

A WOMAN'S LOVE

OR, A BROTHER'S PROMISE

CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)

With much pacing up and down, and many a stop to look at the portrait, Hector fought his way through the monkish tongue; and as he read he could not help a shiver at the parallel Don Augustin would have him see—the distorted parallel he himself could not but see. As he came to "the glory and peace of the saints" he sat down, the little book open in his hand, amulet to summon to his mind's eye a panorama that had unrolled itself before him how many times—London, the palace Maddalena, the Isle of Palms, Asunta, Caldera, and the cave of welcome; the tent in the lines and the hour of hours; every moment that had been his life since yon rainy night in August. And now to-day is come, the first day of the first year of the century; and to-day, in an hour or two, Maddalena is to be crowned Queen of free Palmetto—yet the bells that ring in her reign will ring out his happiness, for to-night, to-night, he leaves the Isle of Palms for ever; leaves Maddalena, leaves love and the joy of life behind.

After the coronation there is to be a great banquet and reception, and honors are to be bestowed on whom the Queen desires to distinguish. Then comes the farewell—the farewell that must be hidden away under smiles, for the people have been eyes and look for happy faces. And then—the sea, London, the old life. Is that possible?

The reverie drifts into vision—such as comes to the Highlander when his hour is nigh. Maddalena and he are alone. The last word is spoken, the last kiss is taken; hand clasps hand, and he turns to go. All is dark—all is dark.

The little book, The Life, Death, and Deeds of the Illustrious and Virtuous Knight, Senor Don Baldassare de la Luz, drops sharply on the polished floor. Hector hears, but does not awake from his dream: the sound seems to be part of it.

All is dark still. But now, slowly and slowly, the thick shadow begins to resolve: it takes a core of light, blurred and faint at first, but growing, growing, growing—into a great white sheet, a sheet of silver cloth. It is a pall—ah! and it covers a bier—a single blood-red rose lies on it; a rose that looks like a heart against the splendid white. At the foot of the bier rests a crown of gold. That is an altar there, the high altar of some lofty cathedral. And now he sees the glimmer of candles, the pale lambent glow of the lamp that burns continually, the pallor of marble columns, and the rich hues of priestly vestments as dim figures go to and fro. To his ear comes the deep murmur of an organ. He strains his eyes to pierce the pall, to see—to see—

But it is gone. Involuntarily he stretches out his arm, forgetting that it is not yet whole. The pain wakes him, and he is aware that Alasdair is looking down on him in wonder and dismay.

"It is gone," he cries, "gone, just as it went that night."

"What's gone, Heckie?" Alasdair lays a hand lightly on his shoulder. "For the second time, the second time! O! God, it must not be Maddalena."

"What's the matter, Heckie man; what's the matter?"

"The bier and the silver pall, the rose and the crown. I saw them once in London, I see them again to-day—to-day, of all days. And I cannot see who lies below. But it must not be, it shall not be!"

The quick eye of Alasdair notes a speck of blood on Hector's right shoulder. He speaks in Gaelic, with the fretful note of a mother chiding her child.

"You're just a bairn, Hector Grant. Look at your arm out of the napkin, and the blood coming O, what would you do without me? Sit still, murmur, and hold your tongue!"

With fingers that had never aught but Love for teacher, Alasdair tends him, patting down this pad, binding that bandage aright again, and settling, so as to give the most support with the least irk, the purple silk sash that makes the sling.

"Now," he says, when all is finished to his satisfaction, "now you'll do. Come on. The little man" (thus he speaks of Bravo) "sent me to look for you; it's time to start—Tighearna! What's that?"

He has caught sight of the portrait of Don Baldassare, and he is staggered; his rough and freckled skin turns ash-color, and his hand is like an aspen. All Highlanders have an inveterate bread of doubles, and Tighearna!—here is Hector—

But the elucidating words are cut short, for through the open door comes the sudden noise of trumpets calling in the gardens of Triana, opposite the palace gates; comes the ring of steel; comes the shouting of crowds; comes a cry of impatience from Bravo.

"Hasten, hasten. Her Majesty waits!"

A second's pause, a deep breath, and Hector is ready.

Her Majesty waits—waits, not in black to-day, but in white, virgin white, all white, a very sun for dazling; a Queen, a bride—nay, rather, a new Iphigenia, setting out to lay her heart on the altar of her country: calm and composed, clear of eye and firm of step.

But there is no time to think, no time to let the thirsty gaze of love take in the splendour of her white simplicity. Just one moment to put his lifetime into a kiss on her hand, and he leads her to the carriage, in which, lovely and lonely crowned only with her hair, she is pass through her people.

Alasdair helps him to mount the black Arab, her gift. Bravo is on his right hand, Ramiro on his left, the generals behind.

A fanfare, and they move. On this side a long line of white and purple, and on that the same; and behind these, Palmettos, thousand on thousand, cheering and cheering and waving hats and flags and handkerchiefs and colored shawls. Bells clash, trumpets rejoice, rifles rattle to the present—and over all the clamor, from loving throats the indomitable call of "Maddalena, Maddalena, Maddalena!"

It seems but a step to the wide-gung door of the Cathedral, where the Bishop stands among his acolytes with Cross and censers. The choir begins to chant a hymn of jubilation. Maddalena bends before the prelate.

Then the procession forms, and moves slowly up the nave to stately music of organ and trumpet and sweet voices. Maddalena walks alone, a clear space before her, a clear space behind—the Queen! Tears blind the eyes, something catches in the throat—God! so young, so beautiful, so lonely. Not a heart in all the vast Cathedral but leaps to her, so young, so beautiful, so lonely.

Now she kneels at the foot of the throne, and so remains through the long magnificence of the Mass.

O! it is all a dream!

The searching sweetness of the music, the plaining of violins, flutes, hautboys, the piercing clamor of clarions, the subdued bourdon of the organ, the silver shrill of boys' voices—all the poignant influences pluck with persistent fingers at his strung nerves. It is a dream, a dream.

The low voices of the priests intoning, the flash and glitter of their vestments, the gleam of the jeweled Cross, the slow swing of golden censurs, the mysterious, drowsy wisps of incense smoke, the awe, the hush—a dream, a dream, a dream!

But no, no. It is no dream. It is she, it is she, it is Maddalena, heart of his heart and blood of his blood. And every word said or sung, every note of music, every movement of censer and Cross, takes her farther and farther away from him; slowly tears her from him, fibre by clinging fibre, and now is come the moment when the last tendril that binds them is to be cut—and his, his is the hand that must press the knife down upon the living thing—and Maddalena goes from him for ever.

For Palmetto would do him highest honor, and it has been laid down by the Master of the Ceremonies, none other than Don Augustin (ah! the wise old surgeon!), that when the Bishop asks the question, "Who giveth the Crown to Maddalena?" he, Hector, shall take the gaud and, presenting it to the prelate, say—he, who has won it for her—"I, for the free people of Palmetto."

It is the toneless voice of the Bishop: "Who giveth the Crown to Maddalena?"

Hector makes a step forward, and with both hands lifts the simple gold circlet on its purple cushion. All! his wound re-opens. He kneels. The eyes are blind, but the hands are steady, and the voice is more moving than all the music that has now fallen on silence: "I, for the free people of Palmetto."

Crowned!

And the opening thunders of the Te Deum roll majestically, voicing the grave joy of a free people, the death of two souls that Love made live—to die.

(To be Continued.)

COSTLY BASKET.

A basket recently changed hands in California which took the squaw who made it three years to complete. It was in the form of a fancy work-basket, entirely covered with the down of woodpeckers' scalps, among which were a number of hanging loops of strung beads, and around the rim an upright row of little black quails' plumes. Altogether there were eighty plumes, which required the sacrifice of as many quails, and at least 150 woodpeckers had been robbed to furnish the beautiful scarlet nap for the outside. It was originally purchased from the squaw who designed it for \$25, yet it was sold not very long ago for \$1,625.

CORSETS FOR FINE HAIR.

The Garment Is a Sure Cure for Bald Heads.

If men wore corsets, we are gravely assured by a medical authority of high standing, there would be no more bald heads. In support of this argument it is pointed out that most women have luxuriant tresses, and they invariably wear the much-discussed garment.

The fact is, men do not breathe in a proper manner, and the corset corrects the irregularity. The ordinary man allows the lower portion of the stomach to play too great a part in the process of breathing, whereas this tendency is checked in women by the use of the corset. The work of respiration is confined more to the chest, with the result that the fair sex retains its crown of glory.

How is this? In the pursuit of their investigations the medical men selected various animals which breathe properly, and fitted them with an apparatus which forces what is called abdominal breathing. Dogs, cats, and birds fitted with these wrongly constructed corsets lose their hair or feathers after a few months of wear!

The scientists killed two or three of these creatures and examined the lungs. In every instance they found in them a crystallized substance which, when placed in solution and applied to the bodies of healthy animals, caused the hair or feathers to fall out!

This crystallized substance was found in the lungs of creatures forced to adopt this abdominal breathing; it is, therefore, evident that it was produced by that form of respiration. Once in the lungs, it is tolerably certain that its effects will be felt in the head of man.

JAPANESE OPPOSITION LEADER.

Count Okuma Who Spends His Money for Education.

Count Okuma, the leader of the opposition in Japan is described as the third most popular man in Japan, after Marquis Ito and Marshal Yamagata, and by far the most interesting, for whereas the two latter have become much Westernized, Count Okuma remains a thorough typical Jap.

He is the greatest orator in a nation of orators, and the best-mannered man in the land of exquisite courtesy. When he was lying in agony, between life and death, just after a fanatic had thrown a bomb under his carriage, the Count could still remember his manners and apologize to a foreign diplomatist because he could not accompany him to the door after the visit of inquiry.

He has held office in the Government, but prefers the Opposition benches, knowing that from them he can best serve his country. He is immensely wealthy, being known as the Rice King of Japan, and he has lavished his wealth on the furtherance of his countryman's education. He has rather a prejudice against foreigners—but visit him with new ideas on the subject of education and he will, figuratively, take you to his heart.

BREATHING WHILE YOU WAIT.

The following recipe for performing artificial respiration in the human subject has been given by Professor E. A. Schafer: The patient is laid in a prone position, preferably on the ground, with a thick folded garment underneath the chest, and the arms forward. The operator puts himself athwart the subject, facing his head, and kneeling on one knee, with the other knee and hip flexed, and places his hands on each side over the lower part of the back of the chest. He then slowly throws the weight of his body forward to bear on his own arms, and thus presses on the thorax of the subject and forces air out of the lungs.

He then gradually relaxes the pressure by bringing his own body up again to a more erect position, but without moving the hands; as he does this air is drawn by elastic reaction of the chest walls into the lungs. This process is repeated regularly not less often than twelve times a minute. By this means it is easily possible in an average man to effect such an amount of respiration as will be enough to maintain complete aeration of the blood. The advantages of this method are: Ease of manipulation, simplicity, impossibility of air passages being blocked by falling back of the tongue, and facilitating escape of water from them.

EUROPEAN RAILWAYS.

The total length of railways in the world is stated to be about 454,000 miles. Some curious light is thrown on the relative civilization of the various countries by a comparison of their mileage in railways. Russia comes out first numerically with about 34,000 miles, but dwindles greatly if the enormous extent of her territory is considered. Germany follows with 31,000 miles, and France is third with 29,000. England has 22,000 miles, which, if the size of the country be allowed for, places her at the head of the list. Italy and Spain have only from 13,000 to 16,000 miles respectively. In the whole of Europe only about 60,000 miles of line are subject to State management.

OUR INTEREST IN THIBET

MISSION IS NOT FOR PURPOSE OF ANNEXATION.

The Chinese Sovereignty Over the Country Is a Dead Letter.

A curiously complicated story of Oriental manoeuvring, Russian intrigue, Chinese commercial jugglery and Thibetan efforts to throw off a hated suzerainty circles round the history of Colonel Younghusband's mission to the mysterious city of the Lamas says the London Express. To make this history plain in the light of the events recorded in our news columns to-day it is necessary to clear the ground of some persistent misconceptions. Chief, perhaps, of these, is the deeply-rooted belief that Lhasa, the ultimate object of the mission, is a sacred city. As a matter of fact, Lhasa is purely a priest-crafted stronghold. It has not, and never has had, any inherent sanctity, any claims conferred by history or tradition, to hold itself aloof from the world, as something defensible by outside touch, its population is as mixed, its customs as unsanitary, and its streets as dirty as those of any Indian native city.

Bound up in this misconception as to the sanctity of the city is the theory that it is the headquarters, the great and central shrine of Buddhism, of which the Dalai Lama, or "Ocean Priest," is held to be the incarnation. But the religion of the Thibetans is not even Buddhism, except in a diluted and corrupted form of saint-worship and the adoration of many gods, with the addition of the Buddhist doctrine of reincarnation.

TROUBLE IS OLD.

A third misconception is that the Imperial Government have been all along aiming at the annexation of Thibet. The mission has had no such purpose in view, and until the hostility of the Thibetans—induced on the one hand by Russian agents and on the other by the Viceroy Sze-chuan—made the advance of Col. Younghusband with his handful of Sikhs impossible, the mission was purely a peaceful and political one.

Nor is the mission a thing of today or yesterday. It has now reached within some 180 miles of Lhasa; it started in the days of Warren Hastings. It had in view in these days, as primarily it has now, the establishment of commercial relations with Thibet. If it has more than that in view to-day the responsibility lies with the Thibetans themselves. So far as hostilities are concerned, they were begun in recent times, in 1886, when the Thibetans invaded the British dependency of Sikkim, and there was heavy fighting on the high altitudes near the Jelep Pass.

CONVENTION NOT KEPT.

Thibet has been tributary to China since it was finally conquered by that country in 1720, but when representations were made at Peking with regard to this invasion of Sikkim, the Chinese Government declared its complete inability to interfere with the activity and aggressiveness of its vassal. And the essence of the situation to-day lies in the fact that this powerlessness of the suzerain power has been manifested ever since. In 1890 a convention was signed between the Chinese Envoy and Lord Lansdowne (then Viceroy of India) with the object of delimitating the Thibet-Sikkim frontier and facilitating trade relations between Thibet and India. Three years later regulations were drawn up to give effect to the terms of the convention. But if any single one of these regulations has been carried out the circumstance has certainly escaped notice.

THREATENED TREATY.

The Thibetan authorities have expended endless ingenuity in obstructing trade routes across the Himalayas, and in making commercial intercourse with India impossible. They have not hesitated to arrest and imprison British subjects; they have opposed every effort to adjust the northern boundary of Sikkim; and they have resolutely refused to make any effort to carry out the terms of the convention. In this attitude of undisguised hostility Thibet has all along been regarded by Russia. Of that circumstance there is evidence too ample to be disputed. Four years ago Russia was supplying the Thibetans with arms, missions were exchanged between the two countries, and a Russian subject and agent was directing the attitude of the lamas from Lhasa itself.

In 1902 Sir Ernest Satow, British Minister at Peking, was able to tell Lord Lansdowne that Russia had concluded a secret treaty with China guaranteeing to maintain the integrity of that country. The price was warning from Lord Lansdowne to the Chinese Government that if such an arrangement were contemplated or carried out, Britain would take steps to protect her own interests.

CHINESE CONTROL.

During a brief period of quiescence which followed, the Viceroy of Sze-chuan exerted such influence as he possessed to obstruct the friendly opening-up of Indo-Thibetan trade relations. Through this province—to which portions of Thibet were attached in 1787—the bulk of Thibet's trade has passed for more than a hundred years and the viceroy was

bound to resist, by all the subtleties means known to Chinese diplomacy, a movement which might have the effect of diverting some of that profitable commerce to other routes. The situation thus experienced a fresh complication.

A third complication lay in the fact that the Chinese suzerainty over Thibet had long been a waning power. Early in last year Lord Curzon, after pointing out that all past attempts to deal with Thibet through China had failed, declared that the Indian Government "regarded the so-called suzerainty of China as a constitutional fiction—a political affectation which has only been maintained because of its convenience to both parties"; and, under cover of which, it may be added, Russian intrigue was having everything its own way. China and the Lamas were the Spemlow and Jorkins of the East. Spemlow was willing, anxious, burning, to open the road to India's trade, but Jorkins was so short-sighted, so stupid, so blind to his own interest, so obstinate and immovable. And Jorkins, appealed to in the same way, retorted in the same strain—that wretched suzerainty stood in the way.

PRESENT MISSION.

Then came the tardy decision of the Imperial Government, arrived at after much urging on the part of the Government of India, to ignore the intermediary and deal directly with Thibet. It was agreed that the Dalai Lama and the British mission should meet at Khamba-jong last year, and discuss the whole question in a perfectly amicable spirit. Colonel Younghusband was sent thither, but the Dalai Lama failed to keep the appointment.

The mountain advanced towards Mahomet, then busily engaged at Lhasa in hurrying Russian arms and at almost every step of the way, the advance was threatened. Menaces became deeds, and the attacks at Gura marks the final stage of the conversion in self-defence of a mission of peace into an affair of arms.

But that the peace of the Thibetan silences is threatened is in the highest degree improbable. The Thibetans, buoyed up by false hopes and Russian promises destined to be broken, have all along been convinced that Britain would bring no force to bear upon her wishes. The whole history of the matter has yielded support to that view. There may yet be fighting at Gyantse, but in all human probability the mission will have achieved its aim before that point is reached.

LEOPOLD OF BELGIUM.

King a Money-maker, Especially in Rubber Trade.

King Leopold II., of Belgium, who denies that his daughters have any claim to the money left by their mother, and who consequently is a defendant in the law courts of his own country, has devoted much of his time to money-making.

He has also a great capacity for spending it. Although an old man, he is said to be extremely fastidious in his toilet. According to "Le Cri de Paris," no society butterfly could take more trouble over the care and arrangement of her complexion than King Leopold does over the cit and appearance of his long grey beard. It is said that before the King sleeps his valet carefully envelopes his master's beard in a silk bag to prevent it getting disarranged. "So much care does he expend on his personal appearance, that his dressing room resembles a hair-dressing establishment, stocked as it is with pomades, perfumes, oils, pastes, and brushes of a thousand and one varieties."

According to a character-sketch in the "Review of Reviews," the late Mr. Rhodes declared that King Leopold was the hardest man to deal with he had ever met. "He is a regular Jew," said Mr. Rhodes, and he declared that one could more easily get blood from a stone than any concession from him. As Mr. Stead says, the success of the King from a financial standpoint is with out precedent, but he is not content. His profits arise almost exclusively from the ivory traffic of the Congo, and the exaction, by methods which have been sharply criticized, of the India rubber which is required to furnish the cycle and motor trade with tires.

Mr. Vandervelde, a Belgian Socialist leader, declared in the Brussels Senate that the King of the Belgians was the greatest India rubber merchant in the world, and charged the King's agents with employing methods for collecting the rubber that resulted in untold horrors. The modus operandi by which the natives are induced to bring in the stipulated amount of rubber is very simple, according to report. A village is ordered to produce so many baskets of rubber, and it is said that if the deliveries are not up to the mark a punitive force of the native standing army of 15,000 men is sent out to burn down the houses and shoot the natives or cut off their hand. The wretched natives "sell" the rubber to the King's representatives for a farthing a pound and it is resold at Antwerp at about thirty times as much. More than 2,000 tons of rubber are sold at Antwerp every year.

After putting on the boxing gloves a man begins to realize that it is more blessed to give than to receive. It's difficult to induce a politician to land himself to any scheme; you've got to buy him.