

The Ne'er-Do-Well.

[Continued from page 6, Col. 4.]

"Don't be angry, Kirk. I haven't seen you alone since—that night." "Taboga?" he said guiltily. "You're not going to lecture me again? I'm sorry enough as it is."

"What a queer chap you are! Am I so unattractive that you really want to rush off after those horses? I have known men who would have thought it a privilege to be left alone with me—like this."

"I—have no doubt." "You remember, for instance, I told you there was one man at Taboga whom I did not wish to see?" "Yes—at the sanitarium."

"Well, something like this happened once—with him—and I told Stephen." "And did you tell Mr. Cortlandt what I did?"

"Do you think I would have come riding with you if I had?" She shook her head. "Kirk, I used to think you were an unusually forward young man, but you're not very worldly, are you?"

He began firmly: "See here, Mrs. Cortlandt, you have been mighty good to me, and I'm indebted to you and your husband for a whole lot. I am terribly fond of you both."

"I suppose," she said, half defiantly, "you know how things are with Stephen and me—everybody must know, I suppose. Happiness—that is what I want, and I will have it—I will have it at any cost. It is my right. Because a woman marries without love, is it right for her to forego love all her life? I think not."

"I can't pretend to misunderstand you, although—listen!" He cut his words short. "Here comes some one."

She turned her head, as from the direction their mounts had taken came the sound of approaching hoofs. "Natives from the hills," she nodded carelessly toward the purple mountains back of them. But the next moment she gave a little gasp of consternation. Out from the overhanging path, with a great rustling of leaves, came not the expected flea bitten Panama horse, but a familiar bay, astride of which was Stephen Cortlandt. He was leading Marquis and Gyp by their bridles and reined in at the sight of his wife and her companion.

"Hello!" he said. "I caught your horses for you."

"Jove, that's lucky!" Kirk greeted the husband's arrival with genuine relief. "They bolted when we got down to take a drink, and we were getting ready for a long walk. Thanks, awfully."

"No trouble at all. I saw them as they came out on the main road." Cortlandt's pigskin saddle creaked as he bent forward to deliver the reins. He was as cool and immaculate as ever. He met Edith's eyes without the slightest expression. "Nice afternoon for a ride. Pretty spot, isn't it? If you are going back I'll ride with you."

"Good enough. May I give you a hand, Mrs. Cortlandt?" Kirk helped Edith to her seat, at which her husband bowed his thanks. Then the three set out in single file.

"Which way?" inquired Stephen as they reached the highroad. "Back to town, I think," Edith told him. "And you?"

"I'm not ready yet. See you later." He raised his hat and cantered easily away, while the other two turned their horses' heads toward the city.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Rest of the Family.

THE time for Senor Garavel's return having arrived, Kirk called at the bank and found not the least difficulty in gaining an audience. "I remember you quite well, sir," said Garavel—"La Tosca." Since you are a friend of Mrs. Cortlandt I shall be delighted to serve you.

"I have something very particular to say to you," Kirk began diffidently, "but I don't just know how to get at it."

Garavel smiled graciously. "I am a business man."

"This isn't business," blurted Kirk; "it's much more important. I want to have it over as quickly as possible, so I'll be frank. I have met your daughter, Mr. Garavel—the banker's eyes widened in a look of disconcerting intensity—and I am in love with her—sort of a shock, isn't it? It was to me. I'd like to tell you who I am and anything else you may wish to know."

"My dear sir, you surprise me—if you are really serious. Why, you have seen her but once—a moment, at the theater?"

"I met her before that night, out at your country place. I had been hunting and on my way home through the woods I stumbled upon your swimming pool. She directed me to the road."

"But even so?" "Well, I loved her the first instant I saw her."

tell. Just now I'm working on the P. R. R. as assistant to Runnels—the master of transportation, you know. I like the work and expect to be promoted. I have a little money—just enough to give me a fresh start if I should lose out here, and—oh, well, I'm poor, but honest. I suppose that's about the size of it." He paused, vaguely conscious that he had not done himself justice. "My father is a railroad man in Albany, N. Y."

"In what capacity is he employed, may I ask?" Kirk grinned at this, and, seeing a copy of Bradstreet's on the banker's table, turned to his father's name, which he pointed out rather shamefacedly. Senor Garavel became instantly less distant.

"Of course the financial world knows Darwin K. Anthony," said he. "Evan

we modest merchants of the tropics have heard of him, and that his son should seek to win success upon his own merits is greatly to his credit. I congratulate you, sir, upon your excellent progress."

"I ought to tell you, sir, that I am not on good terms with my father at present. In fact, he has cast me off. That is why I am here supporting myself by hard work, instead of living in idleness. But I'm beginning to like the work—and I'll make good—I'll do it if only to show my father his mistake. That's what I care about most. I don't want his money. It's easier to make money than I thought. But I must succeed, for his sake and my own."

"May I inquire the cause of this estrangement?"

"Oh, general worthlessness on my part, I suppose. Come to think of it, I must have been a good deal of a cross. I never did anything very fierce, though." He smiled a little sadly.

A quick light of thought flashed through the banker's eyes. He was a keen judge of men.

"Well, well," he said, with a trace of impatience, "there is no need to go into the matter further. Your pro-



"She has been promised to Ramon."

posal is impossible—for many reasons it is impossible, and yet—your spirit is commendable."

"Does that mean you won't even allow me to see your daughter?" "It would be useless."

"But I love Gertrudis," said Kirk, desperately.

Garavel looked a trifle pitying. "You are by no means the first," he said; "I have been besieged by many who say always the same thing—with-out Gertrudis they cannot, they will not, they should not live. And yet I have heard of no deaths. Her marriage has been arranged."

"Do you think that is quite fair to her? If she loves Ramon Alvarez?"

Once again Garavel's brows signaled surprise. "Ah, you know?"

"Yes, sir. I was about to say if she really loves him I can't make any difference. But suppose she should care for me?"

"Again it could make no difference once she had married Ramon. But she is too young to know her own mind. Youth is headstrong and blinded by dreams; hence it is better that marriage should be arranged by older persons."

"Exactly. That's why I want you to arrange mine." The banker smiled in spite of himself, for he was not without a sense of humor, and the young man's sincerity was winning.

"It is out of the question," he said; "useless to discuss. Forgetting for the moment all other considerations, there is an obstacle to your marriage into a Spanish family which you do not stop to consider, one which might well prove insurmountable. I speak of religion."

"No trouble there, sir." "You are then a Catholic?" "It was my mother's faith, and I was brought up in it until she died. After that I sort of neglected it. You see, I am more of a Catholic than anything else."

"What we call a 'bad Catholic'?" "Yes, sir. But if I were not it wouldn't make any difference. Chiquita is my religion."

"Who?" "The father, started."

"I—I call her that," Kirk explained in confusion; "to myself, of course." "Indeed! So do I," said Senor Garavel dryly. For a moment he frowned in meditation. There were many things to consider. He felt a certain sympathy for this young man, with his straightforwardness and artless brus-

querie. Moreover, though the banker was no great respecter of persons, the mention of Darwin K. Anthony had impressed him. If Kirk were all that he seemed he had no doubt of the ultimate reconciliation of father and son. At all events it would do no harm to learn more of this extraordinary suitor, and meanwhile he must treat him with respect while carefully guarding his own dignity against possibly impertinent advances.

"She has been promised to Ramon," he said, at last, "and I have considered her future quite settled. Of course, such arrangements are frequently altered for various causes, even at the last moment, but—who knows?" He shrugged his shoulders. "She may not wish to entertain your suit. So why discuss it? Why make plans or promises? It is a matter to be handled

with the greatest delicacy; there are important issues linked with it. For a young man I have known so very short a time—he smiled genially—"you have impressed me not unfavorably. I thank you for coming to me, at any rate."

The two men rose and shook hands; Kirk was not altogether cast down by the result of the interview. He understood the banker's allusion to the possible change of arrangements, and felt sure from what Chiquita had told him that the marriage with Ramon could not take place after the true nature of Garavel's political aspirations became known.

The truth was that Andres Garavel had not hesitated long after that memorable night at the Tivoli before accepting the brilliant prize which the Cortlandts had dangled so alluringly before his eyes, and the decision once made, he had entered into the scheme with all his soul. He was wise enough, however, to leave his destiny largely in their hands.

It was not long after Kirk's visit to the bank that Garavel, during a conference with the Cortlandts, took occasion to bring up the young man's name. Cortlandt had been called to the telephone, and Edith was left free to answer without constraint.

"I have seen you and him riding quite frequently," her guest remarked, with polite interest. "Is he, then, an old friend?"

"Yes, we are very fond of him. He will be promoted soon, by the way, although he doesn't know it. He is to replace Runnels as soon as he is able. Kirk is certain to succeed, and old Anthony will come round, if I know American fathers."

Garavel smiled, well pleased that he had treated his recent visitor with proper consideration. After all, why not invite the young fellow to his house? That would be rather a significant step according to Spanish custom, yet he need not be bound by it. He could put a stop to the affair at any time. Besides, despite his frequent protestations to the contrary, he was somewhat influenced by his daughter's desire for more liberty. It was not fair to her, he thought in his heart, that she should know only Ramon. One reason especially appealed to his pride. If a break came between him and Alvarez, Ramon must not appear to have jilted Gertrudis. If, meanwhile, she had another suitor, and one of distinguished family, the affair would wear a better look. It cannot be denied that the name of Darwin K. Anthony rang musically in his ears.

"The boy has the right stuff in him," Edith went on. "He began at the bottom only a few months ago, preferring to work his way up, though he was offered a first rate position to begin with."

She would have said more, but just at that moment her husband entered. "You were saying that Alvarez suspects," said Cortlandt, addressing Garavel. "Has he said anything?"

"Not to me as yet, but he surely must know. The rumors must have reached him. He is cold, and Ramon acts queerly. I feel guilty—almost as if I had betrayed a friend."

"Nonsense! When the time comes you will be called for. But it must be the voice of the people calling. Bocas, Chiriqui, Colon—they must all demand Garavel." Cortlandt sighed. "I shall be very glad when it is over." He looked more pale, more bloodless, more world weary than ever.

"You need have no fear that it will cause serious trouble between you and the general," Mrs. Cortlandt assured Garavel. "Ramon should be able to effect peace, no matter what happens."

"Ah, I am not so sure that there will be a marriage between Gertrudis and him."

"Is she growing rebellious?" Cort-

landt inquired. "If I were you, then, I wouldn't force her. A loveless marriage is a tragic thing."

His wife nodded her agreement. "Not exactly rebellious. She would do whatever I asked regardless of her own feelings, for that is the way we Spaniards bring up our daughters, but she is cold to Ramon, and he, I believe, is suspicious of my intentions toward his father. Therefore the situation is strained. With Gertrudis I cannot be severe, but unless it becomes necessary to make conditions with my old friend, Alvarez, I should prefer to let the girl have her own way."

[Continued next week.]

Primrose League.

The Primrose league was formed in 1884 in memory of the late Lord Beaconsfield, whose favorite flower the primrose is thought to have been. Beaconsfield died on April 19, 1881, and the anniversary of that day is termed "primrose day," when the flower is generally worn by his admirers and also placed upon his statue in Parliament square. The joke of it is, the primrose was not the great statesman's favorite flower. It was, however, the favorite flower of Queen Victoria, and when asked about the floral tribute to be sent to Beaconsfield's funeral she advised sending "the primrose, my favorite flower." In some way the matter got mixed up, and the delusion sprang up that materialized in the Primrose league.—New York American.

Persistent Carlyle.

The father of Thomas Carlyle was a stonemason and a good one, so his son said. The elder was as proud of his stone walls as was the son of his own "French Revolution" when he threw the complete manuscript on the table and said something like this to his wife:

"There, let the world have it. I have put my best blood into it."

But his patience and pride in his work was to receive a severer test. He lent the manuscript to a friend, who did not safeguard it. As a result a servant threw it into the fire. The author was not mirthful by nature, yet he went cheerfully at his work again and for the second time put his best blood into it.—Boston Globe.

No Danger.

Rich Father—I fear that young man of yours is living beyond his means. Daughter—Oh, no, papa; he hasn't any.—Boston Transcript.

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