

Choice Literature.

MISS GILBERT'S CAREER.

CHAPTER X.—Continued.

At Bloody Brook, the passengers took a late supper, connected with which the only thing that Dr. Gilbert remembered was a picture in the dining-room of the celebrated massacre from which the village had derived its name. Some very stiff-looking people, whom he had read of as "The Flower of Essex," were represented as picking grapes upon very high trees, and receiving deadly arrows from very low Indians who seemed to have grown among the bushes. He entered Northampton and a dream about the same time, and left both without any distinct notions of their respective characteristics. Half-sleeping, half-waking, and uniformly uneasy and uncomfortable, he passed the night, and the towns through which his course lay, and came in sight of the spires of Hartford just as a brilliant sun was rising into a cloudless sky.

Here the stream of life was swelling again, and again Dr. Gilbert's proportions, as a man of mark and importance, consciously shrank. The coach rolled in upon the paved streets, and even at that early hour found many astir. Hackney-coaches were actively pushing about, collecting passengers for the New York boat. Loads of stores and light freight were pressing to the river bank, where lay the splendid steamer *Bunker Hill*. The coach which bore him and his fellow passengers was only one of a dozen that came in and deposited their passengers and luggage. Everybody was in a hurry. A score of stevedores and deck hands were trundling boxes and barrels on board. Black porters were dodging here and there, collecting baggage, of which they proposed to take the charge for a consideration. The bell of the *Bunker Hill* introduced its tongue among the babel voices of the hour. The hurry every moment increased. Men came running down the street with umbrellas and satchels under their arms, and rushed on board as if life depended on their crossing the plank ten minutes before the steamer swung off.

Of much of this active life the doctor was a quiet observer from the upper deck of the *Bunker Hill*. The great man of Crampton had at this time come to be exceedingly insignificant. He saw elderly, portly, dignified gentlemen come on board, attended by ladies of stylish appointments and a demonstrative air of high breeding, all smacking of a loftier grade of life than he had been accustomed to. He could not help acknowledging to himself that Dr. Theophilus Gilbert, of Crampton, accompanied by his accomplished daughter, the author of "Tristram Trevanion," would make, anywhere, a less impressive figure. Then the question again occurred to him—"What does all this world of life, full of high enterprises, grand pursuits, headlong business, and unrelenting competitions, care for the offspring of a country girl's brain? What possible relation has the book which stirred such enthusiasm in the Crampton pastor and his wife to the life that I see before me?" The doctor grew timid. The doctor was actually frightened. He wished that Fanny Gilbert's "career" had taken another direction, and that Fanny Gilbert's father had been less a fool.

At length the bell of the *Bunker Hill* began to toll, and then a dingy mulatto, in dingy satinet, went back and forth in the boat, warning with a professional twang all those to "go ashore that's going," and ringing a hand-bell to attract attention to his message. The wheels began to move, the last straggler crossed the plank, the lines were cast off, and the boat wheeled into the stream, and was soon under full headway.

Dr. Gilbert's quick, observant eyes had scanned every passenger he met. He was alone, bound to a great city, which, though a man of experience, he had never seen. He longed for companionship. Among those who had most impressed him was a tall gentleman of middle age, in spectacles. He seemed to be alone, and had the appearance of being a literary man, just the kind of man whose acquaintance he would like to make. This solitary gentleman soon came to monopolize all the doctor's attention. He had an air of profound reflection; and when he made remark upon the scenery to any person near whom he might be standing, it was always accompanied by some new and striking attitude, and by a gesture of the hands at once so graceful and natural that the doctor concluded that he must be some great public speaker.

The gentleman seemed to be aware that he had attracted the doctor's eye, and came up and took a position near him, with his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, his left foot finely thrown out in advance, and his eye evidently drinking in the beauties of the scene.

"This seems to be a fine country," suggested the doctor. "Rich, sir, rich in all the elements of fertility, and, as a poetic friend of mine would say, redolent of sweets," responded the gentleman.

The doctor was struck by the language, and hardly knew how to continue the conversation. The tones of the gentleman's voice were deep and rich, and the gentleman himself seemed to rejoice in them. He did not change his position; so the doctor said: "We have quite a large company on board to-day."

"Yes, sir, yes," responded the stranger.

"Many very interesting-looking people."

"Yes, to me the human face divine is the most interesting vision of nature. I turn from fields to faces, as I turn from earth to heaven."

The doctor was almost stunned. At length he ventured the suggestion that the boat seemed to be a very fine one, and a great improvement upon the stage-coach.

"Yes, sir, yes," responded the stranger with magnificent emphasis; "in emblem of human life, bearing us down to the bosom of the mighty ocean."

Having delivered himself, the stranger turned and moved grandly away, but Dr. Gilbert had no intention of parting with him thus. So he resolved that he would not lose sight of him, and followed him at a distance. He saw him engaged with another passenger, and went up behind him.

The fresh interlocutor was overheard to remark upon the filthy condition of a landing they were passing.

"Rich, sir, rich," responded the magnificent stranger, "in all the elements of fertility, and, as a poetic friend of mine would say, redolent of sweets."

"You are hard on 'em," said the astonished fellow, with a peculiar smile.

"I have towns," said his highness. "I turn from towns to faces as I turn from earth to heaven."

"Well! you'll find faces enough on the boat here I should think," said the fellow.

"Ay, the boat! the boat! It emblem of human life, bearing us down to the bosom of the mighty ocean."

Having redelivered himself of these splendid sentences, the stranger turned gracefully away, leaving his companion puzzled and dumb. The latter caught the eye of Dr. Gilbert, and came up to him with the inquiry, "Know that feller?"

The doctor replied that he did not, but would like to find him out.

"He is rather numerous, ain't he?" responded the man.

Dr. Gilbert, preferring magniloquence to slang, turned away still unsatisfied, and determined to see more of the man who had interested him so much. Keeping at a decent distance from him, he heard him for half-an-hour ringing his changes on the beauty of the human face divine, the richness of nature in all the elements of fertility, and the steamer *Bunker Hill* as a fit emblem of human life, bearing him and the rest of the company down to the bosom of the mighty ocean. Then the bell of the steamer rang, and the boat ran in and threw out her lines at the Middletown landing. A number of passengers came on, and a number departed. Among the latter, much to the doctor's surprise, was the stranger with the spectacles, carrying in one hand a diminutive carpet bag, and in the other hand a little oblong case, that looked very much as if it contained a violin.

"Found out who that feller is," said a voice in the doctor's ear—the voice of the man who thought the stranger so "numerous."

"Ah!" responded the doctor. "Who is he?"

"Well, he's a rovin' singin'-master, by the name of Peebles," replied the man; and then added, "they call him the pasteboard man round here. You see he thinks he's a man, but he's nothing but pasteboard. He sort o' stands round, and spreads, and lets off all the big talk he hears. Ain't he rather numerous, though?"

"I have never been so disappointed in a man in my life," responded the doctor, with equal gravity and earnestness.

"You come from up country, I guess," said the man, taking in a fresh quid of tobacco. "That wasn't the only pasteboard man on this boat, by a long chalk."

"What do you mean, sir?" inquired the doctor, suspecting the fellow was quizzing him.

"Well, see that old feller with the gals there?"

"The old gentleman with a eye-glass? Yes."

"Take him for a member Congress, wouldn't you?"

"I confess," replied the doctor, "that it had occurred to me that he might be in public position."

"Well, he does look numerous, that's a fact; but he keeps tavern, and spe is breakfast b-r-e-a-k, breck, f-i-r-s-t, first, breckfirst. Fact—saw it on a bill. Lots of 'em all round here in the same way. I come from up country myself, and I s'pose I know how all these slick fellers look to you, but three-quarters of 'em are pasteboard, just like Peebles. Now you don't know it, but you are the most sensible-looking old cove there is on this boat, and these pasteboard fellers know it, too. Goin' to New York?"

"I am on my way to New York," replied the doctor, ignoring the compliment.

"Where do you put up?"

"I have not determined."

"Lucky," responded the man, drawing a card from his pocket. "That's the house for you—City Hotel. I always stop there—right in the centre. You may keep that card if you are minded to. It's one I brought away, but I know the street."

The doctor received the card gratefully, and the accommodating fellow turned away, and was soon busy in conversation with a group of countrymen, to each of whom he handed a card, that looked very much like the one which the doctor put in his pocket.

Dr. Gilbert began to open his eyes. He was not so insignificant a man after all. Very much encouraged, he began to make conversation with one and another, and before the day expired, he had established friendly relations with quite an extensive circle of men and women, with whom he discussed politics, religion, education, and all the leading subjects of general interest, proving himself to be quite the equal of the most intelligent of the company.

The long day wore away, and nightfall found the gallant steamer ploughing the waters of the Sound. It was not until midnight that the lights of the great city showed themselves, and the boat, with its freight of life, ran in among a forest of masts, and was made fast to the wharf. The doctor was anxious. He had secured his trunk, and stood firmly by it while beset by the crowd of importunate hackmen. At length his acquaintance of the card appeared, and calling to a rough-looking fellow, said: "This gentleman goes up to the house." Then, slipping his arm through that of the doctor, and ordering the porter to carry out his trunk, he conducted him to the City Hotel carriage, already full and piled with baggage, and managed to get him in.

The doctor awoke the next morning with a dull, heavy roar sounding in his ears, and then rose and looked abroad from his high window upon housetops and chimneys, and busy streets and sidewalks, thronged with early passengers going to their daily employments. The vision was a novel one, and would have been very agreeable, had not the thought of his unfinished and unpromising errand constantly intruded itself. What could "Tristram Trevanion" do in such a place as that? Who would care for the Hounds of the Whip-poorwill Hills?

Dr. Theophilus Gilbert shaved himself very carefully, put on the best linen that Crampton ever saw, and robed himself in a black broadcloth suit, made by the Crampton tailor.

and only brought out on very pleasant Sabbath days, or great secular occasions. He descended to breakfast, and was exceedingly pleased with the attentions bestowed upon him by the waiters. It really seemed to him that he was securing a larger share of attention than anybody else, and that those less favoured must look upon him with a measure of envy. Breakfast concluded, he devoted half-an-hour to the Directory, copying the names of the principal publishing houses, with their streets and numbers. Then he held a long conversation with a fat bar-keeper (who, in his shirt-sleeves and a paper cap, was polishing off the outside and filling the inside of the bottles) with relation to the locations he wished to find, and then he started out, with the manuscript novel under his arm, to attend to his business.

He had not given up the Kilgore. He was entirely faithless as to their having seen his letter. So he made his way to the great house of the Kilgores, and entered it with assumed courage, though, to tell the truth, he felt more like a beggar than a gentleman in easy circumstances. He inquired of a clerk, whom he had some difficulty in apprising of his presence, for "the head of the house."

"The old man, I suppose," said the young man, listlessly.

The doctor said, "Yes, sir," at a venture.

"Oh! he won't be down town these two hours," replied the clerk. "You'll have to wait."

The doctor waited. He was bound to see Kilgore the elder before any other publisher. He walked up and down the long salesroom, looking at the shelves deeply packed with books, and the cases full of the pets of the public, dressed in gorgeous gold and morocco, and wondered what kind of a figure his manuscript would make in such brilliant society. Alas! how could room be made in such a crowded establishment for "Tristram Trevanion"?

He had begun to tire of this thriftless employment when the clerk, to whom he had originally spoken, came out from behind the counter, and, inviting him into the elder Kilgore's private office, told him that he could sit there quietly and read the papers until the head of the house should make his appearance. He accepted the invitation, and was conducted back to a little room, carpeted and neatly furnished. At a desk sat a lean, middle-aged man, engaged with bills and letters. At his side were piles of proof-sheets, waiting for examination. At a window stood a seely-looking man of fifty, in brown clothes, with his hat on, gazing out upon a dead wall, and apparently absorbed by reflection. The clerk looked up, nodded, waved the doctor into a chair, pointed to a newspaper, and went on with his work.

As the doctor took his seat and the newspaper, the seely-looking man in brown turned around, and came toward him. Dr. Gilbert noticed the wildness of his eyes and the dingy pallor of his face, and, with professional readiness, perceived the malady that afflicted him. The stranger seized the doctor's hand, and shaking it warmly, said: "This is Mr. Kilgore. May the Lord bless him, and cause his face to shine upon him!"

"You are mistaken," replied the doctor. "My name is not Kilgore. On the contrary, I am waiting to see Mr. Kilgore, as I presume you are."

"Then you are not Kilgore, eh? Who are you?"

"My name is Gilbert," replied the doctor.

"Your Christian name?"

"Theophilus."

"Theophilus, I salute you. All the saints salute you. What are your views of the millennium?"

"I can't say," replied the doctor, "that I have any very distinct views of the millennium. I suppose everybody will be very good and very happy."

"Yes, but how are they to be made good and happy? That's the grand secret, sir, and that secret is hid in me, an unworthy vessel. You behold in me, sir, the forerunner of an epoch—the John the Baptist of the Second Coming."

The doctor was amused, and asked him to declare his secret.

"It's soon to be published to the world. The Kilgore have had it all night. In the meantime, I have no objection to saying to you privately that it's flesh. You know how it is with the children of Israel when they gathered quails in the wilderness, ten homers apiece. While the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague. God made man upright, but he has been eating dead animals so long that he has lost the divine image, and become a beast. All we have to do to bring about the millennium is to stop eating dead animals, and refrain from drinking the blood of beasts. The cattle upon a thousand hills are the Lord's, not ours, sir, and when the blessed thousand years shall dawn, and these cursed slaughter-houses are shut up, even the animals of the forest will be partakers of the benefit, for the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the cow and the bear shall feed together."

(To be continued.)

THE BATTLE OF ABU-KLEA.

There is no necessity to make any comparison between the corps that formed the Desert Column. The Guards Camel Regiment, the Mounted Infantry, the Heavy and Light Camel Regiments (unfortunately the latter were not at Abu-Klea) and the other regiments were the flower of the British Army. Sir Herbert Stewart often said that no more splendid body of men could be formed—picked shots, men of stamina and strength. In the events that happened no credit belongs to one corps more than another. The brunt of the attack at Abu Klea fell upon the left wing of the Heavy Camel Regiment and the Naval Brigade, and they acquitted themselves to the satisfaction of their General, but not a whit better did they acquit themselves than others of the column would have done. They all did their work in the several places in which they found themselves. Sir C. Wilson remarks that not a single Arab penetrated the ranks of the First and Second Life Guards or Blues (he might have added Bays). It is perfectly true; but, like the other portions of the square, they did not bear the chief force of the main attack; they only had to resist portions of the surging force whose fury chiefly spent itself on the left