



CHAPTER XXV.—(Continued.)

At last a battle was imminent. There had been terrible girdings in the papers at the long delay; all sorts of disasters were prophesied; the intrenchments were impregnable—thousands of troops were marching to the aid of Arabi—a battle, even if we were successful, must inevitably be attended with fearful loss of life. On the night of the 12th June did not close her eyes. All night long she saw the picture she had seen that night when Dallas was trying on his belt and waving his sword in the air. That had been a presentiment, she felt sure. On the morrow, or the day after, she would take up the paper and read his name among the dead, as she had done in fancy a hundred times.

All the morning of the 13th she went about looking like a ghost, with pale lips and hollow eyes. At noon Tom brought the news to her. Even he was elated and interested this time. "Glorious news!—a tremendous victory; our loss comparatively trifling."

A momentary sense of relief came over June, to be crossed immediately by a misgiving. "A comparatively trifling loss" to a nation may mean hundreds of stricken homes, hundreds of broken women's hearts.

She must ask the question.

"The Guards?" she faltered. Tom did not know; no particulars had arrived yet; this was only a telegram from the station. But he would ride over himself at once; for, even if he had been jealous of Dallas, he did not forget in the moment of danger that he was his cousin, and was really anxious to hear of his safety.

The time until Tom returned seemed like eternity. Even then the news was meager. The brunt of the loss had fallen on the Highland regiments; it was thought the Guards had not been actively engaged.

Mrs. Trevanion was to arrive that evening. She would be sure to know.

Mrs. Trevanion came, armed with the latest intelligence. She had called in Downing street before going to the station, and had heard the latest intelligence from a personal friend. Foot Guards under fire, but in second line.

The third week of Mrs. Trevanion's visit was drawing to a close. It was a dull, gray afternoon. June was cowering over a fire; she had a fit of shivering, and felt more than usually unwell. For the last few days a listless feeling had crept over her; she had no appetite, and felt ill and depressed. She had refused to have a doctor, but to-day Mrs. Trevanion had insisted, and a servant had been dispatched to summon him.

"I wonder," said Mrs. Trevanion, "how Dallas is getting on? I don't think his last letter was quite so cheery as usual. He had looked forward so much to Cairo, but it seems they are all disappointed and disgusted with it, and would rather be in the desert."

"Oh," exclaimed June, suddenly, with her eyes fixed on the window, "there is Agnes. I am getting positively to hate the sight of her."

"Leave her to me," observed Mrs. Trevanion. "I will talk to her." A minute later, Miss Ellesmere was announced. She came in with a longer face than usual, and in her hand she held an orange envelope.

As June saw it, a deadly chill took possession of her; she shivered violently; her teeth chattered in her head.

"I have some dreadful news," said Agnes, fixing her cruel eyes on June's face. "This telegram came for mamma from Aunt Violet. She was out, and papa opened it. Mr. Broke died of fever last night in Cairo."

Mrs. Trevanion uttered a cry, then, starting up, ran to June.

She had turned white as death, and was falling back senseless in her chair.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Lady Nevil was carried upstairs to bed, and it was more than a month before she was able to be moved from it again. The doctor pronounced that she was sickening for a fever—typhoid, he feared. From the moment when Agnes told the cruel news, she never perfectly recovered consciousness, but was either insensible or delirious.

The day after June was taken ill little Tom began to sicken, and in five days he died. Sir Thomas was like one stunned; but his intense anxiety about his wife made the loss of the child perhaps less agonizing. If only June were spared to him, he felt he could bear that other grief, awful though it was; he realized once again how he loved his wife, and what her death would mean to him: His remorse was grievous to witness. He made no attempt to conceal it from Mrs. Trevanion. Indeed, it was the only thing he could talk of. He clung to her, imploring her not to leave him. He seemed to hang on her presence as the only chance of saving his darling.

To Mrs. Trevanion's relief, the name of Dallas never crossed June's lips. During those dreadful days of her poor little

child's illness, death and burial, June was happily unconscious. She knew nothing of Tom's agonized face, as he came in with hushed steps and haggard eyes from that other chamber where half his hopes lay dead—from the little waxen figure that it would have broken June's heart to see. This anguish at least she was spared.

When the funeral was over poor Tom used to creep up to the nursery and sit with his face in his hands. Sometimes he would take up one of little Tom's toys, and then, poor fellow, he would burst into a terrible passion of dry sobs. When he came down he would go on tiptoe into his wife's room and look at her in dumb despair.

After the twenty-first day June took a turn for the better. For the first time she looked at Mrs. Trevanion with recognition in her eyes, and put out a wasted waxen hand to her.

"Have I been ill?" she asked, in a languid voice.

"You will soon be well now, dear child," answered Mrs. Trevanion, in her cheeriest tones.

"Where is Tom?" she asked, presently.

"Would you like to see him?"

June made a gesture of assent, and Mrs. Trevanion went to fetch him.

"But," she said, as he was preparing with alacrity to obey the summons, "not in these clothes," looking at the mourning garments he was wearing for his lost heir. "And if," he voice faltering, "if she asks for the poor darling, you must try to command yourself, and say that he has gone away to stay."

Tom arrayed himself in an old shooting suit, and went on tiptoe to his wife's room. What an eager light there was in his honest face as he approached the bed and once more saw recognition in the eyes of his beloved! She smiled faintly and held out her hand to him, and he took it in his as tenderly as though it might melt away at a touch.

"Where is little Tom?" asked June, faintly. "I want to see all the family."

Mrs. Trevanion saw the convulsive working of Tom's face, and hastened to interpose.

"He is with his grandmother, darling," she said, thinking sadly of June's dead mother; but June understood, as it was meant she should, that he was with Mrs. Ellesmere.

"Fancy Tom letting him out of his sight!" she murmured, and then sank back tired, and said no more.

"Oh," said Tom, in a melancholy voice, as they sat together after dinner on the last evening, "what shall I do without you? I don't believe my poor little girl would ever have pulled through but for you."

"When she is stronger, you must tell her," answered Mrs. Trevanion, with tears in her eyes. "And when you talk about your dreadful loss, it will be heart-breaking at first, but it will draw you closer together afterward. And now," looking very kindly at his grief-stricken face, "do you feel sufficiently friendly to allow me to take a liberty?"

At this Tom jumped up, and, coming round to her, seized her hand and held it fast.

"What in the world might you not say or do?" And he took the chair beside her.

"You know," said Mrs. Trevanion, after a slight pause, "when our poor darling was so ill and we did not know which way it might turn, I would not allow you to reproach yourself in any way on her account; but, now that she is going to get quite well and strong again, you must be all in all to each other, just as you were when first you married."

Mrs. Trevanion paused a moment; then, looking at him very kindly and speaking in a low but resolute voice, she proceeded: "No third person ought ever to be allowed to come between a husband and wife. The cause of most of the misunderstanding between you and dear June has been the interference of Miss Ellesmere."

"Yes, yes," said Tom, heartily. "I am sure you are right. But I think, with poor Agnes, it was what you would call want of tact more than anything else. However," seeing the expression of dissent on his friend's face, "it shall never happen again. No one—nothing—shall ever come between my wife and me. Please God she gets well, she shall have it all her own way."

Mrs. Trevanion smiled. "I think you will find," she said, "that June is less likely to be spoiled by too much kindness than by the other method. And I am quite sure that a man as good and kind as you are ought to make any reasonable woman happy, and will do so when left to yourself."

"Oh," cried Tom, deprecatingly, "don't say anything about me! I'm a very poor sort of chap, I'm afraid!"

"No, you are not," said Mrs. Trevanion, smiling and putting out her hand to him. "But you are none the worse for being modest, and when I come to stay with you again I know I shall find you the happiest couple in the world."

"And we will be, thanks to you!" cried

Tom, fervently, still grasping her hand. "It will be thanks to the natural good qualities of both of you, and to there being no one to interfere," answered Mrs. Trevanion, kindly.

CHAPTER XXVII.

It was the first week in January. Sir Thomas and Lady Nevil were staying at their place in the North. Extensive alterations were being made at the Hall, and, indeed, both its master and mistress shrank from the idea of returning to the place where such terrible calamity had befallen them. June had almost recovered her health, though not her spirits. Her child's death had been a crushing blow; it seemed to her a sort of divine retribution for having thought too little of him in his lifetime.

Six months ago anyone might safely have predicted that the boy's death would have fallen with ten times more severity on Tom than on June; but such was not the case. Tom was almost cheerful, while his wife was a prey to the deepest grief. Now Tom only had one object in life—to devote himself to June, to heap love, affection, caresses upon her, to prove to her beyond all doubt how thoroughly and entirely she occupied his heart. And June, if she remained sad, thoroughly appreciated his kindness and tenderness, and was always ready to reciprocate it after a gentle and subdued fashion, very different from her gay, coquettish manner of old. Time would doubtless bring that back, but it would have been strange and unnatural that she should so soon forget.

Her heart had returned to its old allegiance. Tom was again the one man in the world whom she loved, and whose existence was necessary to her. When she thought of her dead young hero, it was with the tenderness of a sister's love, and she could thank God, oh, how fervently! that no word had ever been spoken between them that might tarnish her memory of him or cause her a single pang of self-reproach.

Mr. and Mrs. Carslake were their only guests, and thoroughly congenial ones. Madge's brightness and gaiety, tempered by her sympathy for her cousin's distress, made her presence most welcome to June, and Mr. Carslake, who possessed a very kind heart and considerable tact, was excellent company for Tom. He was, moreover, an excellent sportsman, and, with his host, enjoyed the capital sport which the place afforded. Madge was exceedingly happy. Being neither quite so sentimentally inclined nor so exacting as her cousin by disposition, she was in no danger of suffering disappointment or disillusionment, and was perfectly satisfied with the very real if undemonstrative public affection of her lord.

"I am sure," she said, laughing, to June, "any one might think that you and Tom were bride and bridegroom rather than Robert and I. As for Tom, I believe he must have been taking lessons in the art of love making, he does it so well."

Tom and Madge had made up their differences and were on the old affectionate terms again.

One morning as the four were sitting at breakfast, the letters, unusually late, were brought in. Presently the rest of the company were startled by a whoop in the old style from Madge, as she started up and executed one of the pas seuls dear to the days of her youth, but which she had relinquished since she had arrived at the dignity of the marriage state.

"Madge!" remonstrated her husband, pretending to look shocked, but inwardly amused.

"This letter," cried Madge, waving it in the air, "contains the most delightful news in the world—news that will fill each of your separate and all your collective hearts with joy when you hear it. I will not take up your time by asking you to try and guess, because you never would. Our dear Agnes is about to become a Bishopsess. But do not, my loves, be too elated by the grandeur of the connection. He is only a colonial bishop. Listen to mother's letter."

"It seems that Agnes produced a great impression upon him when he saw her a year ago at the Marstons'. He thought her so very sweet, and was so struck by her earnest interest in mission work. So he begged Mrs. Marston to invite them to meet again, and proposed to her the day before yesterday. She is to accompany him to Africa in the spring. It will be a great trial to part from her, especially as we have already lost one of our dear children, but, if it is for her happiness, we must not consider ourselves."

"Fancy Aggie Bishopsess of the Cannibal Islands!" cried Madge; "perhaps they will eat her some day. I wonder if a sweet woman tastes better than an ordinary one? I remember quite well meeting the bishop at the Marstons' and thinking him one of the most odious and domineering wretches I ever saw. He is very small, with coal-black eyes and beard, and a complexion of a decidedly liverish hue; he looked as though he might have improved it with soap and water if he cared to, but I don't think he did care. He had a delightful conviction that ninety-nine out of every hundred souls would go to a naughty place, and he looked as if he had a fiendish temper. So Aggie's sweetness will have full scope."

Madge uttered her tirade with such a mixture of drollery and malice that even Tom burst out laughing.

Late in the afternoon, when he was sitting in his wife's boudoir before dinner—he had resumed this old affectionate custom—June said, leaning her head against his shoulder:

"We must give Agnes a very handsome wedding present." And then, with something akin to her old playful manner, "It will be a thank offering."

"We will give her whatever you like, my darling," answered Tom. "It is just as well, perhaps, that she is going away, but," with emphasis, "whether she goes or stays, no one shall ever come between my wife and me again."

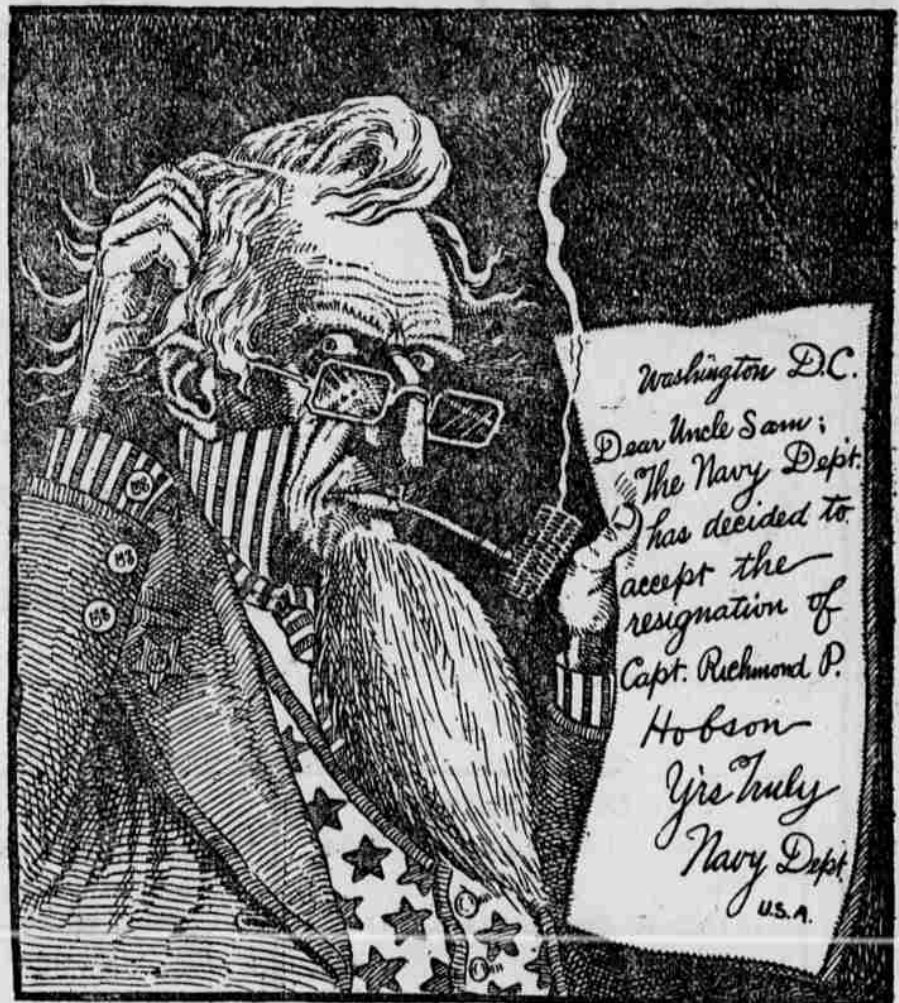
"Do you swear it?" said June, looking earnestly into his eyes.

"I swear it. So help me heaven," he answered.

And, to ratify his bond, he took her in his arms and kissed her sweet, pale face fervently again and again.

(The end.)

AFTER ALL, WHAT IS FAME?



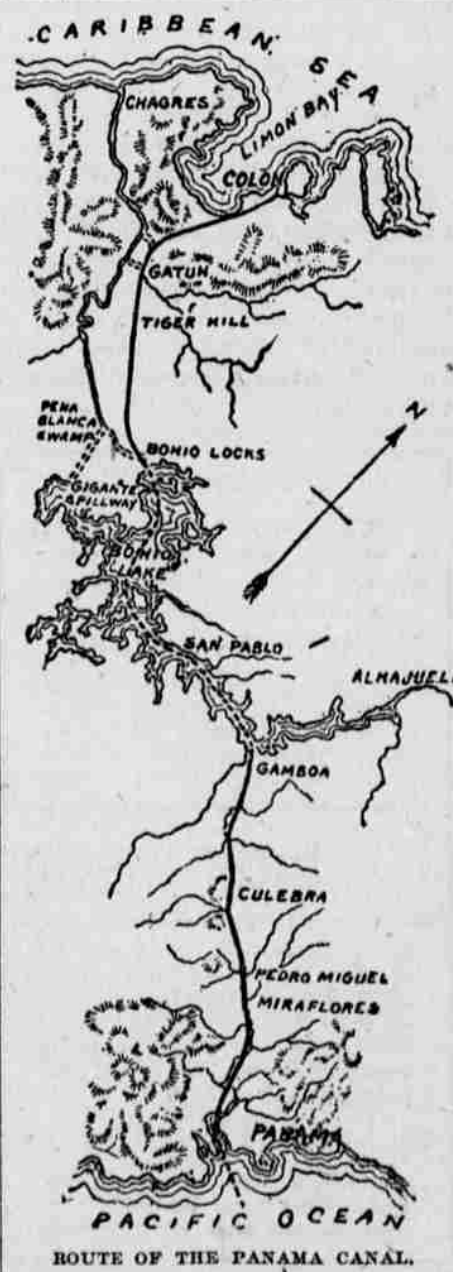
Uncle Sam—Hobson, Hobson? Seems to me I can't place him. Oh, yes, didn't he kiss somebody or sink a ship?

THE PANAMA CANAL.

Some of the Main Features of a Great Engineering Work.

Now that the diplomatic obstacles in the way of the construction of the Panama Canal are removed, many people, the Tribune Farmer believes, will be glad to refresh their memories concerning the leading engineering features of the plan.

The isthmus is thirty-five miles wide in a straight line, but the canal will be about thirty-eight and a half miles long, not including channel dredging in the terminal harbors. The general direction from the Atlantic (Caribbean) and to the Pacific outlet is from northwest to southeast. The Pacific port, Panama, is about twenty miles further east than Colon on the Atlantic. The highest ground is off to the south, and the elevation here is sometimes 300 feet above sea level. The water sup-



ply comes from the Chagres River, to the eastward of the canal route. That stream joins the latter near Gamboa, and widens out into a lake (Bohio) twelve and a half miles long. Much of this can be utilized for the canal at very little cost. The general course of the Chagres is northwestward, and it empties into the Caribbean several miles west of Colon, having flowed through a low, marshy country much of the way. From Lake Bohio the canal follows a different route from the river. It is proposed to have the bottom of the canal 150 feet wide. The slope of the banks, and hence the width at the top, will depend on the nature of the soil through which the canal is cut. The canal is to be thirty-five feet deep.

To the first stretch of twelve and a half miles southward from Colon there will probably be no interruption. In order to reach the level of Lake Bohio two or three locks will be necessary.

General H. V. Abbot advised having the lake, whose height will be determined by a dam across the old path of the Chagres, only seventy feet above sea level. The United States commission adopted ninety feet as the standard, although in the driest season this may fall off to eighty-two. Where the canal taps the lake two or three locks are to be introduced. The commission favored only two, each making a difference of forty-two or forty-five feet in the water level. Although such locks are feasible, it is remotely possible that three may finally be adopted, as it is safer to lock up and down only thirty feet at a time. If a third lock is introduced perhaps it will not be located close to the other two, but be constructed at Tiger Hill. An enormous dam, blocking the course of the Chagres, is to be built a little east of the Bohio locks. Engineers say that there will be less danger of seepage, or leakage through the soil, if there is a head of only sixty-five to seventy feet here, instead of one of ninety. Still, if there is another lock at Tiger Hill the same effect would be secured.

A spillway to discharge the surplus water of Lake Bohio, will be constructed three miles to the southwest of the dam and locks, on a small tributary called the Gigante. A natural cut exists here, sixty-five feet above sea level. Of course the spillway must be higher than that to maintain the desired level in Lake Bohio. The commission proposes to have it eighty-five feet above the sea. From the Gigante the water will drain off through swamps to the lower Chagres, a little excavating helping the flow here. It is expected that the Gigante spillway will serve as an automatic safety valve in time of floods.

As already stated, about twelve and a half miles of route lie through Lake Bohio. For fully seven miles there will be deep water. Only a little dredging will be necessary as Gamboa is approached. To the southeast of the latter point lies the heaviest work along the whole route. For nearly eight miles (7.95, to be exact) a cut in the backbone of the isthmus will be needed to bring the canal down to the proper level. This is known as the Culebra cut. The water will be no higher here than in Lake Bohio, and there will be no locks. However, as it may be desirable to drain the Culebra level some time, gates will be introduced near Gamboa (at Obispo).

It may be remarked, in passing, that the depth of the Culebra cut bears a close relation to the height of the Bohio dam. The amount of excavation in the former was lessened twenty feet when the commission decided to raise the level of Lake Bohio to ninety feet above the sea, instead of seventy feet. On the other hand, if General Abbot's recommendations had been adopted, it would have been necessary to go twenty feet lower in the cut. Part of the material to be removed here is rock, but a good deal is merely clay.

Partly to control the excesses of the Chagres in very rainy weather, it has been proposed to build a dam at Alhajuela, ten or eleven miles east of Gamboa, near the source of the stream. An artificial lake there would serve as a reservoir, take care of part of the surplus water when the precipitation was heavy, and thus relieve Lake Bohio of a part of its responsibility. By affording storage, too, it would be able to reinforce the lower lake in the dry season.

A woman regards every old engagement as a scalp dangling at her belt. But the men have a different notion.

The best some people can do is to express second-hand opinions.