

got over in the morning. And I certainly do not approve of your being at the beck and call of every sick person in the village, whether you are fit to attend to them or no! You had a bad headache yourself when I left you this afternoon."

"Oh, my poor head! I had forgotten all about it. Yes; it was very painful at one time, but I suppose my excitement has driven the pain away. Philip, I have been listening to such a sad story. You know the child—the little boy that they said was at nurse with Mrs. Cray."

"I have heard you mention it. I really did not know if 'twas a boy or a girl, or if you knew yourself," he replies indifferently.

"No, no; of course not!" she says, coloring, "but you know what I mean. Well, what do you think—it's a secret though, mind"—lowering her voice—"he belongs to poor Myra, after all; isn't it shocking?"

"And what is the use of their telling you such tales as that?" replies Colonel Mordaunt, angrily; "I won't have them defiling your ears with things that are not fit for you to hear. If it is the case, why can't they keep the disgrace to themselves? You can do no good by knowing the truth."

"Oh, Philip! but you don't understand; it was the poor girl told me, and it was such a comfort to her—she has no one else to confide in. And besides, she is so unhappy, because Mrs. Cray, beats her poor little boy, and she is afraid he will be ill-treated when she is gone."

"And wants to extract a promise from you to go down there every morning and see that her precious offspring has slept and eaten well since the day before. No, thank you, Irene! I think we've had quite enough of this sort of thing for the present, and when the laundress's niece is dead, I hope that you will confine your charity more to home, and not carry it on *ad infinitum* to the third and fourth generation."

He makes one step downwards as though to leave her then, but she plucks him timidly by the sleeve and detains him.

"But, Philip—I promised her!"

"Promised what?"

"That I would befriend her child when she is gone; that I would take him away from Mrs. Cray (she was so miserable about him, poor girl, she said she couldn't die in peace), and—and (I do so hope you won't be vexed)—and bring him up under my own care."

"What!" cries Colonel Mordaunt roughly, startled out of all politeness.

"I promised her I would adopt him; surely, it is nothing so very much out of the way."

"Adopt a beggar's brat out of the village—a child not born in wedlock—a boy, of all things in the world! Irene, you must be out of your senses!"

"But it is done every day."

"It may be done occasionally by people who have an interest in Ragged Schools, or the Emigration Society, or the Shoe Black Brigade, or who have arrived at the meridian of life without any nearer ties of their own; but for a young lady, just married, and with her hands full of occupation, both for the present and the future, it will be absurd—unheard of—impossible!"

"But what occupation have I that need prevent my looking after a little child, Philip? If—if—"

"If what?"

"I don't know why I should be so silly as not to like to mention it," she goes on hurriedly, though with an effort; "but supposing I—I—had a child of my own; that would not interfere with my duties as mistress here, would it?"

"And would you like to have a child of your own, darling?" he answers sweetly, but irrelevantly, and relapsing into all his usual tenderness. Were Irene politic, she might win him over at this moment to grant her anything. A smile, an answering look, a pressure of the hand, would do it, and bring him to her feet a slave! But, in one sense of the word, she is not politic; her nature is too open. She cannot bring her heart to stoop to a deception, however plausible, for her own advantage. And so she answers her husband's question frankly.

"No! not at all, Philip. I've told you that a dozen times already! But I want to take this poor little boy away from Mrs. Cray, and bring him up respectfully in mind and body."

Colonel Mordaunt's momentary softness vanishes, and his "grumpiness" returns in full force.

"Then I object altogether. I'm not so fond of brats at any time as to care to have those of other people sprawling over my house—and a pauper's brat of all things. You must dismiss the idea at once."

"But I have promised, Philip."

"You promised more than you can perform."

"But I swore it. Oh, Philip! you will not make me go back from an oath made to the dying! I shall hate myself for ever if you do."

"You had no right to take such an oath without consulting me."

"Perhaps not; I acknowledge it; but it is done, and I cannot recede from my given word."

"I refuse to endorse it. I will have no bastard brought up at my expense."

The coarseness of the retort provokes her; she colors crimson, and recoils from him.

"How cruel! how pitiless of you to use that term! You have no charity! Some day you may need it for yourself!"

At that he turns upon her, crimson too, and panting.

"What makes you say so? What have you heard?"

"More than I ever thought to hear from your lips. Oh, Philip, I did not think you could be so unkind to me!" and she turns from him weeping, and goes up to her own room, leaving him conscience-stricken in the porch. It is their first quarrel; the first time angry words have ever passed between them, and he is afraid to follow her, lest he should meet with a rebuff, so he remains there, moody and miserable, and before half an hour has elapsed, could bite out his tongue for every word it uttered.

The idea of the adopted child is as unpalatable to him as ever; it appears a most hare-brained and absurd idea to him; but he cannot bear to think that he should have been cross with Irene, or that she should have been betrayed into using hasty words to him.

Oh, that first quarrel! how infinitely wretched it makes humanity, and what a shock it is to hear hot and angry words pouring from the lips that have never open yet for us except in blessing.

Better thus, though—better, hot and angry words, than cold and calm.

The direst death for love to die is when it is reasoned into silence by the voice of indifference and good sense.

Othello's passion was rough and deadly, but while it lasted it must have been very sweet pain. Was it not kinder to smother Desdemona whilst it was at white heat than to let her live to see the iron cool?

But Colonel Mordaunt is in no mood for reasoning; he is simply miserable; and his mood ends—as all such moods do end for true lovers—by his creeping up to Irene's side in the twilight, and humbly begging her forgiveness, which she grants him readily—crying a little over her own short-comings the while—and then they make it up, and kiss, as husband and wife should do, and come downstairs together, and are very cheerful for the remainder of the evening, and never once mention the obnoxious subject that disturbed their peace.

(To be continued.)

ILL THINK OF THEE, LOVE.

I'll think of thee, love, when the landscape is still,
And the soft mist is floating from valley and hill;
When the mild, rosy beam of the morning I see,
I'll think of thee, dearest, and only of thee.

I'll think of thee, love, when the first sound of day
Startles the bright-plumaged bird from its covert away—
For the world's busy voice has no music for me—
I'll think of thee, dearest, and only of thee.

I'll think of thee, love, when the dark shadows sleep
On the billows that roll o'er the emerald deep,
Like the swift speeding gale, every thought then will be—
I'll think of thee, dearest, and only of thee.

I'll think of thee, dearest, while thou art afar,
And I'll liken thy smile to the night's fairest star;
As the ocean shell breathes of its home in the sea,
So in absence my spirit will murmur of thee.

PATIENT GRISSEL.

Griselidis was married to one of the most illustrious and most celebrated descendants of the house of Saluce, who was named Qualitiero. Without wife or child, and showing no disposition to have either spouse or heir, he exercised himself in hunting, but this mode of living and thinking was objected to by his subjects, who supplicated him so often and so determinedly to give them an heir, that he resolved to cede to their prayers. Whereupon they promised him to choose a woman who, by birth and virtue, was worthy of him.

[Here we have the first intimation of the Eastern origin of the story—the choice of a wife by intermediaries.]

But Qualitiero answered them, "My friends you desire to force me to do a thing that I had resolved never to do, because I know how difficult it is to find a wife possessing all the qualities I require, and which alone can ensure decent behavior between husband and wife. This decent behavior is so rare, that it never, or only very rarely, can be found. How wretched must be the life of a man obliged to live with a person whose character has nothing in common with his! You believe you are able to judge of daughters through their fathers and mothers, and following this principle, you wish to choose a wife for me. Error—for what can you know of the secret habits of the father, or, above all, of the mother? Again, even if you were acquainted with those matters, do we not generally remark that daughters degenerate? But since, in fine, you will absolutely have it that I am to chain myself with the laws of marriage, I have consented; yet, so that I may find fault only with myself if I have cause to repent, I will it that I myself shall choose my wife, and that whoever she may be,

you shall honor her as your lady and mistress,—or I will make you repent having prayed me to marry when my tastes strayed from matrimony."

The good people replied that he might count upon them—provided that he would marry.

Now for some time the Marquis had been attracted by the behavior and beauty of a young girl who lived in the village below the castle. He fancied that she would be just suitable, and without thinking more, he decided to marry her.

He called the father before him, and told him his plan; and then summoned his council and his subject neighbors living near the castle.

"My friends," said he, "it has pleased you, and it pleases you still, that I determine to take a wife. I have decided to give you this contentment; but forget not the promise you have made me to honor, as your liege lady, the woman upon whom I fix, no matter whom. I have found a damsel near at hand who pleases me, and she is the wife I have chosen. In a few days I shall bring her home, so prepare to receive her honorably, that I may be as satisfied with you as you will be with me."

Here the assembly showed great joy, and all there said, with one voice, that they would honor the new Marchioness as their liege lady and mistress.

From that moment the lord and his subjects thought only of the preparations for the wedding, the Marquis inviting many of his friends and relations and some gentlemen of the neighborhood. He had made a number of rich robes, cut to fit a damsel whose height and size were those of the bride, and looked after the rings, girdle, and crown—in fact, after every requirement necessary to a young bride.

The day decided upon, the Marquis, at about nine in the morning, attended by his court, mounted his horse, saying, "Gentles, it is time to go find the bride."

Off they set, and soon arrived in the village where she resided. As they came near the house where she lived with her father, they saw her returning from the well, and running forward that she might catch a glimpse of the lord's bride.

When the Marquis saw her, he called her by name, Griselidis, and asked her where was her father.

"My lord," replied she, blushing, "he is within."

Thereupon the Marquis dismounted, entered the poor cottage, and finding the father, who was called Gianetto,—"I am come," said he, "to marry thy daughter Griselidis; but I will, in the first place, that she answers before thee certain questions I shall ask her."

Then he asked the damsel if, when she should be his wife, she would force herself to please him; if she would know how to keep cool, whatever was done or said; if she would always be obedient and docile.

A "Yes" was the answer to all these requests. The Marquis then took her by the hand, led her out, and, before everybody, clothed her in the superb garments he had brought with him, and finally placed a crown upon her spreading hair.

"Gentles," said he to the surprised spectators, "behold her whom I will to take for wife, if she wills that I shall be her husband." Then turning to her he added, "Griselidis, wilt thou have me for thy husband?"

"Yes, my lord, since it is your will," she replied.

Thereupon he married her, and led her in great pomp to his castle, where the wedding feast was as magnificent as though he had espoused a daughter of the King of France.

The young wife seemed to change her habits with her fortune. She was, as it has been said, beautiful and well-grown, but after her marriage she became so amiable and gracious that she appeared rather the daughter of some lord than of humble Gianetto. She amazed everyone who had known her as a peasant-girl. Moreover, she was so obedient to her husband, and took such care to anticipate his least wishes that he was the most contented and the happiest of mortals. She had so cleverly managed to conciliate the affections of her husband's subjects, that there was not one but loved her as much as he did, and but prayed heaven for her happiness and prosperity. All agreed that if appearances had been against the Marquis, the facts were in his favor; that he had acted like a wise and prudent man; and that he must have been wonderfully sagacious to discover so much merit under the rags of a peasant girl.

The rumors of Griselidis's good qualities spread in a very short time, not only over that land, but far beyond, and so powerful was her empire, that she effaced the disagreeable impressions that her husband's faults had created amongst his subjects.

In proper time she gave birth to a daughter, to the great joy of the Marquis, but owing to a madness such as one cannot conceive of, he took it into his head, by the harshest and cruellest means to try the patience of his wife. To this end, he began with harsh language, saying that her low birth had set all his subjects against him, and that the daughter she had brought into the world would not a little help to make him bad friends with his people—more especially as they wanted an heir to his lands.

Upon hearing these reproaches, without changing face or feature, Griselidis said to him, "Do with me all that you think your honor and your peace of mind command, and I shall not complain, knowing that I am worth much less than the meanest of your subjects; and that in no way have I merited the noble destiny to which you have raised me!"

This reply pleased the lord, who saw that the honors he and his subjects paid his wife had not made her proud.

Having thus spoken to her of the hatred he said his subjects felt towards the child, some time after he sent a servant whom he had prepared to his wife, to whom he said, with a desolate air, "My lady, if I would save my life, I must obey my lord's orders. I am compelled to take away your child."

So saying, he held his peace. Now upon hearing these words, and marking the man's wretched countenance, and above all remembering her lord's words, she felt that he had condemned their child to death. Nevertheless, though in her heart she was suffering the most cruel agony, she showed no sign, but took the child out of its cradle, kissed, blessed, and placed it in the servant's arms.

"Do," she said, "as the master has commanded thee. I but ask one pitying favor: do not cast my innocent to the wild beasts of the land, or to the wild birds of prey."

The servant, carrying the child, returned and told all to the Marquis, who was much pleased with the courage and constancy of his wife; and who thereupon sent his daughter to one of his relations at Bologna, directing that the child should be reared like a gentlewoman, but without knowing who she was.

[It is very clear, in this Eastern and impossible fiction, that the daughter is reared in ignorance of her name and station, that when grown up she may not prevent the last trial of patience to which the mother is submitted. Again, the nomadic, Eastern character of the tale is shown in the sending of the servant. In Syria, the schek, wandering from place to place, would naturally send a trusted messenger to the wife. But in the tale under consideration it is to be presumed that husband and wife are living under the same roof—not in different tents—and therefore the use of the messenger has no basis.]

Again Griselidis gave birth to a child—this time a boy. The joy of the Marquis was now at its height, but the trials to which he had subjected his wife did not sufficiently assure him that she was obedient, and therefore again he used harsh language, harsher even than the first, and in an angry voice he said to her at last, "Since thy son was born, it is beyond me to live at peace with my subjects. They are humiliated at the thought that the grandson of a peasant will one day be my successor and master. If I do not will that their anger shall go farther, and that they drive me from the heritage of my fathers, it must be with thy son as it was with thy daughter; and, in fine, that I divorce myself from thee, and take a wife worthy of the rank to which I have raised thee."

The Princess heard him out with admirable patience, and made only this reply:—

"My lord, be at peace; do as you shall think fit; think not of me. Nothing in this world is so dear to me as that which pleases thee."

Soon after, the Marquis sent away his son to Bologna, to be reared with his sister, and let it be supposed that he killed the boy. Meanwhile Griselidis, though very tender-hearted, showed as much patience in this trial as in the former. The Prince was utterly amazed, for he had persuaded himself that no woman in the world could bear patiently so great a trial, and he would have believed that her behavior was the result of indifference had he not known how much she loved children.

[It may be remarked here how thoroughly the repetition of the cruelty, which increased in force, in taking away the second child is typical of Eastern literature; as also is the idea of making the greater trial the loss of a boy, the loss of the girl being a minor misery—exactly as, to this day, in Hebrew families, only the birth of a boy has rejoicing as a result.]

Meanwhile, the Marquis's subjects, who had no knowledge that a trick was being played, supposed the children dead, and came to abhor the Marquis as thoroughly as they pitied his wife. As for this unfortunate, she consumed her grief without complaint, and though she often heard the woman about her speak openly against the Prince, she never uttered a reproach.

Yet was not this strange Prince content. He felt it necessary to put his wife's patience to a final proof. He declared openly to many of his relations that he could no longer endure Griselidis; that he felt he had made a young man's mistake when he married her; and that he intended to put her away, and marry with another. In vain a few honest men protested against the injustice of his proceeding. All the reply he made, when he thought fit to make any, went to the effect that he had made up his mind to be divorced.

The Princess, informed of the misfortune which threatened her, foreseeing that she should be obliged to return to her father's house and the work of her early days, and that her place would be taken by another near him who had all her love, was in her heart weary to death, but she was prepared to accept this new misfortune with the same outward calmness she had shown on the previous occasions.

A little while after, the Prince caused a forged papal dispensation to be brought him, as though from the Pope, and he gave his subjects to understand that by this bull he was enabled to put away Griselidis and marry another. Sending for the unhappy woman he thus tormented, and in the presence of many persons, he said, "Woman, by permission of the Holy Father, the Pope, I may take another wife, and let thee go by. And because my ancestors have been gentlemen and lords on the land where