A TALE OF ENGLISH LIFE.

CHAPTER X,

colder.

my fault."

against his."

and training.

one else ?"

that do not exist."

"You think so. You do not think m

lew, soft voice. "Did you guess noth-

should have grown a better woman."

with me! You were very blind."

"How could I tell you?" I had no

HE MASK THROWN OFF-THE SITTERNESS | As Alice's pession increased Holen grew OF DEPEND

must have guessed that something ex-traordinary was going on; that the two girls did not always look like that.
Alice was standing by the mantelpiece, her cheeks flushed with the beautiful

"Ah was seen now to be added to the cheeks flushed with the beautiful

"Ah was seen now to be added to the cheeks flushed with the beautiful

"Ah was seen now to the country of colour which excitement of any kind . "Ah, you sucer now; it is your turn, bright, and her lips parted, as though words were trembling on them, which ahe only restrained by a great effort.

In the ever improve to make you feel as I feel new I will use my power to the utmost. Corld you not guess what

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Helen was very pale, but there was a look in her eyes which Percival had never seen there helen and which he hook in her eyes which Percival had never seen there before, and which he thought, he should not like to feel had been called there by any word of his. When I went away you had not spoken half-a-dozen times to Percival. Perhaps half-a-dozen times to Percival. Her lips were compressed, only in that half-a-dozen times to Percival. Perhaps way did she show her excitement. She you think that when I was nursing my had not risen from her seat, and Alica with her tall figure drawn upright, It was very evident there was a dispute go-

Percival perhaps, hardly rose to the o masion. He was so startled, almost shocked, that he could not behave as though he had noticed nothing. He looked from one to the other of the girls, and would perhaps have spoken if he had

"Mr Moore, will you go and ask papa now, please. He is in the dining-

He had never heard Helen speak in such a tone-cold and hard, without any of the little inflections which generally came into her voice when she was speak ing to him. But she had raised her eyes full to him as she spoke, and he knew perfectly well what it was he was to ask Mr Lafone. He merely said, therefore, "I will ask him with the greatest

room without having exchanged any of the usual greetings with the two girls. There was perfect silence in the room

for a few moments after he had gone. A change had come over Alice's face; the brightness had died out of her eyes, but the color in her cheeks was deeper than before as she asked-"What is Mr Moore to ask papa, Hel-

"His consent to our matriage,"replied

Helen, a little curtly. "Has Mr Moore asked you to marry

"I should hardly have sent him to

"How long ago did he ask you? "It is some time ago, now."

"And you have been engaged to him

They could not possibly have been in

kind of tacit antagonism between them, caused as much by difference in bringing up as in character. Now, eventhe most superficial agreement had been swept away. Helen felt outraged. She had not at first believed Alice to be speaking seriously, and when it was forced upon her that she did in reality mean every word she said, she had been too much bewildered to make the only statement which would have effectually ailenced her sister. Percival's entrance brought back her consciousness, and she lost no time in explaining matters, but in the curt, direct way which she always employed when very much annoyed or deeply

ent and strong prejudice against Helen was awakened by her words, and when she announced in that bold way that he would be grateful if Mr Lafone would be grateful if Mr Lafone would spare him a few minutes. months before, while Alice had been losing her heart to him, she was almost dumb with astonishment and indigna-

Alice came up to her, and seizing her wrist gave it a little shake as she said-

gaged for months secretly to Mr indeed he did-for he had Helen's con-Moore ?" "Yes. Will you loose my wrist,

passion bursting the bounds she had at very intently.

first laid upon it. "Dou yo know what "I am very much surprised to hear you have done with your ridiculous con-coalment and underhand work? You length, indeed," he said at have let me fall in love with a man who "Is it so very strange that I should love your daughter?" asked Percival, have let me make confession of my love slightly raising his eyebrows. to you you of all people—the very girl "Certainly not, but I have

the time shad been speaking she had knew his attentions to Alice had been he?"

When she finishing speaking she flung it it to himself, and if Mr Lafone had done."

Wome at all, my dear. I wish he will be put it to himself, and if Mr Lafone had done."

vo'untary, other people might have done the same. He hastened to speak again and put things in a clearer light.

"I should be very sorry if any atten tions I have paid your second daughter have been minuaderstood. As your daughter and Mins Lafone's sister the el you for that, If you remember, I said had certain claims upon me, but it is

Miss Lafone whem I wish to marry." of can't well put it stronger than that," reflected the young man, "He must see the trath now."

It appeared so, for after a moment's conversation he said-"That being so, I am very sorry I

nentioned Alice's name. insulted you by supposing you capable "What did he ever mention her name

for ?" again reflected the younger, man, Does he suppose when I ask for one of his daughters that in reality I mean the but my turn will come. If it is ever tin other?" But aloud he said. "You don't object to the marriage, I

"Have you spoken to Helen ?"

"I would have preferred you to to me first, but I believe it is not the fashion with the present day." Percival having no practical exper-

"Yes, she sent me to you."

in the way such things were done in Mr best friend woon his deathbed I was Lafone's youth, did not feel called upon planning how to guard against the dan- to make any remark, and both the ger of you talking in love with the man sat silent for some little time. At last who is going to be my husband. I never Mr Lafone roused himself. "Well," looking at his anger mails as saw you and Percival together. All this

has happened in my absence; that is not he spoke, in accordance with the habit he had, which Pergival had often moticed. "If you did not think of my danger ,it but which had never irritated him until might have occurred to you to guard this evening, "I suppose I must say "People do not guard against dangers The grudging, yet indifferent way in

which he spoke, stirred Percival's wrath, and be said quickly, worthy to be your rival; certainly I "If you have any objections to make, never expected to have you for one.

sir, please state them. You have asked And you think there was no danger in no questions about settlements or anyleaving your lover for six weeks alone thing. I shall be glad to tell you whatever you like." "Do you not think it was you who Mr. Lafone indulged in a gesture of re were blind ?" interposed Helen in her monstrance.

ing? You knew that Percival and I tion and fortune, otherwise I should were friends when you came home; you not have allowed your attention to eaw us together. It was rather you who Alice." should have inquired if Percival were Percival was more annoyed than he free. Though after all to a certain ex. cared to show at this second allusion to

"I am quite estisfied as to your pesi-

ed that accustomed as you are to have slight to Helen was not to be borne.

all you want, and far more than you "We had better come to an underwant, forced upon you, you would really standing about this, Mr. Lafone. You desire the one thing you might not have, will oblige me by telling me what I have and would want it all the more if you ever said or done which should make knew it belonged to some one else. It is you suppose I wished to marry your always so with people of your character daughter Alice."

Thue brought to bay Mr. Lafone "You talk of character and training as found it difficult to bring forward any if I had consulted my own pleasure in proofs, so he took refuge in suppositions, both. Has it never struck you that such sayinga character and training are a greater "You were constantly here; you

misfortune to their owner than to any seemed to prefer her society to that of anyone else, and people notice these "You have always seemed perfectly things you know." "Mr. Lafone," said Percival, when

"He would have helped me," went on the elder gentleman had finished his Alice almost to herself without heeding statement, "do you wish to force upon Helen's words. "Under his influence I me a wife I do not want? It would be a very sorry service to either of us. and "So far his influence does not seem to one which you would repent having have been very powerful, since you are rendered all your life. Had you chosen a less favorable mood for understanding just as determined to have and to keep to take notice of my manner to Mess one another. There had always been a whatever takes your fancy as before." Lafowe you could not have mictaken Lafone you could not have mistaken "How you talk !" said Alice, who had any attentions I paid her sister. You grown much quieter. "I cannot think have never appreciated Helen, and you now; I am stunned. But remember, will lose her before you know her worth. Helen, I will never forgive you for this. It has pained me over and over again to You, the last of all the women in the see the persistent way in which she is world to whom I would have confessed depreciated and set aside in her own any weakness or failure, have chested home, and one of my desires in winning the admission from me. I never tiked her was that I might place her in more you, now I hate you, and will never in my life forgive you."

"Really." said Mr. Lafone, "you

my life forgive you."

She left the room as she spoke, and speak as though Helen had met with ill-Helen feeling a little shaken and upset treatment at the hands of her best began to wish for Percival, and to think friends. Might I not suggest that it is how long he stayed away.

Percival had found Mr Laftone, not in the library, busy

'It may be so," replied Percival rath-

er ironically; "nay, no doubt it is so. with some correspondence relating to one of his farms. It was very seldom he It is highly probable that her charm wrote letters after dimner, and Percival and beauty exist only in my imaginaapologised for interrupting him, but said tion,"

I want nothing but herself," said the young man almost gruffly. 'If she is to be dependent she shall at anyrate be

"Helen's beauty? You are the first spare him a few minutes, person I have ever heard remark on The elder man pushed his writing ma-Helen's beauty." terials away, as though rather glad of an "Possibly ; the greatest beauty often

excuse to give up writing, and immedremain longest unrecognized."

Mr. Lafone made no reply, and Per iately placed his time at the disposal of his young friend. cival after a moment's silence went on, Percival stated his business very clear-"Am I to understand that I have your

ly and distinctly without any hesitation, consent, Mr. Lafone?" "Do you mean that you have been en- rather as if he felt sure of success—as "Yes, yes, certainly. I only wanted you to be sure of your own mind. I don't know whether you are aware," he went on, "that Helen has no fortune,

Alice? If you feel an absolute necessity ing a little ornament—a ruler—which and in my present circumstances I do hart nomehody, please let it be some- lay upon the writing table. It was made not think I am justified in lessening my of bits of differently coloured marble, and "I can never hurt you enough!" her he seemed to be studying the differences

mistaken them for genuine and "These are riddles, indeed," she as i?

speciation of you. I never was ac dis-

I should have more congratulations than

"Dan't speak in that way, as if you were so used to it. I hate to think of

"Then don't think of it. Tell me, it stead, what you talked about and why you atsynd so long."

He told her part only of the converse-

tion; he sould not bring myself to m'ntion Alice's name, and he concluded by

"I want you to fix the time of ou wedding now, Helen. I shall never rest till I get you away from here all to my (TO BE CONTINUED.)

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dependent on some one who grudges her so Percival rose, and in a few minutes was back again in the drawing room Liver, Blood, and Lungs

to whom he is engaged. I will never daughters than one, and I must asy I thought—we all thought—you preferred

She was shaking with passion. All Alice, my second daughter."

Percival frow sed and bit his lip. He the three had been speaking she had the three had been speaking as the came on Helen's wrist, but the three has been on Helen's wrist, but the three had been speaking as the came on Helen's wrist, but the three had been speaking as the came on Helen's wrist, but the three had been speaking as the came on Helen's wrist, but the three had been speaking as the came on Helen's wrist, but the three had been speaking as the came on Helen's wrist, but the three had been speaking as the came of the three had been three three three had been three three three had been three three had been three three three three three had been three three three had been three thr

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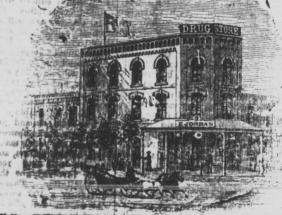
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