TRUE TO HIS WORD

A NOVEL.

CHAPTER I.

IN THE SMOKING-CARRIAGE.

In a quarter of an hour the mid-day express will leave the terminus at Paddington for the west, and the platform is beginning to fill. Paterfamilias, with his mountains of luggage and oceans of children, is already there. The fidgety maiden lady who 'always likes to be in time," was there ten minutes after a dropped apple—she is standing by the ago, but has gone by mistake by "the parliators, but has gone by but has mentary"-a literal exemplification of "more haste less speed." The bride and bridegroom about to pass their honeymoon in Devonshire, have also come, with the intention of securing a coupe, and are very much disgusted to find that there is no such carriage to be had; Charles, who has three hundred pounds a year in the Customs, is half-disposed to take a compartment to themselves; a design which Angelina (already wife-like) combats on the reasonable score of expense; it is true that there is one carriage with a door in the middle, but the gentleman departing quietly dle, but the gentleman departing quietly It was now Mr. Litton's turn to blush, and from his creditors is already in possession of he did so very thoroughly. He had by no its most secluded corner, and they come upon | means so much confidence in his own merits him unawares with a mutual shock. Of young gentlemen, indeed, there are but two as his companion; in his eyes every woman as yet arrived, and these two of the very class was hedged about with a certain divinity; that you would have expected to be among and one so beautiful and winning as this the latest. They are both well dressed, the latest. They are both well dressed, though one more fashionably than the other they are of too tender years (unless they have been very "imprudent") to have any domestations. When they are of too tender years (unless they have been very "imprudent") to have any domestations charm for him. Moreover, as the latest. They are both well dressed, tic ties, since, in the eye of the law, one is little more than "an infant," and the other only his senior by a few years; and they are in a smoking-carriage, which at present they have all to themselves. The anomaly of their being so much before their time seems to strike the younger of the two as it does ourselves, for he removes his pipe to remark: "I glamour, his ready tongue was for the moment bewitched, when she made him that hope you have brought me here early enough, Selwyn; you used not to be so punctual in your college days, if I remember right; I suppose it is the discipline of the Crimea which has effected the reform."

"Well, you see, old fellow, with a gamearm" (his left arm is in a sling) "and a game-leg" (he has limped across the platform with the aid of his friend, and also of a crutch), "one feels a little helpless; and kurry and bustle are to a poor cripple like

"My dear fellow," interrupts the other effusively, his comely face blushing to the roots of his brown beard, "don't say another word; I am ashamed of myself for having forgotten your misfortune even for an instant. I ought to have four legs myself—to be such a

He leans across and pats the knee of the uninjured leg of his companion, an affection-ate impulse strange to behold in one of his muscular and manly appearance, and which evidences, one would say, a very tender heart. He has not been thoughtless in his acts, in spite of that little verbal slip, for he has not only seen to everything, but taken as much care to make the other comfortable as though he were a sick child. If he showed impatience about the train, he shows it now in a much greater degree with himself, twisting threads of his silken beard as though he would tear them out, and looking volumes of crowd of those who had come to say "goodpenitence out of his large soft brown eyes. by," and to which she herself had a moment "What an idiot I am," he mutters: 'a man before belonged. that would say things like that" (he is refearing to his malapropos observation) "would say anything, and steal the coppers from a

blind man's tray.'

His companion, quite unconscious of these ejaculations, is gazing out of the window, watching the platform as it fills with it hurrying throng: a photographer would have had an excellent chance of taking him, so intent is his expression of interest, and this is the portrait that would result. lean, dark face, with what are called speaking features; the mouth hard when in rest, but capable of much expression, and improved rather than otherwise by its delicate black moustache; the eyes large and lustrous, but without the softness that is the che characteristic of his friend's; the nose aquiline, the forehead high; altogether a very handsome face, nor marred—to the female eye at least-by a certain haughtiness of aspect. When we add (for so far does he lean out of window that we get a "quarter-length" of him) that his left arm lies in a sling, it is clear that he must needs present an image as dangerous to woman's heart as he did but a few months back to England's foes, when, with those reckless few, he flew across the cannon-swept plain of Balaklava, and sabred

the Russians at their guns.
"By Jupiter, there she is!" cried he excitedly, and beckoning with eager joy to some

one in the passing throng.
"What!" exclaims his companion, in a

tone of astonishment; "surely not your" "Yes, it's Lotty," interrupts the other, in a tone which has triumph in it as well as pleasure. "You don't know what a trump she is. I thought my letter would 'fetch' her. Why, my darling, this is kind." These last words were addressed to a young

girl of singular beauty, who had hurried up at his signal, to the carriage-door, tall and well shaped, with a head crowned by bright brown hair, "a love of a bonnet," with delicate blonde features, that speak of gentle tendance and refinement, and with her air and attire breathing of luxury and the power that belongs to wealth. The expression of this young woman's face, as she caught sight

she had been a slave, and he a prince, nay, if she had been a Russian serf, and he the Czar, her king and priest in one, it could not have expressed a more devoted and submissive admiration. An instant before, she had been moving with stately dignity, and that con-sciousness of superiority to those about her, consciousness of having more of style, that is, and being better dressed-of which women are so demonstrative, and now-having suddenly darted through the crowd like a

though defying steam-power to part them.
"This is very, very good of you," continued the captain tenderly. "Good of me, Reggie! why, when you wrote"—— Then she stopped, and the flush mounted to her brow, as she saw for the first

time that she and her lover were not alone. "That's only Litton, my dear," explained

the captain assuringly; "you've often heard me speak of Walter Litton."
"O yes, indeed," said she, with a sweet smile, as she disengaged her hand from Selwyn's grasp, and offered it to his friend "his name is very familiar to me-and wel-

come. -perhaps he had none-as he had certainly no wounded arm to show in proof of themthis face flashed upon him it had begotten the thought: "If I were a favorite of For-tune, instead of a penniless painter, and might make bold to ask her for the highest bliss she could bestow on mortal, I would ask her for this woman to be my wife." The wish died in its birth, for he instantly remembered that her love was plighted to his friend; but for all that, his soul was lost in gracious speech.

"Walter is modest, and you overcome him," said the captain pleasantly. Then he whispered in her bent-down ear: "How I wish, my darling, you were coming with me to-day, instead of bidding me good-by for

Heaven knows how long."
"Ah, how I wish I were!" was the hushed response, and the tears rushed to her eyes. In the silence that followed, the harsh platform bell began to knell, and the warning voice: "All take your seats for the south," rang hoarsely out. "To have seen me but for these fleeting moments is scarce worth the pain, Lotty."

"O yes, it is well worth it," answered she, no longer able to prevent the pearly tears falling one by one down her now pale cheeks.

"It is something to think of afterwards."
"Look here!" cried the captain eagerly why not come with us as far as Reading you will just catch the up-express there, and be back in town before six. None but Lilian need ever know.'

A look of troubled joy came into her face. "How nice that would be," murmured she "but then"-

"Now, miss, you must please stand back," said the platform guard; "the train is mov-

ing."
"This lady is coming with us," exclaimed the captain quickly; and before a word of remonstrance could pass her lips, the door

"O, Reggie," exclaimed the girl in frightened accents, as the train steamed out of the station, and the full consciousness of her audacity smote upon her for the first time. "And it's a smoking carriage too!"
"Not now," said Walter Litton, smiling,

as he emptied out of the window the pipe which he had held concealed in his hand

from the moment of her appearance.
"Oh, I am so sorry," said she earnestly.
"I don't at all object to smoking; I rather like it."

"You mean you like to see others smoke." observed the captain, laughingly. "Well, you shall see me. Litton had only a pipe—the contents of which were, moreover, almost exhausted—but it really would be a sacrifice to throw away a cigar like this.'

"You're a naughty, selfish man," said Lotty, with such a loving stress upon each adjective, that you might have imagined she

was eulogising the dead.
"My dear, the doctors recommend it," answered the captain mildly: "all our men that have been badly hit-unless they were

shot through the jaw—were enjoined to smoke the best tobacco, and very often."

"Poor fellows," ejaculated Lotty pityingly. "I am sure they deserve the best of everything.'

"One of them has got the best of everything," whispered the captain—"at least so

Lotty sighed.
"I believe I was very wrong to come, Reggie; the people stared so at me as we came out of the station. What must they have thought!"

"The people always do stare," was the contemptuous rejoinder; "but I never heard of their thinking."

"But I am afraid that it was wrong," sisted she, "and that everybody must think so. Don't you think, Mr. Litton, it was a wrong thing to do?"

This was rather a poser; for Walter Litton did think it was so; as wrong a thing, that is, as so exquisite a being as Lotty was apable of; that is to say, he thought it injuthis young woman's face, as she caught sight dicious, rash, and a little "fast;" a thing of the wounded soidier, was (when we consider these attributes) a marvel to behold. If he would certainly not have permitted, far

"There can be no harm in it whatever," answered he, "if, as Selwyn says, the up-express can be caught so conveniently at Reading. Our train stops nowhere else, so we cannot be intruded upon by strangers; otherwise, that would certainly be embarrassing. As it is, you go back to town in the ladies' carriage, and no one need be any the

There was no very high morality in this speech of Walter Litton's, it must be owned; but let the reader (male) put himself in his place; he could not call her "a bold creature," and prophesy that harm would come of it—

No more questions of conscience were put for his decision, and he hid himself at once behind the broad sheet of his newspaper, and left the lovers to themselves. It was a some-what wearisome situation for one with so delicate a sense of what was due to his fellowcreatures; for when he had read one sheet, he low. This young lady has promised to marry had still to keep it up before him, for the had still to keep it up before him, for the sake of appearances, or rather in order to ignore them. He did not dare turn the paper over; the "liberty of the press" was denied to him. An accidental glance had shown his two companions in such very earnest converse that their lips seemed inclined to touch. He could not well cry "Ahem, ahem!" before removing the obstacle between them and him; and so he remained in durance. Stone walls, however, do not a prison make, and much ess those of paper; his thought was free, hough always within honest bounds of though always within honest bounds of license. He thought no more of Lotty as of one with whom he had fallen in love at first ceiving it is of no use to anathematise us, is sight, but as a sister who had become belall the more likely to listen to reason.' trothed to his friend; and of her future. She "But really, Selwyn, this is a most was, he knew, the daughter of some wealthy, "self-made" man—Brown by name, and "self-made" man—Brown by name, and something, he did not know what, by trade—and that her father was set determinately against the match. If he himself had been in Brown's place, he might (he owned) have been of the same opinion; not because his friend was poor (which was the obstacle in this case, Selwyn had told him), but because he did not think him likely to make a good He was a good friend-or at least husband. Litton had always persuaded himself sogenial, witty, bold, an excellent companion, and a man who had been a general f vorite at college. Yet it was said of him, that if a room, no matter how many were its occupants beside himself, had but one arm-chair in it, Selwyn was sure to get it.

Now, in a friend, this might be overlooked indeed, it was so in Selwyn's case. His friends, and Litton above all, did not grudge him the arm chair, though he always got it; but in a husband this was not a promising Half an hour before Walter would have been ashamed to have found himself dwelling on "dear old Selwyn's" little weakbut that was before he had seen Lotty, his sister (you see), as he was supposing her; and, without doubt, Selwyn had behaved very selfishly in getting her to come to Reading. There were risks in it—none to him but all to her—such as he should not him but all to her—such as he should not have allowed her to run, and which, as her brother, he (Litton) resented. Suppose she were to miss the up-train, or her absence were language indeed—will stream forth in every discovered at home, or some acquaintance were to recognize her as she left the carriage at Reading. Any one of those unpleasant accidents might happen, and the consequences to her might be serious. There was no knowing what a "self-made" man (probably intensely "respectable") might do, on hearing of such an escapade in a member of his family; it might be even the cause of an estrangement between them, though that, indeed, would be likely to throw her into her lover's arms, which was the very thing, perhaps, by-the-bye, that Selwyn-

"That is a pretty plan to impute to your old friend," here interpolated the voice of conscience. "Why, if this girl had not been sounded shrilly, to proclaim their approach so uncommonly good-looking, and taken your precious 'artistic' fancy, Master Walter Litton, you would never have attained this lofty elevation of ideas: you might have gone up a little way, I don't deny, but not so high as all this. Moreover, it is a sheer assumption that anything like an elopement was contemplated. How could Reginald Selwyn know that this young lady would come to the plat-form to see him off to Cornwall? The whole affair was evidently the work of a moment and yet you were about to attribute a design -and a very mean one-to the lad who, when you were schoolboys together, often stood be tween you and harm, and used his three years of seniority, and the superior strength that went with them, to your advantage and succour ; to your old chum at college ; to the man who went down into the Valley of Death among those heroic Six Hundred, and whose wounds should be mouths to peak for him to the heart of every fellow-countryman. For shame, Master Walter!"

Something like this did really pass through the young painter's mind, and covered him with self-reproach; and all this time the two objects of his thoughts were sitting hand in hand immediately opposite to him, billing and cooing, but unseen, and almost unheard. All that he knew, and could not help knowing, was, that Selwyn was pleading earnestly for something or other—advocating some injudicious and rash course of conduct, as was only too likely-and that Lotty was objecting to it, if those gentle tones of remonstrance could be called objecting.

At last, as the train shot through a station, with a whir like the rising of some enormous pheasant, the captain observed aloud: "Why,

that's Twyford, isn't it?"
"Yes," answered Litton: "the next sta

tion, I believe, is Reading."

He took up his Bradshaw to see whether this was the case; but hardly had he begun to peruse it before he uttered an exclamation horror: "Look here; Selwyn, you are quite wrong about the up-express: it does not start from Reading for the next two hours." "Are you sure, my dear fellow? Let's look.—Well, that's exceedingly inconvenient. I can't imagine how I could have made such a mistake."

"The only thing to be done," said Walter, moved by Lotty's white and frightened face, "is for us two to get out also, and keep this

ing to persuade you all along. This mischance may be turned into the happiest stroke off ortune, if you will only take my advice; and such an opportunity will assuredly never

happen again."
"O Reggie, but I dare not. Dear papa would never forgive me."

"He will not forgive you for coming down with me to Reading and going back again, and will keep a very tight hand on you in future, you may be sure, Lotty; but he will forgive you if you don't go back at all, when he finds there is no use in being in a passion, since the mischief is done, and you have become my wife."

"Your wife ?" exclaimed Litton. "You must not do anything rash, Selwyn."

"Rash! no, quite the reverse, my good felago, but her father will not consent to it. says "never;" so it is no more disobedient in her to marry me now than it would be in ten years hence. By this lucky piece of imprudence, she will have already offended him beyond measure; her life will henceforth be made a burden to her under his roof. She can't possibly get back, you see, without the most tremendous row; and after that there would be the other row, when we were married. Now, why shouldn't we have the two rows in one, and get it over for good and all! When the knot is once tied, the old gentleman, per-

"But really, Selwyn, this is a most serious

step"——
"Of course it is, my dear Litton," interrupted the captain; it's the most important step in the world just now, but only to two people in it—to her and to me. Lotty is of age, and can judge for herself."

To this speech, so significant in its tone,

Walter Litton did not know what to reply. The affair was certainly not his business, nor did any valid objections to Selwyn's arguments occur to him, save one-namely, that the young lady in her present position, separated from those who had the right to give her good advice, and urged by one whom she passion ately adored, was not a free agent.
"I don't know what to do for the best,"

cried Lotty, wringing her hands. "Oh, was I so foolish as to get into the train!"

"Not foolish, darling, only so fond," whispered the captain. "You acted as your heart dictated, and that is a guide to which it is always safe to trust. So far from regretting your position, you should rejoice that it has placed the happiness within our grasp which sooner or later we had promised ourselves. Life is too short for such procrastination.

"Oh, what will papa say?" sobbed Lotty, uncomforted by this philosophy, but at the same time obviously giving way to the Inevitable, which in her idea was Captain Regi-

nald Selwyn.

direction, and overwhelm the solid Duncombe and his myrmidons. Then after a while there will be silence and calm. The crater will cease to agitate itself; 'What's done can't be undone; it will sigh, and nobody will be a penny the worse."

"A penny the worse," echoed Litton inwardly: "is it possible he is calculating upon getting money with her?" All his uncharitable thoughts regarding his friend had gathered strength again; he could not forgive him for taking advantage of this girl's love and isolation.

"What will Lily say ?" sobbed Lotty, after to the station.

"She will say, 'How Lucky dear Lotty is to have married the man of her choice, Shall I ever have the like good fortune?" will employ herself in effecting a reconciliation between your father and ourselves. Come. darling, the time is come for your final decision ; be firm, be courageous"

"Selwyn," interrupted Litton, abruptly, there is one thing that has been forgotten With whom is this young lady to reside until you can procure a marriage license! Have you any female relative in Cornwall who can receive her? Otherwise, the whole plan must needs fall to the ground; that is positively

"You are right as the bank," said the captain admiringly. "What a stickler you are for the proprieties; if it was not for your beard, you would make a most excellent chaperon! Why, of course, I have thought of a home for Lotty until she shall be mine. My aunt Sheldon lives at Penaddon-that is only a few miles from Falmouth, for which we are bound, and quite as pretty; you will fill your portfolio there just as well."—

"Never mind me," interrupted Litton impatiently. "Good Heavens! as if anything

signified except this. But you are sure of her getting a kind reception, a welcome?"

"Yes, quite sure," answered the captain decisively. "Mrs. Sheldon will do anything for me. We shall be married from her house in the orthodox manner; it will be scarcely an elopement at all. See, here we are at Reading; and to think that my own darling is not going to leave me, neither now nor ever!"
"O dear! O dear! what will poor Lily say?"

murmured Lotty, nestling, however, close to her Reginald, and evidently quite resolved to stay there.

"Can we not telegraph to her?" inquired Litton eagerly.
"What! and tell her where we have gone!" cried the captain. "That would be madness

"No, no; I mean to relieve her mind; to let her know that her sister is safe and well. Otherwise, they will think she has come to

"Oh, thanks," Mr. Litton, answered Lotty gratefully; "I should never have thought of

that."

"Litton thinks of everything," said the captain laughing; "he ought to be a courier captain laughing; travelling on the continent.

"Litton thinks of everything," said the captain laughing; "he ought to be a courier to secure Continuation of Story. to a large family travelling on the continent.

less have invited and pressed a young lady to do. In his own mind, he blamed the captain very much, but he was not so bold as to say so; he felt that would be much more dangerous than to blame Lotty herself.

"Oh, I don't mind that," interrupted Lotty, in terrified tones; "but what am I to do about papa? I shall not be back in London till eight o'clock. He will be certain to find it all out—O dear, O dear!"

"Oh, I don't mind that," interrupted as I am a cripple, and as I daresay Lotty would find her pretty hand shake a bit under existing circumstances, you shall telegraph for us."

"Oh, I don't mind that," interrupted do as I am a cripple, and as I daresay Lotty would find her pretty hand shake a bit under existing circumstances, you shall telegraph for us."

"He will be quite certain, Lotty," said
Selwyn, with earnest gravity; "and this necessitates the step to which I have been tryone else might open it; and no one must tell poor papa, but Lily. She will be at the drawing class in George street, you know."
"Quite right. Then this is the telegram,"

said the captain, dictating. "From Lotty, Birmingham (that will put them far enough off the scent), to Miss Lilian Brown, Ladies" College, George street.—I have gone away with R. S. to his aunt's house. Your sister will be married to-morrow. (That will prevent the telegraph clerk from taking par-ticular notice, as he would do if he thought we were a runaway couple, and at the same time convince them that all interference will be too late.) Say all you can for her to her father. Her dear love to both of you. That you will forgive and net forget her, is her prayer. Farewell. (There is a deal more than the twenty words there, but sentiment is always expensive.)"

The message had been written while the train was slackening speed, and now they

had reached the platform.

Litton sprang out at once upon his mission, which he had but just time to accomplish ere the engine began to snort again.

"Some fellows wanted to get in here while you were away," observed the captain, on his return to the carriage, "so I have got the guard to stick an engaged board over the window. It combines utility and truth, you see, for it keeps us private, and exactly describes the mutual relation of Lotty and myself. Don't it Lotty ?"

The captain had been mentioned in despatches for his coolness.

CHAPTER II.

THE DAUNTLESS THREE.

"Where is Penaddon?" asked Litton, when the train was once more on its way. "I mean, how far is it from Falmouth?"

"Oh, well, a good step; when I said a few miles I rather underrated the distence. I should think it was twenty miles. It is on the south coast of Cornwall, near the Lizard." "Then there is no railway," observed the

other curiously. "No; but it is a goodish road, though hilly; and with four horses we shall spin along in a couple of hours."

"Is it a telegraph station?" "Yes, there's a telegraph; but we can't go by that," said the captain sharply.
"No; but you can send word to your aunt

that you are coming. That you must certainly do, Selwyn, for, with an hour's stay at Plymouth for dinner, we shall not arrive at our journey's end till very late; and it will, of course, be necessary to make preparations for your reception."

"Our chaperon is always right, Lotty; he shall telegraph at Swindon," said the captain comfortingly, for the news that they were to comfortingly, for the news that they were to be so long on the rway seemed to have come on the poor girl quite unexpectedly, and once more she had dissolved in tears.

41 hope there are not many people at Penaddon. It is not a gay place, is it, Reginald? asked Lotty tearfully.

"Gay! No, my darling," replied the cap-tain laughing. "My aunt Sheldon complains that she is buried alive there. There is not a soul to speak to within five miles."

"What will your aunt think of my coming down like this, Reggie ?"

"What will papa think? What will Lily think? What will your aunt think?" mimicked the captain. "Why, my dear "Why, my dear minicked the captain. "Why, my dear Lotty, you seem bent on collecting the thoughts of all the family. As for Aunt Sheldon, I promise you she will think no worse of you for this little escapade, but rather the better, for she made a runaway to the fit howelf and work or way long as match of it herself-and not so very long ago neither."

Here Litton looked up quickly; his friend's eyes were fixed on Lotty, but the captain's foot came in significant contact with his own,

and gave it a warning pressure. "There is something wrong about Selwyn's aunt," thought Walter. "Sheldon, Sheldon! surely I have heard that name before;" and presently he remembered where he had heard it. Mrs. Sheldon might have made a runaway match, but that was not the incident in her married life which occurred to his memory. He recollected her name in connection with some law case in which there had been circumstances, he did not remember what, but which had made a vague impression on him, not to her advantage. It was too late, how-ever, to make any objections now, even if one could ever have been made on such a ground.

From Swindon, "the chaperon," captain had christened Walter, and as Lotty herself now also termed him (for she was fast recovering from her apprehensions and anxieties), Litton telegraphed to Penaddon, and, when they reached Exeter, to Falmouth also, to order the carriage and posters to meet them at the station, that not a moment should be lost. At Plymouth, too, he preceded them to the inn and bespoke a private room for the little party, whereby he obtained a fleeting reputation of being Lotty's husband. The waiter's powers of observation were not so keen as those of the chambermaid, who remarked at once that Lotty wore no wedding-ring, and built up a little romance upon the circumstance.

The rest of the journey was melancholy indeed; it rained uneeasingly too, for the first hour, so that, though the moon was at her full, there was little to be seen from the windows of the carriage. At last there fell upon their ears that sound, which has no other like to it in nature, the roaring of an angry sea; and the captain let down the window and bade Lotty look out. Around them and before them, for they were on a high-set promontory, spread the moonlit sea, wild and white with wrath as far as the eye could reach, and beneath them a spectral

"That is Penaddon Castle, Lotty, in which, as you may observe for yourself, no county family resides at present. The light down yonder is from the Hall, which shows that hospitable preparation has been made for your reception. The scene looks a little ghastly by this light; but, to-morrow, you will own that you never saw a prettier place, or one, I hope, in which you were so happy.'