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THE GOLDEN LION OF GRANPERE.

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BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XV.

DURING the remainder of the day on which George had left Granpere, the hours did not fly very pleasantly at the Lion d'Or. Michel Voss had gone to his niece immediately upon his return from his walk, intending to obtain a renewed pledge from her that she would be true to her engagement. But he had been so full of passion, so beside himself with excitement, so disturbed by all that he had heard, that he had hardly waited with Marie long enough to obtain such a pledge, or to learn from her that she refused to give it. He had only been able to tell her that if she hesitated about marrying Adrian she should never look upon his face again; and then without staying for a reply he had left her. He had been in such a tremor of passion that he had been unable to demand an answer. After that, when George was gone, he kept away from her during the remainder of the morning. Once or twice he said a few words to his wife, and she counselled him to take no further outward notice of anything that George had said to him.

"It will all come right if you will only be a little calm with her," Madame Voss had said.

He had tossed his head and declared that he was calm;—the calmest man in all Lorraine. Then he had come to his wife again, and she had again given him some good practical advice.

"Don't put it into her head that there is to be a doubt," said Madame Voss.

"I haven't put it into her head," he answered angrily. "No, my dear, no; but do not allow her to suppose that anybody else can put it there either. Let the matter go on. She will see the things bought for her wedding, and when she remembers that she has allowed them to come into the house without remonstrating, she will be quite unable to object. Don't give her an opportunity of objecting."

Michel Voss again shook his head, as though his wife were an unreasonable woman, and swore that it was not he who had given Marie such opportunity. But he made up his mind to do as his wife recommended.

"Speak softly to her, my dear," said Madame Voss.

"Don't I always speak softly?" said he, turning sharply round upon his spouse.

He made his attempt to speak softly when he met Marie about the house just before supper. He put his hand upon her shoulder, and smiled, and murmured some word of love. He was by no means crafty in what he did. Craft indeed was not the strong point of his character. She took his rough hand and kissed it, and looked up lovingly, beseechingly into his face. She knew that he was asking her to consent to the sacrifice, and he knew that she was imploring him to spare her. This was not what Madame Voss had meant by speaking softly. Could she have been allowed to dilate upon her own convictions, or had she been able adequately to express her own ideas, she should have begged that there might be no sentiment, no romance, no kissing of hands, no looking into each other's faces,—no half-murmured tones of love. Madame Voss believed strongly that the every-day work of the world was done better without any of these glancings and glimmerings of moonshine. But then her husband was, by nature, of a fervid temperament, given to the influence of unexpressed poetic emotions;—and thus subject, in spite of the strength of his will, to much weakness of purpose. Madame Voss perhaps condemned her husband in this matter the more because his romantic disposition never showed itself in his intercourse with her. He would kiss Marie's hand, and press Marie's wrist, and hold dialogues by the eye with Marie. But with his wife his speech was,—not exactly yes, yea, and nay, nay,—but yes, yes, and no, no. It was not unnatural therefore that she should specially dislike this weakness of his which came from his emotional temperament.

"I would just let things go, as though there was nothing special at all," she said again to him, before supper, in a whisper.

"And so I do. What would you have me say?"

"Don't mind petting her, but just be as you would be any other day."

"I am as I would be any other day," he replied.

However he knew that his wife was right, and was in a certain way aware that if he could only change himself and be another sort of man, he might manage the matter better. He could be fiercely angry, or caressingly affectionate. But he was unable to adopt that safe and golden mean, which his wife recommended. He could not keep himself from interchanging a piteous glance or two with Marie at supper, and put a great deal too much unction into his caress, to please Madame Voss, when Marie came to kiss him before she went to bed.

In the meantime Marie was quite aware that it was incumbent on her to determine what she would do. It may be as well to declare at once that she had determined—had determined fully, before her uncle and George had started for their walk up to the wood-cutting. When she was giving them their breakfast that morning her mind was fully made up. She had had the night to lie awake upon it, to think it over, and to realise all that George had told her. It had come to her as quite a new thing that the man whom she worshipped, worshipped her too. While she believed that nobody else loved her;—when she could tell herself that her fate was nothing to anybody;—as long as it had seemed to her that the world for her must be cold, and hard, and material; so long could she reconcile to herself, after some painful dubious fashion, the idea of being the wife, either of Adrian Urmand, or of any other man. Some kind of servitude was needful, and if her uncle was decided that she must be banished from his house, the kind of servitude which was proposed to her at Basle would do as well as another. But when she had learned the truth,—a truth so unexpected,—then such servitude became impossible to her. On that morning, when she came down to give the men their breakfast, she had quite determined that let the consequences be what they might she would never become the wife of Adrian Urmand. Madame Voss had told her husband that when Marie saw the things purchased for her wedding coming into the house, the very feeling that the goods had been bought would bind her to her

engagement. Marie had thought of that also, and was aware that she must lose no time in making her purpose known, so that articles which would be unnecessary might not be purchased. On that very morning, while the men had been up in the mountain, she had sat with her aunt hemming sheets,—intended as an addition to the already overflowing stock possessed by M. Urmand. It was with difficulty that she had brought herself to do that,—telling herself, however, that as the linen was there, it must be hemmed, when there had come a question of marking the sheets, she had evaded the task,—not without raising suspicion in the bosom of Madame Voss.

But it was, as she knew, absolutely necessary that her uncle should be informed of her purpose. When he had come to her after the walk, and demanded of her whether she still intended to marry Adrian Urmand, she had answered him falsely. "I suppose so," she had said. The question—such a question as it was—had been put to her too abruptly to admit of a true answer on the spur of the moment. But the falsehood almost stuck in her throat and was a misery to her till she could set it right by a clear declaration of the truth. She had yet to determine what she would do;—how she would tell this truth; in what way she would ensure to herself the power of carrying out her purpose. Her mind, the reader must remember, was somewhat dark in the matter. She was betrothed to the man, and she had always heard that a betrothal was half a marriage. And yet she knew of instances in which marriages had been broken off after betrothal quite as ceremonious as her own,—had been broken off without scandal or special cause from the Church. Her aunt, indeed, and M. le Curé had, ever since the plighting of her troth to M. Urmand, spoken of the matter in her presence, as though the wedding were a thing already nearly done;—not suggesting by the tenor of their speech that any one could wish in any case to make a change, but pointing out incidentally that any change was now out of the question. But Marie had been sharp enough to understand perfectly the gist of her aunt's manoeuvres and of the priest's incidental information. The thing could be done, she knew; and she feared no one in the doing of it,—except her uncle. But she did fear that if she simply told him that it must be done, he would have such a power over her that she would not succeed. In what way could she do it first, and then tell him afterwards?

At last she determined that she would write a letter to M. Urmand, and shew a copy of the letter to her uncle when the post should have taken it so far out of Granpere on its way to Basle, as to make it impossible that her uncle should recall it. Much of the day after George's departure, and much of the night, were spent in the preparation of this letter. Marie Bromar was not so well practised in the writing of letters as will be the majority of the young ladies who may, perhaps, read her history. It was a difficult thing for her to begin the letter, and a difficult thing for her to bring it to its end. But the letter was written and sent. The post left Granpere at about eight in the morning, taking all letters by way of Remiremont; and on the day following George's departure, the post took Marie Bromar's letter to M. Urmand.

When it was gone, her state of mind was very painful. Then it was necessary that she should shew the copy to her uncle. She had posted the letter between six and seven with her own hands, and had then come trembling back to the inn, fearful that her uncle should discover what she had done before her letter should be beyond his reach. When she saw the mail conveyance go by on its route to Remiremont, then she knew that she must begin to prepare for her uncle's wrath. She thought that she had heard that the letters were detained some at Remiremont before they went on to Epinal in one direction and to Mulhouse to the other. She looked at the railway time-table which was hung up in one of the passages of the inn, and saw the hour of the departure of the diligence from Remiremont to catch the train at Mulhouse for Basle. When that hour was passed, the conveyance of her letter was insured, and then she must show the copy to her uncle. He came into the house about twelve and eat his dinner with his wife in the little chamber. Marie, who was in and out of the room during the time, would not sit down with them. When pressed to do so by her uncle, she declared that she had eaten lately and was not hungry. It was seldom that she would sit down to dinner, and this therefore gave rise to no special remark. As soon as his meal was over, Michel Voss got up to go about his business, as was usual with him. Then Marie followed him into the passage.

"Uncle Michel," she said, "I want to speak to you for a moment; will you come with me?"

"What is it about, Marie?"

"If you will come, I will show you."

"Show me! What will you show me?"

"It's a letter, Uncle Michel. Come up-stairs and you shall see it."

Then he followed her up-stairs, and in the long public room, which was at that hour deserted, she took out of her pocket the copy of the letter to Adrian Urmand, and put it into her uncle's hands.

"It is a letter, Uncle Michel, which I have written to M. Urmand. It went this morning, and you must see it."

"A letter to Urmand," he said, as he took the paper suspiciously into his hands.

"Yes, Uncle Michel. I was obliged to let him know it. I am afraid you will be angry with me, and—turn me away; but I cannot help it."

The letter was as follows,—

"The Hotel Lion d'Or, Granpere,
October, 1, 186-.

"M. URMAND,—

"I take up my pen in great sorrow and remorse to write you a letter, and to prevent you from coming over here for me, as you intended, on this day fortnight. I have promised to be your wife, but it cannot be. I know that I have behaved very badly, but it would be worse if I were to go on and deceive you. Before I knew you I had come to be fond of another man; and I find now, though I have struggled hard to do what my uncle wishes, that I could not promise to love you and be your wife. I have not told Uncle Michel yet, but I shall as soon as this letter is gone.

"I am very, very sorry for the trouble I have given you. I did not mean to be bad. I hope that you will forget me, and try to forgive me. No one knows better than I do how bad I have been.

"Your most humble servant,

"With the greatest respect,

MARIE BROMAR."

The letter had taken her long to write, and it took her uncle long to read, before he came to the end of it. He did not get through a line without sundry interruptions, which all arose from his determination to contradict at once every assertion which she made. "You cannot prevent his coming," he said, "and it shall not be prevented." "Of course, you have promised to be his wife, and it must be." "Nonsense about deceiving him. He is not deceived at all." "Trash—you are not fond of another man. It is all nonsense." "You must do what your uncle wishes. You must, now! you must! Of course, you will love him. Why can't you let all that come as it does with others?" "Letter gone—yes, indeed, and now I must go after it." "Trouble!—yes!—Why could you not tell me before you sent it? Have I not always been good to you?" "You have not been bad; not before. You have been very good. It is this that is bad." "Forget you, indeed. Of course he won't. How should he? Are you not betrothed to him? He'll forgive you fast enough, when you say that you did not know what you were about when you were writing it."

Thus her uncle went on; and as the outburst of his wrath was, as it were, chopped into little bits by having to continue the reading of the letter, the storm did not fall upon Marie's head so violently as she had expected.

(To be continued.)

DOLLY VARDEN.

Every now and then a whim seizes the public and takes possession of people's senses, though why or wherefore it would be hard to say; but when once it has got a fair hold, it has to be humoured until it is worn out or supplanted by some other novelty. At the present moment the name which predominates everywhere, which is advertised in the papers, posted on walls in bills in large block type, stuck up in the windows of dry goods stores, and heard in everybody's mouth, is that of Dolly Varden, the sprightly, coquettish heroine of Dickens' historical novel, "Barnaby Rudge." But the novel was written thirty years ago, and there seems to be no apparent reason why the London locksmith's pretty daughter should all of a sudden start out into popularity greater than she enjoyed when she was first introduced to the world. She was then made the subject of many a picture, and the celebrated artist, Maclise, at the suggestion and under the guidance of his friend, Dickens, painted what may be called a portrait of her, if there can be such a thing as the portrait of an imaginary character. It was, however, a realization on canvas of the conception of the author, and it has given to her the bodily form and the costume by which she will henceforth be identified. Just as we form but one conception now of Uncle Toby and the Widow Wadman, or of Sir Roger de Coverley and the Spectator, or of Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller, in consequence of our familiarity with the celebrated pictures and illustrations in which they are represented, so will our notion of Dolly Varden be limited to that of the artist, combined with the description which Dickens has given of her. In this she appears in a "cherry-coloured" hood and cloak and a hat trimmed with "cherry-coloured" ribbons, &c. But, graceful and attractive as she is, there is nothing in common between her and the young ladies of the present day, who have their own peculiar grace and attractiveness. She lived and flourished while our War of Independence was going on, and in which her lover lost an arm. To find any one who would resemble her, we should have to go back to our great-grandmothers' time; and herein is a partial mystery of the Dolly Varden furor. Some one—in all probability an enterprising dressmaker—started the notion that one of the most striking novelties in the way of costumes for ladies would be a revival of the antiquated flowered chintz overskirts, worn by English ladies in the middle of the last century, and it has been as successful a bit as any that has been made for some time. Accordingly the low bodied dress, with skirts well looped up, sleeves tight to the elbow, and then suddenly assuming the dimensions of sacks, leaving the portion of the arm below the elbow bare, is to be the costume of the season, at home it is to be hoped, for it would scarcely do for walking or riding in, without some modification. And patterns of every hue and every variety of sprig and flower are displayed in the store windows, to the no little anxiety of *paterfamilias*, who begins to wonder what sort of appearance his women-folk are going to assume when they step forth out of the hands of the modiste, with their straw hats looped up on one side, à la Dolly, and their flowered skirts looped up on both sides, displaying the scarlet or brown under-garment, in which our great-grandmothers delighted, and which they wore short so as to display the open clocks of their red stockings, and the shining silver buckles of their high-heeled shoes. And along with Dolly Varden hats and dresses come Dolly Varden jewellery and knick-knacks. It was an ingenious idea to revive all this in the name of Dickens' popular heroine, but it might as well have been done in the name of Clarissa Harlowe, or Sophia Western, or Evaline, or Olivia Primrose, or any other heroine of the period, for they all dressed in the same costumes as Dolly Vardens did. So far, indeed, as looped skirts are concerned, they have been in vogue, more or less, for a century and-a-half, and at this very time are fashionable in walking dresses. The Dolly Varden overskirt is not so much a novelty in itself; the attraction of it is to be found, one may suppose, on the flowered pattern of the material of which it is made.

Our fashionable belles have scarcely recovered from the "Grecian bend," and the luxuriance of their present pompadour over-dresses makes the transition to the tight bodice, low bosoms, and bare arms of Dolly Varden rather sudden. Very young ladies will doubtless expect to double their attractions—if such a thing be possible—in their Dolly Varden costume. And ladies of more mature age who retain their youthful appearance, as many do, may also appear to advantage in it—at home.—*Philadelphia Ledger*.

An English clergyman, a high churchman, was preparing a number of young women last February for confirmation. Among them was one who tells this story: "You will doubtless know, my good girls," said he, addressing them with affectionate earnestness, "what next Wednesday is?" "Oh yes sir," they all exclaimed, "it is Valentine's day." They were right enough, but it was also Ash Wednesday, which happened to fall on the 14th this year, and the coincidence was fatal to its pretensions.