



CHAPTER VIII. SHADOWS BEFORE.

Mrs. Westmacott's great meeting for the enfranchisement of woman had passed over, and it had been a triumphant success.

But there was one woman at least to whom the meeting and all that was connected with it had brought anything but pleasure.

All this might have passed as merely the natural pleasure which an elderly man might take in the society of an intelligent and handsome woman, but there were other points which seemed to Clara to give it a deeper meaning.

One evening the doctor had been rather late at his neighbor's. He used to go into the admiral's after dinner, but now he turned more frequently in the other direction.

"You are looking a little pale, dear," he remarked.

"Yes, I should think that he is not the sort of man who goes wrong. There is nothing hidden about him.

"It is between ourselves. I am her trustee, and so I know something of her arrangements. And when are you going to marry, Clara?"

"Well, really, I don't know that there is any reason for delay. He has a competence, and it increases yearly.

"But you would be completely free." "No, dear, you cannot be that if you are a guest in another man's house. Can you suggest no other alternative?"

you both to marry, but still I should like a suggestion from you, Clara, as to what I should do."

"But there is no hurry, papa. Let us wait. I do not intend to marry yet."

"Well, Clara, if you can suggest nothing, I suppose that I must take the initiative myself," said he.

"Then what do you propose, papa? She traced herself as one who sees the blow which is about to fall.

He looked at her and hesitated. "How like your poor dear mother you are, Clara," he cried. "As I looked at you then it was as if she had come back from the grave."

Clara went up stairs sad at heart, for she was sure now that what she had feared was indeed about to come to pass, and that her father was going to ask Mrs. Westmacott to be his wife.

The widow might fascinate him by her knowledge of the world, her dash, her strength, her unconventionalities—all these qualities Clara was willing to allow her—but she was convinced that she would be unendurable as a life companion.

It passed as a mere eccentricity when they heard of her stout drinking, her cigarette smoking, her occasional whiffs at a long clay pipe, her horsewhipping of a drunken servant and her companionship with the snake Eliza, whom she was in the habit of bearing about in her pocket.

It was a hateful thought, and yet it must be faced.

"You are looking a little pale, dear," he remarked.

"Oh, no, papa; I am very well."

"Yes, His partner, Mr. Pearson, is still away, and he is doing all the work."

"Well done. He is sure to succeed. Where is Ida?"

"In her room, I think."



She pushed forward her chair and ran to fetch his slippers.

"Dear old Clara! Come and sit down here beside me. I have not had a chat for days. But, oh, what a troubled face! What is it then?"

"I am glad of that."

"It is between ourselves. I am her trustee, and so I know something of her arrangements. And when are you going to marry, Clara?"

him most happy. We shall both be away, and why should papa not please himself?"

"But think how unhappy he will be. You know how quiet he is in his ways and how even a little thing will upset him.

Ida's face grew graver, and she pondered over the matter for a few minutes.

"I really think that you are right, as usual," said she at last. "I admire Charles's aunt very much, you know, and I think that she is a very useful and good person, but I don't think she would do as a wife for poor quiet papa."

"But he will certainly ask her, and I really think that she intends to accept him. Then it would be too late to interfere. We have only a few days at the most. And what can we do? How can we hope to make him change his mind?"

"Again Ida pondered. 'He has never tried what it is to live with a strong minded woman,' said she. 'If we could only get him to realize it in time! Oh, Clara, I have it! Such a lovely plan!'

"That's it. You must steel yourself by that thought."

"Oh, I am so proud of it. We will tire him forever of the widow and of all emancipated women. Let me see, what are Mrs. Westmacott's main ideas? You have listened to her more than I. Women should attend less to household duties. That is one, is it not?"

"Yes, if they feel they have capabilities for higher things. Then she thinks that every woman who has leisure should take up the study of some branch of science, and that as far as possible every woman should qualify herself for some trade or profession, choosing for preference those which have been hitherto monopolized by men.

"Quite so. That is glorious!" Her blue eyes were dancing with mischief, and she clapped her hands in her delight.

"We must get in some cloth."

"I have none."

"Then you must take mine."

"What would you do, then?"

"Tomorrow we must go to Mrs. Westmacott and sit at her feet and learn all her views."

"What hypocrites we shall feel!"

FRANCES WILLARD BREAKS DOWN. Her Great Efforts For Temperance Have Shattered Her Health.

Letters received from London by the Woman's Christian Temperance union state that Frances Willard has entirely broken down as the result of her three years' hard work and the loss of her mother last year.

Miss Willard is a born leader of women, and her inspiration and influence will be much missed in the great temperance movement of which she was the organizer and leading spirit.

As president of the World's W. C. T. U. she kept up direct communication with temperance workers all over the world from China to Natal, from London to San Francisco, from Ottawa to Sidney.

While organizing these unions Miss Willard personally visited not only every state and territory in the United States, but also every town of 10,000 inhabitants, and as a result the association of temperance women organized with a completeness found in no other philanthropic body.

At the conventions held in Boston last autumn delegates were present from every part of America, and representatives of all the countries in the world took part.

Miss Willard was born in New York state in 1839 and taken to Wisconsin while still in infancy to be brought up with her brother in a happy 'apprenticeship to nature' and amid the refinement of an exceptionally cultured and happy home.

She can find consolation in the fact that some very excellent people on both sides of the water are being shut out from society walls that shelter many of their inferiors.

Take Along Plenty of Wraps. While sitting in the corner of a hotel parlor the other day I overheard an instructive little lecture which I am going to repeat.

"You don't need any 'medium' things at all," she declared emphatically, "because we never have any medium weather in Chicago. You want a few thin ones, and all the wraps you own.

Idea of Several Paris Women. A fortnight ago the Princess de Leon, noted for her social surprises and departures from the commonplace, invited her friends to a 'literary solemnity.'

A Nice Way to Serve Oranges. There is no doubt that half the pleasant flavor of the orange is destroyed by the difficulty of eating it gracefully, although that is a feat of which, like building an open fire, every one imagines his method is the best.

Discussing "Bloomers." Women of all nationalities and all opinions were at the big congress of representative women. It is pleasant to observe that the first topic discussed was dress. Brains and reform came in their turn, but the congress started off with a philosophical recognition of the innate and unchangeable law of interest in wherewithal she shall be clothed before women go forth to conquer whatever province of endeavor she chooses.

Costumes For Girls, Little and Big. Young and old amid at picturesque gowning. If you cannot accomplish this, you are not a la mode.

Miss Terry's Benevolent Scheme. Ellen Terry has struck on a novel and ingenious scheme to put to some practical use the impromptu and inopportune autograph collector.

Old Fashions Revived. There can be no doubt that the prevailing fashions have been greatly influenced by the recent exhibition of the arts de la femme held at the Palais de l'Industrie, Paris, and which has proved such a great attraction to the feminine population.

In all the new 'creations' we notice many innovations borrowed from the marvelous retrospective exhibits which have caused quite a revolution in modes of dressing.

When in the same day one can wear, without in any way breaking the laws of fashion, a wateau and Louis XV morning gown, a tailor made dress for shopping or walking, an Anne of Austria skirt for visiting and an empire gown for the evening—when there is a choice between the styles of Louis XIII, Louis XV, 1830, the first and second empires—the most fastidious woman must be satisfied.

At last fashion seems to have resolved the difficult problem of pleasing everybody, and having attained this excellent result must for a time remain exempt from any great revolution.

Sorosis and Lotta, the Actress. Lotta was rejected by Sorosis not because she is an actress—Sorosis includes a number of actresses—but because she has kicked her way to fame.

The incident is really no one's concern save that of the ladies involved, for a club which knows no obligations outside is free to confine its membership to congenial people.

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