

## LORD KILGOBBIN.

BY CHARLES LEVER.

Author of "Harry Lorrequer," "Jack Hinton the Guardsman," "Charles O'Malley the Irish Dragoon," etc., etc.

## CHAPTER LIX. Continued.

"Very poor fun indeed!"

"And you were the boy preparing my chibouque, and I must say, devilish like."

"I did not see it, my lord."

"That's the best way: don't look at the caricatures; don't read the Saturday Review; never know there is anything wrong with you; nor, if you can, that anything disagrees with you."

"I should like the last delusion best of all, said he."

"Who would not?" cried the old lord.

"The way I used to eat potted prawns at Eton, and peach jam after them, and iced guavas, and never felt better! And now everything gives acidity."

"Just because our fathers and grandfathers would have those potted prawns you spoke of."

"No, no; you are all wrong. It's the new race—it's the new generation. They don't bear reverses. Whenever the world goes wrong with them, they talk as they feel, they lose appetite, and they fall down to a state like your—a—Walpole—like your own!"

"Well, my lord, I don't think I could be called captious for saying that the world has not gone over-well with me."

"Ah—hum. You mean—No matter. I suppose the luckiest hand is not all trumps. The thing is to score the trick; that's the point, Walpole—to score the trick!"

"Up to this I have not been so fortunate."

"Well, who knows what's coming? I have just asked the Foreign Office people to give you Guatemala: not a bad thing, as times go."

"Why, my lord, it's banishment and barbarism together. The pay is miserable. It is far away, and it is not Pall Mall, or the Rue Rivoli."

"No; not that. There is twelve hundred for salary, and something for a house, and something more for a secretary that you don't keep, and an office that you need not have. In fact, it makes more than two thousand; and for a single man, in a place where he cannot be extravagant, it will suffice."

"Yes, my lord; but I was presumptuous enough to imagine a condition in which I should not be a single man, and I speculated on the possibility that another might venture to share even poverty as my companion."

"A woman wouldn't go there—at least, she ought not. It's all bush life, or something like it. Why should a woman bear that? or a man ask her to do so?"

"You seem to forget, my lord, that affections may be engaged, and pledges interchanged."

"Get a bill of indemnity, therefore, to release you. Better than wait for yellow fever to do it."

"I confess that your lordship's words give me great discouragement, and if I could possibly believe that Lady Maude was of your mind—"

"Maud! Maud! Why, you never imagined that Lady Maude would leave comfort and civilization for this bush life, with its rancheros and rattlesnakes! I confess," said he, with a bitter laugh, "I did not think either of you was bent on being Paul or Virginia."

"Have I your lordship's permission to ask her own judgment in the matter: I mean with the assurance of its not being biased by you?"

"Freely, most freely do I give it. She is not the girl I believe her if she leaves you long in doubt. But I prejudice nothing, and I influence nothing."

"Am I to conclude, my lord, that I am sure of this appointment?"

"I almost believe I can say you are. I have asked for a reply by telegraph, and I shall probably have one to-morrow."

"You seem to have acted under the conviction that I should be glad to get this place."

"Yes; such was my conclusion. After that 'fiasco' in Ireland, you must go somewhere, for a time at least, out of the way. Now as a man cannot die for half a dozen years and come back to life when people have forgotten this unpopularity, the next best thing is South America. Bogota and the Argentine Re-

public have whitewashed many a reputation."

"I will remember your lordship's wise words."

"Do so," said my lord, curtly, for he felt offended at the flippant tone in which the other spoke. "I don't mean to say that I'd send the writer of that letter yonder to Yucatan or Costa Rica."

"Who may the gifted writer be, my lord?"

"Atlee, Joe Atlee; the fellow you sent over here."

"Indeed!" was all that Walpole could utter.

"Just take it to your room and read it over. You will be astonished at the thing. The fellow has got to know the bearings of a whole set of new questions; and how he understands the men he has got to deal with!"

"With your leave I will do so," said he, as he took the letter and left the room.

## CHAPTER LX

## "A DEFEAT."

Cecil Walpole's Italian experience had supplied him with an Italian proverb, which says: "Tutto il mal non vien per nuocere," or, in other words, that no evil comes unmixed with good; and there is a marvelous amount of wisdom in the adage.

That there is a deep philosophy, too, in showing how carefully we should sift misfortune to the dregs, and ascertain what of benefit we might rescue from the dross, is not to be denied; and the more we reflect on it, the more should we see that the germ of all real consolation is intimately bound up in this reservation.

No sooner, then, did Walpole, in novelist phrase, "realize the fact," that he was to go to Guatemala, than he set very practically to inquire what advantages, if any, could be squeezed out of this unpromising incident.

The creditors—and he had some—would not like it! The dreary process of dunning a man across half the globe, the hopelessness of appeals that took two months to come to hand, and the inefficacy of threats that were wafted over miles of ocean! And certainly he smiled as he thought of these, and rather maliciously bethought him of the truculent importunity that menaced him with some form of publicity in the more insolent appeal to some minister at home. "Our tailor will moderate his language, our jeweler will appreciate the merits of polite letter-writing," thought he. "A few parallels of latitude become a great school-master."

But there were greater advantages even than these. This banishment—for it was nothing less—could not by possibility be persisted in, and if Lady Maude should consent to accompany him, would be very short-lived.

"The women will take it up," said he, "and with that charming clanishness that distinguishes them, will lead the Foreign Secretary a life of misery till he gives us something better. 'Maude says the thermometer has never been lower than 132 degrees, and that there is no shade. The nights have no breeze, and are rather hotter than the days. She objects seriously to be waited on by people in feathers, and very few of them, and she remonstrates against alligators in the kitchen-garden, and wild-cats coming after the canaries in the drawing-room.'"

"I hear the catalogue of misfortunes, which begins with nothing to eat, plus the terror of being eaten. I recognize the lament over lost civilization and a wasted life, and I see Downing street besieged with ladies in deputations, declaring that they care nothing for parties or politics, but a great deal for the life of a dear young creature, who is to be sacrificed to appease some people belonging to the existing Ministry. I think I know how beautifully illogical they will be, but how necessarily useful; and now for Maude herself."

Of Lady Maude Bickerstaffe Walpole had seen next to nothing since his return; his own ill-health had confined him to his room, and her inquiries after him had been cold and formal; and though he wrote a tender little note and asked for books, slyly hinting what measures of bliss a five minutes' visit would confer on him, the books he begged for were sent, but not a line of answer accompanied them. On the whole, he did not dislike this little show of resentment. What he really dreaded was indifference. So long as a woman is piqued with you, something can always be done; it is only when she becomes careless and

unmindful of what you do or say, or look or think, that the game looks hopeless. Therefore, it was that he regarded this demonstration of anger as rather favorable than otherwise.

"Atlee has told her of the Greek! Atlee has stirred up her jealousy of the Titian girl. Atlee has drawn a long indictment against me, and the fellow has done me good service in giving me something to plead to. Let me have a charge to meet, and I have no misgivings. What really unmans me is the distrust that will not even utter an allegation, and the indifference that does not want disproof."

He learned that her ladyship was in the garden, and he hastened down to meet her. In his own small way Walpole was a clever tactician; and he counted much on the ardor with which he should open his case, and the amount of impetuosity that would give her very little time for reflection.

"I shall at once assume that her fate is irrevocably knitted to my own, and I shall act as though the tie was indissoluble. After all, if she puts me to the proof, I have her letters—cold and guarded enough, it is true. No fervor, no gush of any kind, but calm dissertations on a future that must come, and a certain dignified acceptance of her own part in it. Not the kind of letters that a Q. C. could read with much rapture before a crowded court, and ask the assembled grocers: 'What happiness has life to offer to the man robbed of those precious pledges of affection—how was he to face the world, stripped of every attribute that cherished hope and fed ambition?'"

He was walking slowly toward her when he first saw her, and he had some seconds to prepare himself ere they met.

"I came down after you, Maude," said he, in a voice ingeniously modulated between the tone of old intimacy and a slight suspicion of emotion. "I came down to tell you my news"—he waited, and then added—"my fate!"

Still she was silent, the changed word exciting no more interest than its predecessor.

"Feeling as I do," he went on, "and how we stand toward each other, I cannot but know that my destiny has nothing of good or evil in it, except as it contributes to your happiness." He stole a glance at her, but there was nothing in that cold, calm face that could guide him. With a bold effort, however, he went on: "My own fortune in life has but one test—is my existence to be shared with you or not? With your hand in mine, Maude,"—and he grasped the marble-cold fingers as he spoke—"poverty, exile, hardships, and the world's neglect have no terrors for me. With your love, every ambition of my heart is gratified. Without it—"

"Well, without it—what?" said she, with a faint smile.

"You would not torture me by such a doubt? Would you rack my soul by a misery I have not words to speak of?"

"I thought you were going to say what it might be, when I stopped you."

"Oh, drop this cold and bantering tone, dearest Maude. Remember the question is now of my very life itself. If you cannot be affectionate, at least be reasonable!"

"I shall try," said she, calmly.

Stung to the quick by a composure which he could not imitate, he was able, however, to repress every show of anger and with a manner cold and measured as her own he went on: "My lord advises that I should go back to diplomacy and has asked the ministry to give me Guatemala. It is nothing very splendid. It is far away in a remote part of the world: not overwell paid, but at least I shall have a claim for something better."

"I hope you may, I'm sure," said she, as he seemed to expect something like a remark.

"That is not enough, Maude, if the hope be not a wish—and a wish that includes self-interest."

"I am so dull, Cecil: tell me what you mean."

"Simply this, then: does your heart tell you that you could share this fortune, and brave these hardships? In one word, will you say what will make me regard this fate as the happiest of my existence? will you give me this dear hand as my own—my own?" and he pressed his lips upon it rapturously as he spoke.

She made no effort to release her hand; nor for a second or two did she say one

word. At last, in a very measured tone, she said: "I should like to have back my letters."

"Your letters? Do you mean, Maude, that—that you would break with me?"

"I mean certainly that I should not go to this horrid place—"

"Then I shall refuse it," broke he in, impetuously.

"Not that only, Cecil," said she, for the first time faltering; "but except being very good friends, I do not desire that that there should be more between us."

"No engagement?"

"No, no engagement. I do not believe there ever was an actual promise, at least on my part. Other people had no right to promise for either of us—and—and, in fact, the present is a good opportunity to end it."

"To end it?" echoed he, in intense bitterness—"to end it?"

"And I should like to have my letters," said she, calmly, while she took some freshly-plucked flowers from a basket on her arm, and appeared to seek for something at the bottom of the basket.

"I thought you would come down here, Cecil," said she, "when you had spoken to my uncle. Indeed, I was sure you would, and so I brought these with me." And she drew forth a somewhat thick bundle of notes and letters tied with a narrow ribbon. "These are yours," said she, handing them.

Far more piqued by her cold self-possession than really wounded in feeling, he took the packet without a word. At last, he said. This is your own wish—your own, unprompted by others?

She stared almost insolently at him for answer.

"I mean, Maude—oh, forgive me if I utter that dear name once more!—I mean there has been no influence used to make you treat me thus?"

"You have known me to very little purpose all these years, Cecil Walpole, to ask me such a question."

"I am not sure of that. I know too well what misrepresentation and calumny can do anywhere; and I have been involved in certain difficulties which, if not explained away, might be made accusations—grave accusations."

"I make none—I listen to none."

"I have become an object of complete indifference, then? You feel no interest in me either way? If I dared, Maude, I should like to ask the date of this change—when it began?"

"I don't know what you mean. There was not, so far as I am aware, anything between us, except a certain esteem and respect, of which convenience was to make something more. Now convenience has broken faith with us, but we are not the less very good friends—excellent friends if you like."

"Excellent friends! I could swear to the friendship!" said he, with a malicious energy.

"So at least I mean to be," said she, calmly.

"I hope it is not I shall fail in the compact. And now will my quality of friend entitle me to ask one question Maude?"

"I am not sure till I hear it."

"I might have hoped a better opinion of my discretion: at all events, I will risk my question. What I would ask is, how far Joseph Atlee is mixed up with your judgment of me? Will you tell me this?"—(To be continued.)

**DR FOWLER'S**  
EXT. OF  
**WILD**  
**STRAWBERRY**  
CURES  
\* **COLIC** \*  
**CHOLERA**  
**CHOLERA-MORBUS**  
**DIARRHOEA**  
**DYSENTERY**  
AND ALL  
**SUMMER COMPLAINTS**  
of  
**CHILDREN or ADULTS**  
Price 35cts  
BEWARE OF IMITATIONS