



CHAPTER XXIV.

Lady Nevil had been in London three weeks; the season was in full swing. She had presented Madge to her sovereign, and Madge was in high spirits and enjoying her gayeties immensely. June had been home once, and Sir Thomas had spent two nights in London, on the occasion of his wife's giving a dinner party at which it was thought desirable he should preside as host.

The season advanced, and rumors began to fly about of an expedition to Egypt in which the Guards were to take part. At first the idea was ridiculed, but gradually it came to be entertained more seriously, and then to be recognized as a fact. Dallas' battalion was for service, and as soon as this was known to the ladies in Grosvenor street it had a most dampening effect upon their spirits. Madge, it is true, affected to share the enthusiasm of Dallas; and talked gaily of the distinctions he would earn—the possibility of medals and Victoria crosses. Mrs. Ellesmere was seriously depressed at the thought of the hardship and danger her favorite nephew might incur, and as for June, each time she realized it, a knot rose in her throat and a mist came before her eyes, and she felt as if life had suddenly become blank. She would look furtively at him as he was laughing and talking in the gayest of spirits, and then her vivid imagination would see him lying dead, with livid, upturned face, on a battlefield, or worn and wasted by fever in some wretched hospital.

Late one July afternoon June and Mrs. Ellesmere left the carriage at the top of the Row and took chairs under the trees. Dallas was to join them there. Madge was spending the afternoon with a friend. Mr. Carslake passed, then stopped, turned and asked permission to sit down by Lady Nevil. Presently a friend of Mrs. Ellesmere joined her, and the first pair were left to each other. Naturally enough, the conversation turned on the coming campaign, and June, who was always trying to get comfort on the subject, asked Mr. Carslake his opinion of the chances of fighting.

June tried to draw consolation from Mr. Carslake. He did not think it would be a very serious affair; he was not impressed with a belief in the fighting qualities of the Egyptians; a change of masters would make very little difference to them; they would still be oppressed under any rule. The climate was the worst part of it, though the Bedouins and the Nile might seriously impede our operations.

Then Mr. Carslake, not looking at Lady Nevil, but trying to make his voice indifferent, said:

"I suppose Miss Ellesmere feels Broke's going very much?"

In a moment his meaning dawned on June, and she saw that a golden opportunity was before her.

"I do not think so," she answered. "Not nearly so much as my aunt—and I. She only thinks of the brilliant side of war, and not of—of the danger."

"She will feel it more when he is gone, no doubt," said Mr. Carslake, tracing a pattern in the gravel with his stick.

"I do not know," replied June. "People never think anything is likely to happen to their friends unless it is a matter of vitally absorbing interest to them."

"But I thought such was the case," said Mr. Carslake.

"Certainly not," exclaimed Lady Nevil, with great animation. "There is nothing of any sort or kind between Madge and Mr. Broke, except the most ordinary friendship."

"Oh!" and Mr. Carslake looked up at her. "I was told that if not actually engaged they were next door to it."

June felt that her opportunity had come.

"What do not people say?" she remarked. "Do you believe every report you hear?"

"Only when it is borne out by appearances."

"You are quite mistaken," said Lady Nevil. "Madge has never been in love but once in her life, and then so seriously that I think it will quite prevent her ever caring much for anyone else."

"Tell me frankly," said Mr. Carslake, "are you speaking of me? I should not venture to ask, unless—"

"Yes, I am," replied June, with equal frankness.

"And—do you really believe she is not indifferent to me?"

"I am quite sure that you are the only man for whom she has ever cared seriously."

To Mr. Carslake's infinite chagrin, Dallas came up at this moment. But June felt that enough had been said, and that Madge's future, at all events, was safe.

Dallas saw June and Madge off by the train next day; he took cordial leave of the latter, and she wished him a gay farewell, and bade him bring her back the scalps of numerous Egyptians and return covered with glory.

"I shall see you again," he said to June as the train was starting, keeping a long hold of her hand and for once not attempting to prevent his eyes from betraying to her all he felt. As for June, she was deathly pale; her lips were quiver-

ing; there was a look almost of agony in her face. The whistle sounded, the train moved off, their eyes were fixed in one long, last gaze, and then they were parted.

June leaned back in the carriage and closed her eyes. Madge made some gay remark, but her cousin did not answer, and Madge took the hint and left her alone. Her own pleasant thoughts were company enough for her; the misunderstanding between her and Mr. Carslake was at an end, and he had asked her to marry him.

The time was drawing on, and June had not yet found courage to tell her husband of her intended visit to London; she felt instinctively that he would not be pleased. And, whatever happened, she could not, no she could not, give up that cherished idea. She must see Dallas once more.

One morning, four days before the announced departure of the Guards, she said to Tom, as he was about to leave the breakfast room:

"I am going up on Saturday to stay two nights with Mrs. Trevanion."

"Oh!" he uttered, and stopped short. "Have you not had enough of London yet?"

There was something unusual in his voice; it had a ring of distinct displeasure and dissatisfaction.

There was no mistake about his displeasure. He scarcely spoke to his wife during the days that preceded her journey to London. He half hoped she would understand that he did not wish her to go and would give up the idea. But, though June was most acutely conscious of his displeasure, she felt that, unless he forbade her in so many words, go she must.

And now the evening, to which June had been looking feverishly forward, had arrived. She was sitting opposite Dallas, who appeared to be in the highest spirits, and thinking every time she looked at his handsome, cheery face that it was for the last time. Her heart was like lead within her breast; she knew she should never see him again. She tried to smile and talk, but when she opened her lips a choking sensation rose in her throat and made her feel as if she must burst into tears. There was a wistful look in Dallas' eyes, as though he were asking her if she was really sorry he was going—if she would miss him.

Mrs. Trevanion made superhuman efforts to talk brightly; she would not allow herself to dwell on facts, but insisted on putting the most cheerful face on the expedition and on making the very best of everything. It was quite likely the whole thing would be over before they got out, she said; but Dallas indignantly protested against the idea of their being made fools of for nothing. What should he bring them back from Egypt?—he hardly knew what the specialties of the country were. But Mrs. Trevanion bade him bring himself back safely, and they would be quite satisfied. His sword belt had arrived just as he was starting for dinner, so he had brought it with him to try on. And, with the help of his hostess, he proceeded to equip himself in it, while June, icy cold, with burning cheeks, sat looking on. Dallas, however, seemed pleasantly excited. He drew his sword from the scabbard, and, flourishing it in the air, wondered laughingly how many Egyptians he should slay with it. Then June shut her eyes, and a horrid picture came across her imagination. She saw him, still grasping his sword, but falling, staggering under his death wound, his now smiling face convulsed with agony. Oh, it was nothing short of murder to send out a boy like that! And in what a cause! Overwhelmed with agony, a great sob rose in her throat—a sob that would not be stifled; and then, struck with sudden horror at having thus betrayed herself, she rose and fled from the room.

Dallas stopped short, as if paralyzed; the color left his cheeks, and he stood staring at Mrs. Trevanion, who affected not to notice what had happened, and went on arranging the belt.

But Dallas put one hand on her arm and said, in a voice stammering with emotion:

"Do you really think she cares about my going?"

"Do we not all care?" returned Mrs. Trevanion, evasively.

"Yes, but I wish I had known before!" uttered Dallas, leaning against the chimney piece and putting one hand over his eyes.

"Why do you wish you had known before?" said Mrs. Trevanion, reproachfully. "Would you like to go away nursing a dishonorable passion in your heart? Do you think it would be any comfort to you, supposing, and her voice faltered—"supposing you had to look death in the face, to remember that you had brought unhappiness and doubt into the home of an honest man—a man whose peace of mind you have every right to respect? And, besides, you are wrong in attaching any importance to Lady Nevil's agitation. She is very sensitive; she has seen a great deal of you lately; even if she had only the most cousinly liking for you, she might well feel upset to-night. Do you sup-

pose," the tears standing in her eyes, "that I do not feel bad about your going?"

"Heaven bless you, my dear, I know you do. But—but," opening his blue eyes rather widely at her, "you—you don't think I shan't come back?"

"No, no," cried his friend. "I am quite sure you will. But I should like to think you went out with a free heart and a clear conscience."

Then there was a long pause, broken at last by Dallas.

"Do you think," he uttered very wistfully, with an imploring glance, "that I might see her for one moment alone before I go, just to wish her good-by?"

"No, no, no!" answered Mrs. Trevanion, with the utmost resolution. "Not for anything in the world; not for both your sakes. You know there is nothing I would not do for you. But not that."

When the wheels had rolled away, the two ladies sat down and wept grievously. And theirs were not the only hearts that ached that night.

CHAPTER XXV.

Tom received his wife with extreme coldness on her return. He scarcely spoke during dinner, and, when it was over, went away to his own room. He did not mention Dallas' name, or make any inquiry about his departure. June was perfectly conscious of these signs of displeasure, but a sort of apathy had stolen over her; it seemed as if nothing mattered very much. In a few days, perhaps, she would feel differently, and then she would set to work to propitiate her husband.

In reality Tom felt himself deeply aggrieved. It took a long time to get an idea into his head, but once it was there, a still longer time was needed to dislodge it. Why should June have wanted to go to London to bid Dallas good-by again, unless she took a much greater interest in him than she had any right to? As for him, of course, he had been at his infernal tricks again; and Tom ground his teeth. Oh, how mistaken, how mistaken he had been in June.

Well, he must put up with it now, he supposed; anyhow, the boy was left to him, and they two would be all in all to each other, please God! There would be no one to come between them for the next twenty years or so, at all events.

Day followed day, and still that apathy was in June's veins. She who was wont to be so active sat listless and idle and took scant interest in anything.

At last the papers recorded the arrival of the Guards at Alexandria, and, after that, June looked every day eagerly for news. She was not, as a rule, given to reading the papers, but now, the moment they came, she seized upon them eagerly. This also Tom remarked with displeasure.

Her husband's altered demeanor was by no means lost on June; she began to feel that their estrangement was a serious thing.

Agnes, who came occasionally to the Hall, had every opportunity of seeing the estrangement between husband and wife; indeed, June took special occasion to be captious and frigid to Tom in the presence of that sainted creature.

When Madge returned from a visit she had paid to Mr. Carslake's sister she experienced a sense of consternation at seeing the state of affairs.

"Juny, darling," she exclaimed, "what on earth is the matter with you and Tom? This sort of thing will never do. You are more like two strange cats than the two devoted people you used to be."

"Oh," returned June, bitterly, "that is the way with married people. You and your Mr. Carslake will be just the same in a few years' time."

"Never!" cried Madge, with immense emphasis.

"He will tire of you," said June. "I don't believe men have any affection. At all events, it does not last."

"Juny," uttered Madge, wistfully, "do you know, I don't think it can be all Tom's fault? I think you must have done something to change him."

"What have I done?" flashed out June. "You will be angry, I'm afraid, if I tell you what I think," said Madge, slightly embarrassed.

June looked at her expectantly. "I think," faltered Madge, "I know it is absurd, but I do think Tom is jealous of Dallas."

Then Lady Nevil fulfilled Madge's prediction by evincing great anger at such an utterly ridiculous and unwarrantable assertion, and Madge was compelled to eat her words and express the sincerest contrition for having suggested anything so impossible and wickedly absurd. Madge was so extremely happy herself about this time that she had little or no leisure in which to occupy herself with her cousin's concerns. Mr. Carslake was at the rectory, and was to spend a week at the Hall later.

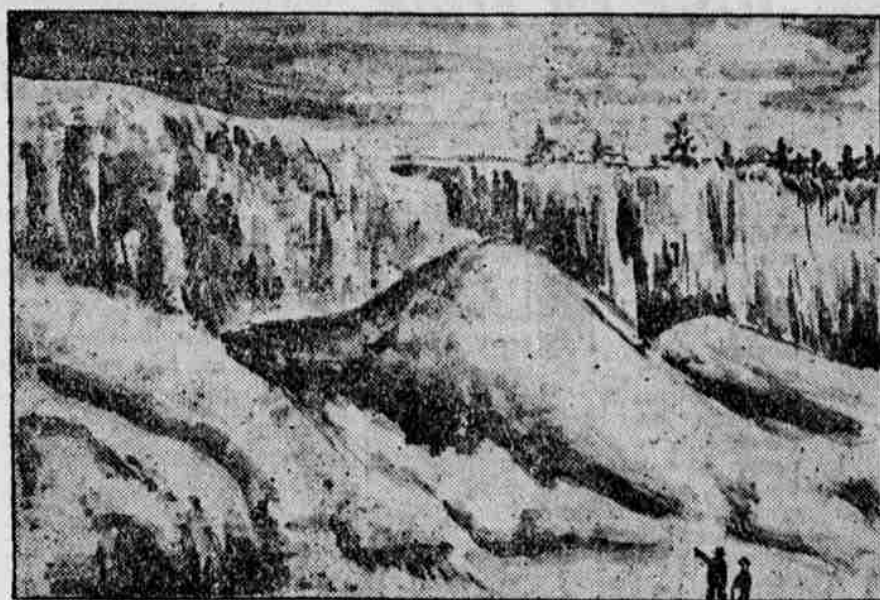
The marriage was fixed for the middle of September. Sir Thomas and Lady Nevil were to go to their place in the North the second week in October. There had been no visitors at the Hall this summer. June had felt scant inclination to play the part of hostess, and Tom was never very keen about having guests in the house. Mrs. Ellesmere was at Homburg, and had been there ever since they gave up the house in Grosvenor street. Mrs. Trevanion was the only person who had been bidden. She, however, had other engagements, but promised to come for Madge's wedding and to stay a fortnight after it. To this visit June looked forward amazingly.

Madge was far too much occupied with her own affairs to continue her system of espionage over her sister, and June had grown not to care—only to feel a sort of contemptuous indifference. "If it amuses them to be together and to abuse me, let them! What does it matter?"

Her soul was harassed by what she read in the papers—the hardships the troops were enduring, the privations, the heat. (To be continued.)

In Austria at the present day the public executioner wears a pair of new white gloves every time he is called upon to carry out a capital sentence.

WINTER GRANDEUR AT NIAGARA.



THE ICE BRIDGE AT NIAGARA FALLS.

NIAGARA FALLS, always gloriously beautiful, is said by those who have been fortunate enough to see it in its winter garb of 1903, to be more lovely than ever. The ice fields have been more extensive than ever before and the formations caused by the freezing of the spray which settles on the trees and rocks, especially on those of the little islands at the brink of the cataract, have been so delicately beautiful as to charm the observer to the spot.

There is always an ice gorge at the foot of the cataract in winter time, the extent of which, of course, depends upon the severity of the weather. This winter the gorge has extended completely across the river several hundred feet below the International bridge. It could be traversed from end to end and from shore to shore of the ravine. There are such high hills away out from the banks that tobogganers and coasters without number found the greatest sport imaginable. The sport is not wholly without danger, though it is not so dangerous as has commonly been supposed. In earlier years, it was an uncommon thing for any person to attempt to cross on the mass of ice which formed, but after the feat had been accomplished a number of times and it was seen that the trip was not especially perilous, everybody who visited the falls in winter went out upon the ice. Then the high masses of ice became attractive to coasters, and now the most precipitous gorges have no terrors for them. Down the ice-clad mountain side, through the glistening mist of half-frozen spray, the merry-makers in toboggans and coasting sleds speed along with incredible swiftness. At the base of this speedway the great gorge is seen at its best, with single cakes of ice 300 feet long and as wide, and the debris of other cakes which were just as big but which have been pulverized into snow-like atoms and spread along the shore. They see the Cave of the Winds transformed into an open chasm of rock with overhanging festoons of solid ice. They revel in the beauties of the frozen white coating which covers the trees of the park and island; they slide down the footway of Terrapin rock, from which the view is marvelously beautiful and grand beyond the power of man to describe; they stand upon the island bridge to listen, charmed, fascinated, overwhelmed, to the boom of the ice cakes as they sweep by to be tossed on high and ground to fragments on the hidden rocks beneath.

The person who stands upon the mountains of ice in the middle of the Niagara River in the winter time, experiences sensations never to be forgotten. What seems monster icebergs, and are fittingly called such, confront the sightseer at every turn. Gazing down through a yawning crevasse, one sees the mad rush and swirl of the mighty river. Amid the ceaseless din is distinguished the thunderous roar of the falling waters. They leap and bound and seem driven back as they attack the mighty icebergs in midstream, but in the terrible whirlpools they gain new strength and plunge forward again into another mass of ice and rocks, while above is an enveloping atmosphere of frozen spray, and milky mists, and far below are long rows of fantastic stalagmites or slender stalactites, apparently covered with myriads of frosty diamonds sparkling radiantly in the winter moonlight. Niagara is beautiful at all times, but it is transcendently gorgeous in winter garb.

"OLD COTTON TOP."

James P. Clarke, the Bellicose Senator-Elect from Arkansas.

The man who robbed James K. Jones, late Democratic National Chairman, of his power in Arkansas, and who has lately been elected to take the erstwhile leader's place in the Senate of the United States, has been familiarly known for a long time as "Old Cotton Top."

His name is James P. Clarke, and the name is one which is apt to appear frequently in the newspapers hereafter, for Clarke has somewhat of a Tillman temperament and will be a marked figure in Washington. He is hot-tempered, with an unbending dignity that knows no perturbation. While Governor he once went to the lobby of a principal hotel in Little Rock on Sunday, spat in the face of a member who, he considered, had offered him an affront concerning a public issue, and when the legislator showed a disposition to resent the attack the Governor drew a pistol from his pocket and was in the act of using it when friends interfered and prevented what might easily have resulted in bloodshed.

The Governor then voluntarily went before a magistrate, submitted his case, and paid a fine of \$50 for carrying a weapon. And there the matter dropped. This was eight years ago, but he has not wholly eradicated this feature of his character. Within the last few months, when a journalist who had opposed him vigorously in all his campaigns accosted him with a simple, "How are you, Governor?" he answered with a blow from his fist which left its mark on the face of the man who had presumed to offer him a friendly salutation.

The new Senator has a marked individuality that is sure to make him a prominent figure in the Senate. His enemies predict that his temper will bring disgrace upon the State, but his friends predict that he will arise as one of the most brilliant stars in that galaxy of the picked men of the States. As a lawyer from Yazoo City, Miss., he came to Arkansas while yet a young man—he is now 48—locating in Phil-



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lips County. Two years later he was elected to the Legislature, and then, by rapid strides, he became State Senator, President of the Senate, Attorney General, and Governor, laying broad and deep at every point the foundations of a popularity and effective organization that has at last landed him in the United States Senate.

HIS DREAM INACCURATE.

Warning of Disaster Proved Distressingly Unreliable.

"As to presentiments," said the Cass County man who was in the city on business a few days ago, "I've had three or four in my time, and I can't say I believe in 'em. The last one I had was located in this town. I fell into a doze in my house one Sunday afternoon, and had a vision or presentiment that as I walked along Woodbridge street I saw through the window of a shop a man sharpening a tool on a grindstone. As I continued to look, the stone burst and killed the man."

"The thing made a deep impression on me, and a week later, when I came to the city, I went out of my way to walk up Woodbridge street. Strangely enough, I found the shop and the man working at the grindstone. My heart was in my mouth as I opened the door and grabbed him by the arm and pulled him out on the walk."

"And then the grindstone flew to pieces?" queried one of his listeners, according to the Detroit Free Press.

"No, I don't think it did."

"But a belt ran off its pulley?"

"No."

"Then what accident did happen?"

"None at all. The man whom I pulled out doors didn't believe in presentiments, nor appreciate my motives. He called me some sort of a fool, and when I replied in like spirit he fell upon me and blacked both my eyes and skinned my nose and I never got in one good sockdologer on him. I'm not going to say there's nothing in presentiments, but I give you the straight tip that the undersigned will take it out in dreams after this, and he'll be particular not to dream of grindstones."

Pretty Italian Princess.

The little Princess Yolande of Italy is said to have the largest and darkest eyes of any European princess.

Officially Disappeared.

Cholera is officially declared to have disappeared from Egypt.