



CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)

A moment's silence followed, broken by the sound of Tom's hearty laugh, with Agnes' somewhat shrill treble mingled with June's. Now she wanted to be on shore to interrupt that tete-a-tete. She hated nothing so much as to see Tom and Agnes together; it was a certainty that her cousin was infusing some poisonous drop into her husband's mind.

"Let us land," she said to Dallas; but he had no desire to leave his charming hostess just as they were discussing such interesting subjects.

"Oh, not yet," he implored; "don't go in yet. Do you really want to?" And June, who always felt it difficult to oppose any one who asked anything urgently of her, forced a smile, and said:

"I will stay here if you like. It is very pleasant here."

Two or three minutes later her mind was immensely relieved by hearing Madge's voice join Tom's, and presently she saw that young lady hanging on Tom's arm, while Mr. Carslake and Agnes walked at some distance behind. The change of companionship had been brought about in this way: When Dallas and June betook themselves to the boat, Madge and Mr. Carslake had made their way to the avenue—the place par excellence at the Hall for lovers and loyemaking, the place to which in former days Tom had always tried to inveigle June as being private and cut off from the rest of the company.

Madge had talked away in her usual bright fashion, and her companion had listened to her with that sense of pleased amusement which he always felt at her quips and pranks. His own disposition was grave, though the reverse of morbid, but he had a strong sense of humor and a keen sympathy with bright and happy young people. His greatest drawback to the enjoyment of their society was his extreme diffidence in himself, his fear lest he should be a kill-joy and spoil their fun. On Madge, however, he produced anything but this effect; his gravity, leavened as it was with an evident appreciation of her sallies and high spirits, rather stimulated than sobered her love of fun.

They had begun by laughing, and were inclining to a more sentimental mood under the influence of moonlight, and the charm of the evening, when Mr. Carslake, with the very best intentions, made a singularly unfortunate remark:

"What a very sweet woman that sister of yours is!"

It acted on Madge like a douche of cold water. The moment before she had been full of gaiety, slightly tempered by a most agreeable sentimentality, for she was undeniably in love with her companion; now she was frowning, piqued, annoyed, she felt angry indeed with her friend for not having more discernment.

She stopped short; the color came to her face, and she said, with extreme decision:

"She is not at all a sweet woman, and I should not have thought you were the sort of man to be so easily taken in."

Mr. Carslake was astonished; he was rather shocked, too, and he looked it.

"Oh, yes," exclaimed Madge, "you are horrified, I see. You think the mere fact of a person being one's sister ought to make one adore her; but I assure you the theory won't hold water. You are much more apt to dislike people who belong to you than any one else, because you are obliged to see so much of them and they have such immense opportunities of aggravating you."

The pair were standing face to face, Madge talking herself angry, Mr. Carslake preserving his scandalized expression.

"Pray, why do you think she is a sweet woman?" asked the young lady, slightly raising her voice and looking at him with rather an aggressive flash in her eyes.

Mr. Carslake's face relaxed into a smile.

"Well, really," he remarked, "she seemed to me very sweet and kind and anxious to please every one. I caught some of her remarks to our host during dinner, and I confess they gave me the idea that she was a very charitable, good person; and then I thought she behaved so nicely in offering to remain with him afterward and to go and see the child upstairs."

"That shows, then," retorted Madge, "how little any one not behind the scenes is able to judge. She only stopped with Tom and talked about going up to see little Tom to aggravate June."

"Really?" with evident incredulity. "I thought Lady Nevil seemed quite disposed for a tete-a-tete with Broke, and your sister good-naturedly offered to stay and amuse Sir Thomas."

"Oh!" exclaimed Madge, growing still angrier; "that is just the delightful way Agnes has of giving people wrong impressions. Do you suppose," with some vehemence, "that June cares two straws about Dallas? She is simply wrapped up in Tom and the child."

"I am sorry I have offended you by

saying what I thought would naturally please a sister," remarked Mr. Carslake, gravely.

"You have offended me very much," retorted Madge, with unwonted petulance. "I thought you had more discernment. All our lives June and I have suffered from Agnes' sweetness which had the delightful knack of making us look in the wrong. No doubt," a little quiver coming into her voice, "when you have seen a little more of her sweetness, you will come to the conclusion that I am not at all a nice person."

"That I shall not," he answered, and made as though he would take Madge's hand, but she eluded him.

CHAPTER XIX.

Madge, who meant to atone for her misconduct by behaving very prettily to him, was much disconcerted at not being given the opportunity. She felt rather crestfallen, but worked herself into a fit of anger before she finally went to sleep, and resolved to punish him for being vexed, although she had done her utmost to provoke him.

A picnic had been arranged for the following day; it was to be held in the same spot as the one recorded much earlier in this story—the picnic which, as far as June was concerned, had been such a dismal failure. Two girls from the neighborhood and two soldiers were to swell the Hall party. Tom could not possibly leave his harvesting operations, and Agnes had declined to join them—a circumstance for which June would have been devoutly thankful but for the uncomfortable suspicion that her cousin would find her way up to the Hall in quest of Tom senior under pretense of a visit to his son. However, she did not allow the thought to trouble her seriously.

It was as lovely a day as that former one, and the party was very cheery, to all appearance. Before starting Lady Nevil had taken Madge aside and said to her:

"My dear child, do not carry this any further. I am sure it is not wise. Leave Dallas alone and keep with Mr. Carslake. He is not a man to be trifled with, I feel convinced."

But Madge tossed her head willfully, saying:

"I mean to punish him. What business had he to go off last night without wishing me good-night?"

"You would be very sorry if you lost him."

"I don't mean to lose him," answered Madge. "Now, Juny darling, you let me manage my lover my own way; you know I am rather successful in these little affairs," with an arch glance.

"One may sometimes be a trifle too clever," answered June. "I dare say your system might answer with some men, but I doubt its success in the present case."

"We shall see," smiled Madge. "Besides, darling, I am not going to let any one think that Dallas is making up to you."

"You are very kind," returned June. "But I fancy I can take care of myself."

"I don't know," returned Madge. "Ladies are very seductive. I can't help rather feeling the influence of his fascinations myself."

Here their conversation was interrupted, and five minutes later they were en route.

Madge, having arranged her plan of battle, proceeded to carry it out. Nothing would please her but that Dallas should be her squire, and she would not allow him to leave her side or to speak to any one else.

Though it was against Mr. Broke's principles ever to repel the advances of a pretty woman, he yet, being actuated by gentlemanlike feelings, thought it not the proper thing to interfere with a friend in a genuine love affair, and, though he did not at all object to the fact of being made a cat's-paw of by a lady who was willing to divert and be agreeable to him, he thought it very hard lines on Carslake to be punished for an apparently imaginary offense.

Madge, while she flirted ostentatiously with the Guardsman, gave an occasional sidelong glance at the real object of her affections, and was exhilarated by observing that she was making him unhappy.

Luncheon over, Madge insisted on a stroll in the woods, which only meant that she took Dallas a little away from the rest of the party and sat with him under a big tree while he smoked cigarettes, in which, for the sake of bravado and with a wicked hope that Mr. Carslake might see her, she joined him. She was not altogether very happy, so she talked volubly and feigned high spirits than usual.

"Here you are!" cried Lady Nevil's voice gaily, as she appeared close at hand with Mr. Carslake. "Come with us for a stroll."

Her ladyship tried to maneuver to leave Madge and her lover together, and Dallas was fain to second her, but Madge was willful and linked her arm in June's, and Mr. Carslake made no effort to overcome her perversity.

Before the picnic party started for

home Madge had partially come to her senses, and if Mr. Carslake had made the smallest overture to her would have kindly consented to forgive and restore him to favor. But he made no such overture, and again the young lady's ire was kindled. They had to pass the rectory on the way back, and Madge insisted on wishing them good-by and going home. June, being exceedingly vexed with her, did not press her very eagerly to return to the Hall.

Mr. Carslake uttered not a word. Dallas was the only one who made any effort to shake her resolve.

The willful young lady passed a very unpleasant evening and night with her own reflections. She had overacted her part—had vexed and hurt the kindest, dearest, best man that ever lived; she would like to throw herself at his feet and beg his forgiveness; she began to despise her own cleverness, and felt quite spiteful against Dallas for having lent himself to be her tool. Never mind! all should be changed on the morrow. She would make the handsomest of amends, and would never, never behave so badly again.

The next morning her eyes unclosed on a tear-stained landscape; the rain was coming down in torrents. She intended to have gone up to the Hall the instant after breakfast, but the weather made it impossible. At 12 o'clock there was a slight cessation of the downpour and she made a valiant start. Down came the rain again, but nothing daunted, she pursued her way and arrived dripping with wet at her destination. June met her in the hall and beckoned her into Tom's room.

"Now," said her ladyship, with quite unaccustomed severity, "I hope you are happy."

"I'm not at all happy," answered Madge, rather flippantly. "I feel like a drowned rat."

"Mr. Carslake," proceeded June, too much displeased to offer, with her usual hospitality, to assist her cousin in her uncomfortable plight—"Mr. Carslake left twenty minutes ago. And it is quite certain that you will never see any more of him."

Madge turned ghastly white.

"Gone!" she stammered.

"Yes, gone. He made some bald pretext about a letter he had received, but I have since ascertained that no letter came for him this morning."

Madge flung herself into a chair and sobbed as if her heart would break. Her case was hopeless. He had not asked her to marry him, though she had felt certain he meant to; there had been no quarrel between them that would admit of her writing to explain or to ask for explanations. She felt that she had been too clever and had outwitted herself and broken her own heart.

CHAPTER XX.

The year was waning, Christmas not a great way off.

Sir Thomas and Lady Nevil had spent two months at their northern place in entertaining a succession of shooting parties. June had enjoyed this immensely; she had, no doubt, a great love of pleasure and excitement.

Madge had been a guest the greater part of the time. She was not the same willful, mirthful, mischievous creature that we have hitherto known her. No need to check the exuberance of her spirits now. She laughs and talks; outwardly she does not give any particular impression of wearing the willow; but, as a matter of fact, she is desperately unhappy.

Three weeks before Christmas, Sir Thomas and Lady Nevil, with their heir and suite, left the north and returned to the Hall. Tom was rejoiced to get back to his beloved home. June was almost equally pleased, and only one thought crept in to dampen her enthusiasm. That was the thought of Agnes.

Several times during the homeward journey June had hoped she would be spared seeing Agnes on their arrival; it was with a feeling of unfeigned vexation that, as they drove up to the Hall door, she saw her cousin on the step to meet them, arrayed in her sweetest smiles. Tom greeted her with amazing heartiness, and, to behold her reception of his son and heir, one might have imagined her a mother parted from her long-lost child. Tom insisted on her remaining to dinner, and she accepted this invitation without the smallest demur or any reference to June. Her ladyship's home-coming was completely spoiled; the shadow which had disappeared entirely from between her and her husband loomed ominously over them once more; she felt angry and impatient with him.

At dinner Tom was in the highest spirits. Agnes evinced considerably more than her wonted chastened gaiety, and it was only June who felt vexed, discontented, out of sorts. She could not be pleasant to her cousin, and she was angrily conscious that Agnes infinitely preferred her displeasure to seeing her in her usual mood.

At ten o'clock her ladyship hoped, with some coldness, that her cousin would excuse her, and Agnes jumped up, exclaiming, with an air of regret:

"Is it really ten o'clock? How the evening has flown! I did not think it could be more than nine. Did you, Tom?"

"No," answered Sir Thomas, heartily, only too anxious to make up for her ladyship's visible coldness. "Time flies, you know, Aggie, when it's spent pleasantly."

"It does indeed," responded Agnes. "I must go home. Of course, Tom, you are tired after your journey, and I must not be selfish enough to take you out tonight."

But Tom swore he was as fresh as a daisy, and that he should like nothing better than to stretch his legs a bit.

Then Agnes deposited a bird-like kiss on June's cheek, which made that fair lady grind her teeth with disgust and repugnance, and the pair set off gayly together.

(To be continued.)

Sir Isaac Newton's house in St. Martin's street, London, which Macaulay said would forever be an object of veneration, is threatened with demolition.

MONGOL'S LAST RIDE.

BEARERS CONVEY HIS BODY AT FULL GALLOP.

Strange and Almost Shocking Rite Practiced Among the Inhabitants of the Mongolian Steppes—Other Peculiar Customs of an Oriental People.

The wild nomad tribes who range over the vast country known as Mongolia have been celebrated for their horsemanship from the earliest days of history, when they swept across Asia and down through Central Europe, leaving tracks never to be effaced. In the mother country of the race, Tibet, and in the deserts of Mongolia, the tribes of wild horsemen have altered very little with the march of the centuries, but of late years they have been reduced to a certain degree of order, and, lacking the outlet formerly provided for their superfluous energies by wars and inter-tribal raids, they are likely to lose much of their old spirit and characteristic customs.

The hereditary aristocracy play a great part in Mongolian life, and even among the wildest nomad tribes "princes" and "dukes" are quite common. The "princes," it may be noted, have for some time past been little more than the pensioners of the suzerain, China, receiving a small yearly revenue, in return for which they are bound to furnish military service if called upon. Beyond the possession of a more numerous flock, finer sheepskin coats and a larger tent, it is difficult to see what privileges are conferred by rank. The expression, "a beggar on horseback"—to denote a ludicrous or incongruous sight—would have no meaning in Mongolia, for prince and beggar alike ride everywhere.

The summer time, when the cattle are out grazing, is spent in riding from tent

sepulchres," hangs round the hills. Once at the appointed place there is little more to do; a last farewell to their comrade, and the little band is in the saddle again, speeding back to the cluster of tents, or rudely built town, at full gallop, with only a stoical regret for the stiff, stark figure out there on the hills, with glassy eyes staring up to the star-spangled sky. Each man knows that the time will come when he, too, must take this terrible last ride, but with Oriental philosophy he says, "If God wills it, what can we do?"

WHY HE SMOKED.

Robinson's Reason Seemed to Need a Good Deal of Bolstering Up.

"Robinson, I never saw you smoking a cigar before," said a Chicago man to an acquaintance whom he had met in the street. Robinson looked a trifle confused, but proceeded to give his reason for using tobacco. His explanation suggests very plainly the French proverb, which is, in English, "He who excuses himself accuses himself."

"I got into the habit in a curious way," he said. "I used to smoke once or twice a year. One day while I had a cigar in my mouth, I accidentally scratched a small wart on my hand—my hands were covered with them—and some of the ashes got into the scratch. In a few days the wart went away. That seemed an easy way to cure them, and I tried it again on another wart. That one also went away. So I kept at it.

"Every few days I would smoke another cigar, scratch another wart, rub the ashes on the place, and in due time it would go away. I don't say the plan will work with everybody, but it did with me. That's how—"

"But when they were all gone, why didn't you—Oh, I see. You still have some to remove. Why don't you treat all of them at once?"

"Well, that would be more or less



HIS LAST RIDE; THE FUNERAL OF A MONGOL.

to tent, drinking tea and gossiping, and it is only in the autumn and winter, when the camels have to be employed for transport service, that the Mongol does any hard work. Every Mongol is a born horseman, and he herds his flocks of sheep, goats and camels on horseback, being able, it is said, to keep his seat even when intoxicated, as he is not infrequently. Horse racing is an extremely popular amusement, the number of entries for each race being enormous, and a kind of polo is played in which the place of the ball is taken by a fat sheep, held in the arms of one of the players, from which the others try to snatch it.

There is, in fact, no circumstance of Mongol life in which horsemanship does not play a part. Courtship and marriage take place on horseback, a simulated chase and abduction of the bride constituting the ceremony of the latter, while even in the last scene of life's drama the "ruling passion strong in death" is frequently shown in the funeral obsequies. As a rule, the Chinese burial rites are followed in the case of the chief lamas and princes, who, placed in coffins, are buried in tombs on the steppes, before which the descendants of the deceased have to worship as prescribed by custom. The poorest people, and even the lower order of lamas, are, however, merely taken out some little distance from the village or encampment, and thrown in some small ravine, to become the prey of wild beasts or dogs—a custom common throughout both Mongolia and Tibet. The bodies of chief lamas are usually burnt, and the ashes covered by small mounds or cairns known as "nobos" or "obos," a custom partly due to the Shamanistic practice of making sacred heaps or cairns, to which it is an act of piety to add a stone.

The method of burial most congenial to the wild free soul of the Mongol is, however, that which is so repugnant to our Western ideas, and yet there is something weirdly characteristic about the scene. The dead man, wrapped in his blanket, is taken from his "pourta," or felt tent, in the still hours of the night, when the cold air blows keenly across the bleak, open steppes. Four companions mounted on their rough, wiry little ponies bear him up, and at a mad, wild gallop the little band sweeps across the plain towards some distant hills. Frequently the lean prairie dogs of the village follow the funeral cortege, and a black cloud of ravens, known to the people as the "Mongol's

trouble. Besides, it might be painful."

"Then why not save up the ashes from one cigar and use them as you need them?"

"I have an idea that perhaps they ought to be used while they are fresh."

"I see. Then why not get the fresh ashes from some friend who is smoking?"

"Why, that—er—well, you see, I can't be sure that my friends use the same kind of cigars that I use, and I don't know whether the ashes from other cigars would work as well. Sorry to hurry away, but I—er—I'm in a little bit of a hurry to catch a train just now."—Youth's Companion.

His Notion of the West.

"This surely is a great country, since we have arrived at the point that geographical terms no longer convey any adequate idea of location," remarked W. S. Crouch of Tacoma, Wash., at the Raleigh.

"The other night, shortly after arriving here, I got into an accidental talk with a gentleman who chanced to be my vis-a-vis at dinner. He was a stranger, and as I was in the same category it was pleasant to have someone to chat with. Moreover, he was evidently a gentleman of standing and respectability and looked like a man of good intelligence. He was well dressed and his whole aspect betokened prosperity.

"He found out that I hailed from the West and the information pleased him. 'I like Western people immensely,' he said. 'They are not so ceremonious and so hard to get acquainted with as those who live in the East. I am a Westerner myself and am tickled mightily to meet you. Come here, waiter, and take the gentleman's order.' As I was saying, being from the West myself, it is a real comfort to run across you."

"And may I ask where your home is?"

"My home, sir, is Pittsburg, Pa. I am proud to live in such a great and enterprising city.' Later on, when I told him that I hailed from the town of Tacoma, he asked me if I was in Washington Territory, and seemed surprised when I told him Washington had been a State for the last thirteen years."—Washington Post.

Large Area Is Irrigated.

The irrigated area of the United States is 7,519,598 acres, of which Colorado contains 1,611,271 and California 1,446,119.