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"Flatterers"

The Shadow of the Future.

CHAPTER VIII.
"Exactly my own taste!" agreed Mrs. Alwyn, better pleased than ever. "Buried here in the country, I rarely use any of this," tossing a heap of Brussels carelessly aside, "they lie away useless and half forgotten; but, perhaps," with a wistfully suppressed smile and glance toward her daughter, "others may care for them. They may be wanted and worn again some day."

"If your young lady has to have a wedding-gown soon," said the woman, taking the hint instantly, "you can give her as good as a princess without going far to fetch it, ma'am."

"She has certainly heard some gossip in the servants' hall," thought Mrs. Alwyn, elated, "family affairs are always known there sooner than anywhere!" "Well, whenever it may be required," she said, aloud, very graciously, "one important item of Miss Villiers' trousseau will be ready."

"And leave plenty for Miss Sydney, too, ma'am," said the woman. At whose mention Mrs. Alwyn bethought herself of rather a clever stroke. Things looked so promising for that secondary scheme, she might advantageously send forth a hint of it; then any incipient fancy of the Honorable and Reverend Edward's would be nipped in the bud. So—

"Miss Alwyn can easily be spared sufficient," she said; "and, indeed, significantly, 'I don't know that I shall do amiss by selecting some to-day, as it is likely to be wanted before very long.'"

The woman looked up from her search, interested; but Mrs. Alwyn was not going to commit herself to particulars, as she adroitly quitted the subject.

"Leonora, love, will you look at the Mechlin I laid out for you? No, the longest strip; a dainty thread round the edge, with little loops and sort of trefolls in the scallop?"

"Yes," Leonora, dropping her book to examine, thought it had, and, holding it languidly up, "would this length be sufficient?"

Her mother and Lady Avena's maid drew near, to pronounce the match on close inspection perfect, and the servant, despite an intimacy with the jewel-case of an earl's daughter, bestowed what Mrs. Alwyn too for keenly appreciative glances on the four sparkled hoops—pearl, diamond, sapphire, ruby—which adorned the young lady's white hands.

The quest ended, nothing remained but to fold up the parcel, but even this last minute Mrs. Alwyn utilized to her own purpose.

"Lie down again, dear Leonora. My daughter felt the heat so much yesterday. You will tell Lady Avena we are all well with this exception." ("Then some one must call to inquire for her," she mediated rapidly; "Mr. Duvesne, most likely.") "Take some eau-de-Cologne, darling," pouring it freely on

hands and handkerchief from an immense gold-stoppered bottle. "If Miss Villiers should depart with all these," sweeping up the festoons of lace from the satin-backed chair, and referring, with motherly benignity, to the maid's former speech, "I must see that she goes where she will be well taken care of. Anything less than what she leaves would be quite impossible for her."

"I haven't a doubt of it, ma'am," was the reply, the speaker bending to tie her parcel.

"You are ready now? Assure Lady Avena I shall not even miss what I send her. And—oh! mind—mind my Chelsea boy!" as an abrupt turn jeopardized a piece of eighteen-centimetre— "I couldn't replace it for fifty guineas! It's safe now. You will go down into the hall, please. Phillips will show you out. Good-morning."

Sydney was just coming from her own room as this early visitor quitted the boudoir. Not particularly wanting to meet the stranger, she drew back, and, herself unseen, was witness of a most inexplicable pantomime. For the stereotyped respectful aspect of the woman changed as she closed the door behind her. With a fierce scowl of bitterest anger, she clinched her hand, and her teeth hard set, seemed furiously to menace the room she had just left. Catching her breath, she seemed barely able to restrain vituperation or sob. One foot raised, as if she could have stamped for very passion, was only brought silently down by an effort that set her trembling from head to foot. But a sound in the hall below seemed to recall her senses. With one great quivering breath she steadied herself, swept the back of her gloved hand quickly over her eyes, and, rapidly descending, left the house.

"I wonder, mamma," Leonora was saying, as her step-sister entered, "how that servant knew Sydney's name. Did you notice it?"

"Picked it up from fellow-servants, of course," was the quick rejoinder. "Now rest quietly, my dear, while I make haste to Hemmyngford. Leonora had best not be disturbed, Sydney, till I come back."

So Sydney was left with only her own council to consult over that curious interlude on the landing, and, since she could not possibly either fathom or amend the woman's singular behavior from her best to put it from her mind. It might have been illness, she thought. It could have nothing to do with any of them at the Dale.

But it had.

CHAPTER X.
BRINGS A WOOER TO ST. CLAIR'S.
Mr. Richard Drayton's two days at St. Clair's lengthened under hospitable pressure into a week, and in that time it naturally fell out that he saw something of what Mr. Vaughan designated his "lay-vicars."

"A multitude of small works mostly go to the women of such homes as mine, Drayton," said the gray-haired rector to his quondam pupil, the morning after the gathering at Oakleigh Place, "and I give them over to those two you talked with yesterday. They can help a man of my years, you

know, without being suspected of wanting to marry him! That Sydney Alwyn's adaptability is most amazing; give her anything to do for any one she likes, and she draws to the task like a needle to a magnet. And the other is an invaluable girl—well, not girl exactly, for she is ten years Sydney's senior—

"And how old may she be?" interposed Mr. Drayton.
"Twenty or thereabouts. So I'm rarely fortunate to have such assistants." The last thing to enter the rector's head would have been any explanation of how his own deeds had earned him these willing services. That, Mr. Drayton might find out!

"But mind you, every man hasn't such luck, and recollect when you map out your home, Drayton, you're not so fond of letter-lore as your old tutor, so furnish yourself with something that will brighten all your evening-tides."

"Meaning a wife!"
"Right. And when you're determined to take one, come here—"

"To find her?" Mr. Drayton's brown face reddened.
"No!"—laughing—but to hear the rest of a bachelor's homily on married life! Who's there?—a soft tap sounding on the study door—"Come in. What you!" as Sydney Alwyn, leaving a basket of strawberries outside, entered, her sunshade in one hand, a bunch of honeysuckle in the other.

"Surely, now, you are not come up in this heat just to bring me these?"
"Not that alone," Sydney answered, setting down her freight to shake hands with Mr. Drayton, "for I promised Harry and Ben to come and help them with their Euclid. At least," blushing, "to do it with them. They expected to be at lessons again to-day."

"Instead of which, I've stopped their industry," said Mr. Drayton—"a drone in the hive, I ought to be off."

"Nonsense!" cried the rector, "they are a pair of lazy little rascals. I set them their work hours ago. They ought to have stuck to it without me. But I suppose"—to Sydney—"they haven't?"

In honesty she had to shake her head.
"Playing!" with a groan, "as if there were no examination coming on in September." Scholarships for these two orphan kids lay heavy on the rector's mind just then, and he looked vexed. Sydney as little liked to see him troubled as to see the lads, her very good comrades of four years, in disgrace, so she hastened to beg speak their pardon with a lurking smile.

"Harry has been the soul of industry," she said, "in drawing cuts. He's sketched the tortoiseshell in fifty attitudes; Ben has written a poetical pendant to the picture, praising pussy's extraordinary mouse-catching powers."

Hereat her hearers broke out laughing, and Sydney went bravely on.
"So they are to be forgiven, please. They are to make up for lost time next week. And as Mr. Drayton will be here, and of course, you must be with him, may I come down and be with the boys each morning? They say they want me."

The rector gave a covert glance at his friend. ("Just a device of that deep young person's to set me free," he explained afterward; "the lads work like Trojans if she's present!") "Oh, come, by all means," he agreed, "and I'll luxuriate in gossip with this man. But stay"—as with this permission Sydney would have left—"are you going to the Dacies?" "Then will you take these club papers?" (It was a poor folk's club, mainly kept aloof from the rector's pocket, one of the few certain props of the doctor's lessening income.) "They've come to me in a muddle, but I'll look in on Monday and set them straight."

(to be continued.)

Blue Bird Is Coming

GREEN OLD AGE.

So live that when your head is gray, and you are bent and tired, you're fixed to throw your tools away, and have the rest desired, and let the younger men baffle the hay, for which they have no need. I like many other ancient men. I threw my tools aside; and then I picked them up again—I can't be satisfied with resting, rusting in my den, while toddlers round me stride. But if I had to buckle down in these, my wintry years, to earn the shilling and the crown, I'd earn the same in tears, and on my brow a dismal frown would reach back to my ears. But I could quit my job to-night, and ply my harp no more, and live in indolence, all right, on coin I saved of yore; and knowing this, with much delight, I do my daily chore. There's nothing sadder, I maintain, than old men making tracks, by stark need driven, through the rain, to toil with aching backs, until they die beneath the strain, and in the grave relax. I work by day, burn midnight gas, and leave a trail of smoke, but I don't need to put up grass, and so the job's a joke; if I were forced to earn the brass, how bitterly I'd creak! Oh, I could sit and chew my thumbs, if that were my desire; but when for me the summons comes, I'll still be at my lyre; you'll hear its tinkling tummy-tums, played like a house afire.

The Passion Play Oberammergau.

Oberammergau, Bavaria (Associated Press).—Thirty performers of the Passion Play have been scheduled for 1922 by the committee of 21 which is directing the spectacle. It is the most dramatic of the annual plays, and the villagers are extremely anxious about the German political situation, lest conditions be such that the foreign tourists, who constitute the descendants of the original peasants who made the vow to produce the play decades ago, should not be able to come to the coast would result in the village, as the Oberammergau folk have slight resources. Most of the burghers are woodcarvers, potters, painters, and small torts, farmers.

Only the descendants of the villagers who were saved from the plague in 1333 take part in the Passion Play, and assume responsibility for its production.

Next October will be a fateful month, for then the names of the leading villagers who are to have the leading roles in the spectacle will be announced. To be selected to enact the role of Jesus Christ, or one of the apostles, is a far greater honor than election to the presidency of Germany or any other office within the gift of the entire German people.

And any woman chosen to play the role of Mary or Martha or Mary Magdalene than to be in the position of Frau Oberammergau, who plays the role of the President's place in Berlin. Many of the actors in the Passion Play next year will doubtless be the same as those in the last year, but he is still young enough to undertake the arduous task, and looks the part so well that younger aspirants are not likely to displace him. Otilie Zentli, who played the role of Mary in 1910, has married since that time. No married woman can play a role. Consequently, all the young women of Oberammergau with ability and experience as actors, are eagerly trying to qualify for the highly important part.

Paula Rendl, daughter of Peter Rendl, the sculptor, who was Joseph of Arimathea in the play of 1910 and enacted the role of St. John 21 years ago, is one of the most promising candidates for the role of Mary. Fraulein Rendl has shown great ability in minor religious plays, which are produced constantly by the Oberammergau folk, and means of training actors for the Passion Play. Marie Mayr, who played the role of Mary, Fraulein Rendl has shown ability, also, in minor religious plays in Chicago. Marie Schmidt, who was the Veronica in the last production, has also married. Eighty-two of the Oberammergau men died during the war and many of the older actors of the last production will be disqualified by age for important roles. Consequently there are scores of places in the cast to which young men with ability as actors may aspire. They have begun to let their hair grow. Wigs and make-up are not permitted by the directors of the Passion Play. Practically all the older men who had important parts in the last production have never cut their hair. Many of them have retained their long beards and pride themselves on their resemblance to the biblical characters they have depicted.

STATUTORY NOTICE.
In the matter of the estate of Michael Connolly, late of St. John's, in the Island of Newfoundland, Butcher, deceased.

Any person claiming to be creditors of, or who have any claims or demands upon or affecting the estate of Michael Connolly, late of St. John's, in the Island of Newfoundland, Butcher, deceased, are required to send particulars of their claims in writing, duly attested, to BLACKWOOD, EMERSON & WINTER, Temple Building, Duckworth Street, Solicitors for the trustee of the said estate, on or before the 28th day of July next, after which date the said trustee will proceed to distribute the estate, having regard only to the claims of which they shall then have had notice.

BLACKWOOD, EMERSON & WINTER, Solicitors for the Trustee. Address: Temple Building, Duckworth St., St. John's. June 23, 1921.

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