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**"Flatterers"**  
 —OR—  
**The Shadow of  
 the Future.**

CHAPTER XXV.  
**HOW MISS VILLIERS PROSPERS  
 IN PASTURES NEW.**

Leonora sent a scared look at her mother from under her long eyelashes. Oh, that that second marriage had been to some indistinguishable Smith or Jones! But Mrs. Alwyn met the emergency grandly. A recent lesson had taught her that up to a certain point honesty is the best policy. Moreover, this one man, detached from the narrow prejudices of English society, was different altogether from that little county clique about St. Clair's. Therefore, she girded her nerves, and with quite a touching mixture of suffering dignity and perfect candor, answered: "Ah! that unusual surname gives me no respite—no chance of casting our troubles into oblivion. It was my husband whose property was lost in the disaster you allude to, Mr. Morecombe-Wood. But as my own fortune and my dear child's was secured beyond reach of harm, we would rather remember that misery than dwell upon the other sad trial. The locality of the dreadful business I know nothing of. I feel I may beg you not to use your knowledge of it to keep us, or put others, in mind of a peculiarly trying event."  
 "My dear madam, I beg ten thousand pardons for having spoken of it at all! Henceforth the subject becomes a blank to me. I shall long ago have forgotten it but for the impression made on me by its being so much talked of in our set—at the Highcombes. But you say you are not acquainted with the families in those parts?"  
 "Not at all."  
 "Ah! then, how the Highcombes escaped being entangled in it wouldn't interest you, so I won't talk of it. They

are the chief people in that unlucky neighborhood. Splendid place they have, too—though they are not as old in the county as the Morecombes. Annabella Morecombe, 1780 or '90, married a Wood of Beachdale. That's how the double name took root."

This pleasant gossip, never again encroaching on the forbidden ground, was willingly prolonged—often reverted to in the agreeable gentleman's now daily conversation with the ladies—and details, highly satisfactory to all, dropped out, from time to time, of his antecedents. In Mrs. Alwyn's accompanying chronicles the noble family of Comyngham—which Mr. Morecombe knew by hearsay only—figured conspicuously, perhaps with a touch of too perceptibleunction on their rank; but Mr. Morecombe-Wood gallantly lent himself to the little weakness, though he in nowise shared it. This was apparent from his passing mention of a foreign title bestowed on himself for what he lightly termed a trifling good turn he had served a certain German count diplomatically—a title he, an "unattached man," didn't care a fig for, though his friend, Count Kuster, was always urging him to use it. And, by the way, "how much he wished he could have introduced his countrywomen to that friend of his, but family affairs had summoned him to Berlin. The count had not much leisure, but what he had he enjoyed passing in English companionship. They were very intimate." It appeared so.

One afternoon found Mr. Morecombe-Wood studying not only a letter just received, but the addresses of sundry others inclosed in the wire-letted rack at the entrance of the parlor. He was pulling his mustache and using unparliamentary expressions below his breath. At sound of a voluble of travelers approaching the steps he vanished up-stairs, and at the dinner-table Leonora's maidenly glance perceived his usual place occupied by a stout German paterfamilias, with three blonde daughters and a weak-looking youth, his son, around him. In the salon Madame Vische gave Mrs. Alwyn a little note, with the remark, "Mistaire Morecombe had been vaire sorry for to go, but he could not wait for so ladies, he was forced 'or to hasten." And the few lines explained a sudden request of Count Kuster's (by reason of indisposition) to join him immediately, to which were added profound regrets at leaving without bidding farewell to Miss Villiers and Mrs. Alwyn, and sincere hopes that he might be able to meet them at Inter-lachen.

It was there the ladies had spoken of staying some fortnight hence, and never went fourteen days more slowly than those which crept by before they moved thither. Let one's aim be what it will, fixing intent desire upon it shuts out all surroundings else! So Giesebach was but a damp nuisance, Merington a dull little hole, the very Jungfrau no better than a sugar-loaf in a grocer's window, or the imagin-

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tions whose foremost ground was taken up with a single figure, the well-born, well-dressed, ingratiating Mr. Morecombe-Wood!

But at Interlachen he re-appeared, and the slighted Jungfrau in the light of his advent, and a young romantic moon, became a thing of beauty and a joy for the time being.

More pronouncedly attentive than ever, his experience as a traveler became invaluable to them. He negotiated Mrs. Alwyn's English bills, counseled their route when he should be compelled to run off to Vienna, where he had invested capital after which it behooved him to look, shared their excursions, and so far progressed in intimacy that when consulted as to their winter abode he frankly arbitrated in favor of his own wishes. To imprison Miss Villiers in the Engadine would be barbarous. He would have advocated Berlin, where Count Kuster would have introduced them to princesses, and "rons" innumerable, but then he should be jealous! It was at Paris that he himself must chiefly reside. There were what in England we call "boards," "companies" he was upon. With the new year he was bound to attend these. But business, for which having had no need, he (with a shrug) had no taste, would take a different aspect if it brought him near Miss Villiers—and Mrs. Alwyn. Could they be persuaded to try Paris?

They could and they did.

By mid-October they were installed in a charming apartment, within a stone's-throw of the Arc de Triomphe. A few weeks later Mr. Morecombe-Wood took up bachelor residence in a quarter not far off. A call or two established him as cicerone to his charming compatriots. Prudent inquiry on Mrs. Alwyn's part, through her brother in England, elicited the fact that this unexceptionable friend's family held foremost place on the southern county roll. His ever-increasing and ever-acceptable devotion to Leonora knew thenceforth neither check nor hindrance. The sun of the old year bade fair to set in such dazzling effulgence that Mrs. Alwyn could afford to forget awhile the humbler fortunes of her younger child.

But above this time a letter reached her from Major Villiers, for which she was far from grateful. For the old officer urged that Sydney should be restored to her mother's side once more.

"The plan," so he wrote, "you imposed on Miss Alwyn, and named to me, of keeping her past action and present life sub rosa, is sure to fall through sooner or later. Pardon me, my dear sister-in-law, for saying unasked what I think, but I do consider that release from this social and domestic interdiction would come more gracefully from yourself than through chalice or other folk's inquisitiveness. I saw Mr. Drayton not long ago. It was with difficulty I evaded his close questioning about Sydney.

(To be continued)

**Side Talks  
 by Ruth Cameron**

**DOES HE THINK HE DECEIVES ANYONE.**

Did you ever meet the man who is very punctilious about extending all the small courtesies to other women and very careless about extending them to his own wife?  
 When the other woman comes in to the room he rises with alacrity and waits until she is seated. When he is a guest anywhere he is very careful to seat his hostess. Also he never fails to make his hostess small compliments on her home, her gown, her cooking.

Plated Not Sterling.  
 But when his own wife comes into the room he is just as likely as not to go on talking. He evidently judges her quite capable of finding her own seat at the table and getting in to it, and though one often hears him make little humorous cracks at her expense, one never hears him pay her any compliment. Whenever I meet a man like this I wonder if he thinks he is getting by with it. Does he never realize how plainly he thus shows his courtesy to be plated and not the real thing?

Of course I know that most of us are a little more careful about the small forms when we are out in company than when we are in the more relaxed atmosphere of the home circle, but the difference I mean goes deeper than that.

The man who is truly considerate and courteous to his wife will never make such a marked distinction between his treatment of her and his treatment of other women.

She Knows the Basis of Her Attractions.  
 I suppose the man who makes such a distinction thinks the woman who is favored by it is impressed in his favor. Sometimes she may be but nine times out of ten, I wager she is neither deceived or impressed. She knows that the reason she is receiving that attention is not that she is especially attractive or pleasing to him but simply because she isn't his wife. She realizes that if she had happened to marry him ("there but for the grace of God goes John Wesley") she would have received that same sort of treatment as his wife does.

He Had Better Love Her Some Other Way.  
 The strangest part about all this is that the men who commit this solecism often do love their wives, in their way.

But it is a mighty poor way, I think, a way that leaves all the pleasant things to be taken for granted. The sooner he finds a new way the better both for her and him.

**Fashion Plates.**

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In this style, Shirt Waist 3694 and Skirt 3700 are combined. The Skirt, a new seven gore model, is cut in 7 Sizes: 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34 and 36 inches waist measure. The Waist in 7 Sizes: 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 44 and 46 inches bust measure. The Waist will require 3 yards of 27 inch material. The Skirt requires 2 1/2 yards of 40 inch material if without nap, and 3 1/4 yards of 44 inch material with nap. The width of the skirt at the foot is 36 yards.

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