

GOLDEN THRONE.

[A ROMANCE BY SAMUEL P. PUTNAM.]

letter from her. I know it by heart. I have read it over and over again: "To my dear Friend, Will Burnham:—I can only write you a few words,—the fewer, the better. We have spent happy days together,—to me, most happy. Fate separated us, I thought that you were dead. Mr. Raymond has been to me the kindest of friends, the dearest of husbands. To him I have pledged my faith. I did so in my youth, my sorrow, my despair, and my desolation. Perhaps it was a mistake, but for me there is no returning. Perhaps you penetrate the secret of my heart. I could not keep it altogether from you, but from this time henceforth it is buried from human sight. Only my own spirit shall know what I feel, and thus what I feel shall be forever pure. I shall not be ashamed of it. It shall mingle with my divinest joy, and be a part of my womanhood and my conscience. If you are my friend, and I know that you are, if you seek my dearest happiness, and I know that you will, please to leave me without a word more. Let me not see you again. Let the ocean, if need be, roll between us. We cannot come together. The more distant we are, the better. No look, no touch, no voice must ever pass between us. Such is the cry of my woman's soul. Every feeling that you have must urge to renunciation. I need not write more. I think I can trust you. I think you know what justice is, what wisdom is, and that love without justice and without wisdom is but a blasting fire.

I am your true friend,

Lorena Peyton Raymond."

"I read the letter, and read it again and again. I knew she was right, but my heart was rebellious. I wanted to be near her. It seemed as if I could not break away. It was like turning from light to darkness, yet to what other conclusion could any manly soul arrive? Her happiness was involved, her honor, her peace. There must be an eternal separation. I must turn my face from her radiant presence. I have not seen her since, nor heard from her. She is my heart's angel. I love her; but I love in the heights of my soul, where all is pure as the glistening snow. Wherever I am, she is with me, beautiful as a star, flashing yet stainless as the dew."

CHAPTER XXXV.

"Your story touches me deeply," said Charlie. "It brings before me the hard problem of happiness and duty. We say that what conduces to human happiness is right. I can conceive of no other standard, yet in this case two beings are made infinitely unhappy in obedience to an inherited conviction. Is this right? I confess that I have thought deeply upon the matter,

for I have suffered deeply. I do not think that marriage is altogether best as now regulated by human custom. Yet in marriage there is something sacred and beautiful which we can never believe will be overthrown, hence the delicacy of this question which so profoundly affects all human happiness."

It was late, but Charlie still lingered. He was not one to let even a dear-bought happiness take him from a companion in trouble, if he could give one word of sympathy or help. The night was surpassingly fair. Do we not sometimes feel that nature will help us, if we could but get close enough to her, if we could remove something which divides us from her real presence of intelligence and goodness? Will evidently appealed thus in mute sorrow to nature for some clue to this painful problem, for he broke the silence with these impassioned words:—

"What a double service nature might perform, if with her transcendent loveliness and power she could answer by some sign or token to man's conscience of the truth! He feels that he has a right to expect this; for nature is eloquent in beauty, and eloquence should always bear some message. We gaze admiringly, imploringly; yet she has nothing to tell us we would know."

After the joyous feast, the doctor had quietly taken up a case he had been adding a few experimental links to, before he could announce it as a confirmed discovery. Elated with the prospect of success and too excited to sleep, he went out into the calm, cool night. Full of his suppressed enthusiasm, and more than usually abstracted, he fell upon Charlie and Will in time to catch these words, "You say inevitably where we see the largest happiness there do we see the largest duty; but in this case, as in marriage, almost universally we find unhappiness."

"Hollo, boys! What's the matter now? I believe I'm just in the nick of time again. You found that science could help you out on mid-ocean. Now, I am ready to show you what science can do on land. Marriage, unhappiness,—why of course, and always will be until folks understand the science of this business; for I tell you there is a science of love and marriage, and it is the finest and most profound of all science. Gooch was binding a love, hand and foot, in the name of religion. Don't forget that a false theology is carrying tens of thousands of human loves over the voyage of life,—misplaced and blighted loves, seeking to be free, yet manacled and chained as effectually as was Blanche."

"To begin at the bottom of this matter," continued the doctor, as though the spirit was gaining upon him to elaborate this theme with

his accustomed thoroughness and vigor, "there is a radical upheaval taking place in the old order of things. Theology has for ages been held as the only divinely appointed means for man's redemption, theology the only connecting medium between this world and the next, theology the only thing that could teach man how to live and die. Thus has theology, built upon the idea of an inspired revelation to man, been used as the fountain source of all religious and moral authority; and man has accordingly looked to no higher law for human conduct. Almost every idea of duty, goodness, purity, has been conceived and shaped through this theologic system. But now do we see around us the breaking of a new light, the revelation of science, from which inevitably must form a new and more perfect system of morality.

"Prophets and leaders are everywhere turning to science as the consistent explainer of creation, and to scientific methods of thought and investigation as best meeting the growing needs and problems of our age. I lately read this in a leading journal from a professor in one of our foremost colleges: 'It is now regarded among the active workers of science as a waste of time to discuss the truth of evolution. The battle has been fought and won.' All this points to the significant fact that man must give up his old conception of things, and work out his salvation and happiness on fundamentally different principles from what he has done. And, true to the necessities of the hour, do we not see a universal movement to adjust human rights and happiness in accordance with these broader and truer methods? It is being learned that it is no longer godlike to be meek and poor, that poverty is unnecessary, an imposition and a curse, to which man should not submit, and labor is rising to resist oppression and demand the rights upon terms of equity. Now, consistent with this new system which yields to no authority above reason, experience, science, what shall we do with marriage, which is still viewed as a distinctive and peculiar attribute of Christianity, depending upon revelation for its sanction and permanence? In fact, marriage has so long been deemed a sacrament, and holy above all other ordinances of the divine will to man, that the deepest and tenderest sentiments of humanity have justly centered around this tradition; and it is for this reason the last issue to be lifted from its sacred shrine, and cast before the crucible of science. But must this not be done? Profane as it may seem, marriage must also take her place in the scale of social problems, and be studied in the light of science. Look around and study the signs of the times, from the tendency of

modern philosophy to the last strike of mill operatives, and you will realize that a new spirit is breathing over man. He is interpreting life anew, considering its duties by different methods, balancing relations by new standards, and establishing rights upon more enlightened premises. In a word, he is discarding super-naturalism, and invoking the new authority and religion of science to serve our growing humanity. Shall we give every other science a place in popular regard, and leave marriage in the shades of superstition, buttressed by priestcraft and tradition? Shall we send other topics to schools and probe other questions to their cores, but leave marriage at home in ignorance of itself and its enormous possibilities of good to our race? Now, before we can know the rights of any system, we must first know its science. It is precisely for this reason that I would urge the science of marriage, that those entering into its relations may know upon the most approved and rational grounds what are their rights. It is because the science of a thing embraces its rights that I would plead for the science of marriage, as inseparable from its rights, in the same way that we are striving to fix the rights of labor and capital through a science of economy and politics. So may the rights of love and marriage only be found in their respective science."

"What do you mean by the science of love and marriage?"

"It is simply the science of chemistry as applied to human affection. In other words, it is the chemistry of love, as explaining what are the principles of attraction and repulsion. As a science, it embraces a vast range of subjects pertaining to the constitution of man; but, for the direct purpose of love and marriage, it deals more particularly with organization, temperament, organic quality, brain, development, etc., and explains what combination of types and qualities are fundamentally necessary to the most complete and enduring love. The science of marriage, therefore, embraces those laws by which the greatest possible fitness and harmony between the sexes may be secured. Victor Hugo says that 'social philosophy is essentially science and peace. Its aim is, and its results must be, to dissolve anger by the study of antagonisms.' Equally true is the science of marriage the philosophy of social peace and happiness, because it teaches how antagonisms may be avoided. And should this not be the grand mission of science to prevent misfortune? Give science this opportunity and sphere, and religion will find her own place and follow it; for science must ever determine what is right, while religion must furnish the impulse to perform it. This is my complaint against Chris-