depths.

"Yes, I know. No wonder you are shocked as you are. I don't know it—it was a proposal! Oh! I tell you how I did it!"

There are several intervals that need never be recorded, as all true lovers fill in for themselves, and presently she goes on comforted and a little gleam of her old self steals forth.

"I shall take a proposal, for all you may say," says she, but the pretty saucy smile breaks out here, and there is a gleam of the old devil eyes that argues considerable life for him in the coming days. "I hope you are not going to—refuse me!"

An hour later they are still full of love, as though the year had just begun. Truly, the genius of love is wonderful.

"I shall take you abroad myself. No one could look after you as I could. We'll speak to Cecilia."

Cecilia until this moment, but already she regards her as a sister.

"Yes, and then, after all, I don't want a nurse any more."

"Even if you did, I'd be your nurse."

At this she laughs heartily.

"A nice nurse you'd be," says Nell. Then all at once her mood changes, and she looks at him with anxious eyes. "Do you remember now how you used to scold me to find fault with me?—I was then—the same you know, as I was then."

"That is what I like to think," says he. "It is?" She pauses, as if meditating upon this. "You," after a bit, "I thought you were a little bit of a troublemaker, but the more I shall know of you, the more I shall love you."

"There was one day when you said—"

"But she never gets to the end of that sentence."

"Look here," says he, "I won't have all my crimes brought up against me like this. It's beastly unfair—that's what I call it—and after all, you ought to be generous to my faults, because it was pure despair of ever gaining you that drove me to the brutalities you mention."

He laughs—but she does not—and after a moment she leans towards him and puts her head on his shoulder. "You do love me, then? You do?" asks she.

"So much honest doubt in her voice that it shocks him. Can't she see?"

"No, no darling—"

"As you," vehemently, "never have loved me, and never could love anyone again."

"I thought it was plain, my sweet-heart," says he, reproachfully. "But there is this, Nell, that all the world and everything in it, is of no account to me, except you, and your love for me, and my love for you!"

[The End.]

Mark Twain's
New Book.

A Few of the Good Things It Contains.

"Following the Equator" and Its Wit-ticisms—It Is a Reflection of His Early Manner in "Innocents Abroad."

New York, Oct. 11.—"I am now reading the proof sheets of Mark Twain's forthcoming book, 'Following the Equator,' and I must say that his wit and humor are as vigorous and his wit as sprightly as ever," are the words of Frank Bliss, who 28 years ago assisted Twain in the first book of the literary comedian before the American public. This statement of Mr. Bliss will be highly significant to those who are acquainted with the inner details of Twain's life during recent years.

Mr. Clemens, who has been called the "Huckleberry Finn" of the literary world, already in his looks bore the shadow of the leonine appearance of earlier years. His talk and his manner were as full of spirit and vigor as ever. The negotiations were carried through very quickly and he went away well satisfied with the result.

"Innocents Abroad" was finally a great success, but it required hard pushing at first to get the new book into the market. It was not until the summer of 1900 that it was published, and it was not until the summer of 1900 that it was published, and it was not until the summer of 1900 that it was published.

Mr. Clemens came to our house, and I will never forget the scene. He was very much surprised to find that we were not used to having his popular European travelogue read to him. He was very much surprised to find that we were not used to having his popular European travelogue read to him.

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hope, and she said she would do everything I told her to do. So I said she must stop smoking and drinking and smoking and eating for four days, and then she would be all right again. And it would have happened just as I know it, and she said she could not stop because she had never done it before. So there it was. She had never done it before, and she had never done it before, and she had never done it before.

Now that they would have come good, nothing was to be done but to wait. Now that they would have come good, nothing was to be done but to wait. Now that they would have come good, nothing was to be done but to wait.

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