End of a Campaign.

By MATT CRIM.

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CHAPTER I.

When Mrs. Colonel Waring sold her old home in Virginia and went to New York to live, she frankly confessed that it was for the sole purpose of giving her daughters the advantages of social life, and the opportunity to marry well.

Frankness seemed one of Mrs. Colonel Waring's crowning charms. Her poverty, the beauty of her daughters, her motherly anxiety and ambition for their future, were all gracefully acknowledged; but discretion went hand in hand with this candor. The lady was shrewd enough to know perfectly well when and with whom to talk so freely. Her audiences were carefully selected. Men were apt to pity and admire her, but a few ill-natured women had declared her to be a deliberate and selfish schemer. However, Mrs. Colonel Waring suffered little from these scurrilous attacks.

She was a small, slightly-built woman, with a thin face, queer gray eyes and dark hair tinged silvery on the temples. She dressed plainly and always very markedly as a widow, but wore some handsome rings on her slender hands. No one ever observed Mrs. Colonel Waring without also observing the old-fashioned diamond on her forefinger. It seemed to assist largely in the perfection of her plans. When occupied with some knotty problem she would turn and twist it around on her finger incessantly. As for the colonel, he had fought gallantly for the confederacy, and finally lost his life in its service. People who knew the family well had liked him rather better than his wife. He had been a handsome, robust man, as healthy in mind as in body, a truly candid soul without any pretense or make believe. The daughters inherited his beauty, and they might have resembled him more in spirit had he lived to train and influence them. But they knew the pinch of poverty and felt it all the more because their mother chafed under it so sorely. Her high estimate of money and position had its influence with them, and the two eldest sisters married according to her wishes. They had the opportunity, for the Warings were remotely connected with a moderately well-to-do and very aristocratic family—according to the New York standard of aristocracy—while Tom Waring, who had made and lost two or three fortunes on the stock exchange, rendered valuable service in bringing some of his moneyed friends to the house. So her sisters married, and then it was Barbara's turn.

For her, Mrs. Waring had made her most ambitious plans. She was undoubtedly more attractive than either of her sisters, although they were much handsomer. She was charming, but not eager to please, therefore men were anxious to please her, and then she possessed a decided "style," to which, she, as well as her mother, attached decided value. She listened to her mother's worldly counsel with a ready acceptance of its wisdom and a cool impartial appreciation of her gifts and what was due her family pride. It would be an exceptional man indeed who could win her. Her marriage should be a triumph before which all the Waring marriages would pale into utter insignificance. She desired money, the prestige of a fine old name, and a brilliant mind. She would neither marry a rich fool nor a poor genius. She read the history of famous and fascinating women, pored over accounts of the French salons and wished that she could have one of her own. Her lip curled witjh disdain at the thought of contenting herself with the frivolous pastimes of a mere society woman. It was her vaguely outlined plan to draw about her the highest and best in all the arts and professions, to become a patron of genius and be noted for her brilliant gatherings as well as the perfection of her gowns. Love had not even been considered. Indeed, it rather pleased her to think that she couldn't love very deeply, that her head, her well poised, artistically dressed head, would always govern her.

"A little unwomanly," Tom Waring would say to himself when his thoughts wandered in her direction. "Not very deep, either, I fancy, but taking—immensely taking."

Waring was a stout, florid bachelor who had been through an endless number of love affairs and who still retained his chivalrous admiration for women. He had taken the pretty Waring girls under a semi-professional wing and felt it his duty to administer many solemn warnings on worldly ambition. But as he invariably delivered those warnings after dinner freely he only provoked laughter and affectionate raillery. Barbara exasperated him very much.

"A fellow might kill himself for you, and I don't believe you'd know enough to care a bawbee!" he exclaimed, one evening.

She leaned her head lazily against the back of her chair.

"Ah! well, perhaps not so bad as that," she said, nonchalantly. "But a man who would do such a decidedly imbecile thing is hardly worth pitying, don't you think so?"

"I wonder," said Waring, looking quizzically at her, "I wonder if you are not posing. It is your evident desire to appear very flinty, and you play your part well—very well. But I'm sorry. I wish girls would be more simple and natural."

His earnestness amused her.

"I think it would be very tedious to have to keep up a pose before you, Cousin Tom, one of my own family—tedious and unprofitable. Girls are natural, only they are not all angels, but human beings, like the rest of the world. If I can't fall madly in love or don't want to, what's the difference? I think the people in love are about the most wretched creatures I know, always swinging between heaven and hell."

"You've been well trained, Miss Waring. A fish would be warm-blooded compared to you."

Barbara refused to be piqued.

"Mamma is admirable, but I have a reason of my own which occasionally is able to assert itself."

"Your reason be hanged!" cried Waring, rising from his seat in a passion. "It doesn't seem to prevent you from accepting all the adoration that is offered you."

"You positively grow rude, Cousin Tom. Don't you think it would be wise for you to go home and sleep off your ill temper?"

"I beg your pardon, Barbara. I have to let myself out occasionally, you know. But what has reason to do with love—genuine true-hearted love, you know?"

Barbara's eyes glinted.

"I don't see why it shouldn't have a great deal to do with it, and I think if it did there'd be fewer unhappy people in the world—fewer divorces even. There is no reason whatever for people throwing common sense to the wind simply because they fall in love. For my part—"

"By Jove! Barbara you are stunning, really. I'd like to possess a little of your coolness when stocks are going down and the market smashes. Your serenity is worth a fortune."

Barbara passed through three seasons and received a number of offers of marriage. They were all rejected, however. She had not yet found what she wanted.

"And you never will, my dear Barbara, depend upon it. You'll either marry some poor devil, or die an old maid," said the irrepressible Tom, who watched her social career with unabated interest.

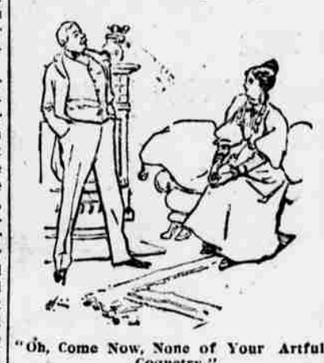
Barbara involuntarily stole a glance at herself in a mirror.

"Oh, you are not losing your attractiveness, I must admit. You wear marvelously well." His voice sunk to a suggestion of tenderness. "You could be a matchless woman if you had a heart."

"A very necessary portion of one's anatomy, I should say. I hope I have one."

"A tireless machine to propel your blood, that is all—not capable of much feeling."

"It loves you," she said, with a sudden bewitchingly soft smile. That was one of the fascinating things about



"Oh, Come Now, None of Your Artful Coquetry."

Barbara—the little glimpses of womanliness occasionally peeping tantalizingly through her colorless languor.

"Oh, come, now, none of your artful coquetries on me!" he exclaimed, flushing and stroking his gray mustache.

"Then you must stop harking back to that old theme. We settled it long ago."

"No, we have not settled it. We never can as long as you refuse to—"

"To see through your eyes?"

"To see what you are blising. But I guess you are all right—some sides of you, at any rate. I believe you'd make a first-rate mother. Now, wouldn't you?"

She had relapsed into her usual indifference.

"I really never gave the matter a thought," she said, then suddenly broke through again and laughed a gay, delightful laugh. "How you do overflow with sentiment. You must have been in love a score of times.

"I have."

"And your heart? I suppose it is in a very fragmentary condition?"

"On the contrary, it has been enriched by every experience," he replied, with dignity. "My first love affair occurred when I was only twelve years old. What an experience! What profound emotion thrilled my soul!"

He sighed deeply, throwing his head back and gazing retrospectively at the ceiling.

"And when did the last affair end?" Barbara inquired casually.

Waring came out of his sentimental reverie with a slightly disconcerted air.

"Oh—ah, it hasn't ended."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, she is the dearest litle woman in the world."

"How interesting! Why don't you marry her?"

"She—ah, is already married. It is a purely platonic sentiment between us, I assure you, Barbara. She is neglected and I pity her. I shall never marry."

Just then Mrs. Waring's niece broke into the conversation. She had all the while been seated near the window.

"Tom, Tom, why do you talk such nonsense? Of course you will marry. There is a Divinity that shapes our ends."

"A peroxide of hydrogened one will probably shape his," Barbara remarked from the cabinet mantel where she was now standing rearranging her hair.

Waring dined downtown with some friends that evening, and then returned to his rooms to make some changes in his toilet before going on to the Lyceum where he had promised to meet Barbara and her mother. He had imbibed so freely of champagne that he was overflowing with joyousness.

"I am not drunk, but Jove, my head does feel peculiar," he muttered to himself. "That champagne must have been extra dry, sure enough."

At the last moment he discovered some letters on the table. He turned them over carelessly, while humming a popular air. A foreign postmark attracted his eye, and he opened that letter, pushing the others aside to be read at a more convenient time. It was from an old acquaintance traveling abroad.

"And now, Waring, I come to the real point of this discourse. My son is on his way to America. He has foolishly entangled himself in a love affair with a young widow over here, and I am anxious to break off the whole matter. He will call upon you in New York, and I beg you, for the sake of our friendship in the past, to look after him, you know all the best people. Introduce him to some charming girls and try, if possible, to make him forget his widow. Please do not let him know that I have prepared you for his visit. I am quite recovered from the most serious of my ailments. Ever your friend.

JAMES NOEL."

For a moment Waring struggled with his befogged memory trying to place James Noel.

"Oh, yes; oh, yes," he said finally, "I know who it is now. James Noel went abroad with his family years ago, and his daughter married a prince or something of that kind. Why, of course, awfully sick man, Jim Noel. Didn't

A Foreign Postmark Attracted His Eye.

suppose he'd be alive a month after he left America. Why, I knew the Noels before the war—fine old family, and Jim made money till you couldn't rest. Perfect loads of it."

He mused over the letter and the responsibility thrust upon him for a moment. Then a brilliant idea struck him.

"I'll introduce him to Barbara—that's the thing, the very thing. If he's not hopeless she'll cure him. Yes, I'll introduce him to Barbara."

He winked at himself in the mirror, and gathered up his hat and gloves. At the same instant a servant appeared at the door with a card.

Waring took it and gave vent to a prolonged whistle, but in a moment he remembered himself through the haze of his astonishment.

"Show the gentleman up, show him up," he said quickly. "Now I must be careful what I say; funny that he should call the very day I get the letter. Wonder if he looks like his father. I am very glad to see you, Mr. Noel," he exclaimed heartily as a blonde, good-natured looking young man entered the room. "Knew your father very well; I ought to say extremely well. I'm happy to welcome you to America; very happy indeed to welcome you to America."

"You are kind, Mr. Waring," said Noel. "I promised my father I would look you up if I ever came to New York."

"Delightful of him to remember his old friend"—hypocritically, and with his hand upon the letter in his pocket.

"He always spoke of you in the warmest tones, sir," said the young man, seriously. He did not appear an entirely spoiled or willful youth. He was older than Waring had expected, judging from his father's letter, and even through the simple candor of his manner one might have seen a suggestion of satisfactory reserve force and self-reliance. Waring insisted upon taking him to the theater, and learned during the drive that Noel had studied art abroad, and that he expected to set up a studio in New York. He did not speak of his family, and Waring tactfully refrained from making inquiries. He introduced the young man to his relatives and managed during the evening to whisper into Mrs. Colonel Waring's ear some information about his aristocratic family, and his father's wealth, enlarging especially upon the princess. Mrs. Colonel Waring absorbed all these details as a hungry fish does water after being out on dry land.

"He's very ambitious, too. Works, you know, for the love of it. Will suit Barbara to a T," Waring added, as she smiled blandly upon the young man.

But when he had slept off the effects of the dinner he had almost forgotten Noel's existence. Some mining investment called him away to the west and he left at a day's notice, merely writing a line of farewell to Mrs. Waring and her daughter.

[To be Concluded.]