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ific Pushing the Along.

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y 26.—Considerable ed here by reports young London boy, two years in Ionia ill die if not re- ult of being over- s stated, is required mber of chairs per of ill-health has fal- ult that he has to time working. Ill- exercise have, it is dition most pitiable. etition, asking that and allowed to be f relatives here has or Warner of Michi-

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THE WOOING OF ERNA

"I will not answer what you say," she almost whispered. "I will marry you if you wish. I do not love you, and never could; but I respect you, and will strive to honor your name. But first let me tell you that I have nursed a wild beast in my heart, and have turned it loose to rend me. I am wicked, unworthy, cruel. I will be the Marchioness of Melrose, if you wish; your wife in the true sense I never can be."

"I ask only what you can give," he said.

"One more thing!" her voice quivered with anguish, and her bosom rose and fell tumultuously, as the sea in a sudden and violent storm. "It shames me to say it, but I must. I love another man. I do not speak his name—you know it. I love him, and I hate him, too. I would not be his wife—I would die rather. But it is Heaven's truth that I love him. It were wiser not to take me, Lord Melrose. I cannot see into the future; but I know it it black, black, black!"

What a wooing! what a bride! The beautiful head drooped, and a choking sob rose in the round, white throat. Lord Melrose—generous old nobleman—groaned—groaned because he was powerless to help her.

But it was over. The sob was swallowed, the proud head uplifted fiercely.

"I have said everything, my lord. Do you take me?"

"Gladly; praying Heaven that I may find the way to make you forget and be happy."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Erna March, the betrothed of the Marquis of Melrose, flashed into the social world, an uncrowned queen. She was talked of from one end of the kingdom to the other, and society was all agog to meet the wonderful creature of whom such startling stories were told.

It was whispered that she had positively rejected Lord Aubrey, the grandest catch of the day, and had laughed off a dozen other titles and fortunes, to give her hand to the old marquis.

Stories of her wild riding were told at every dinner-table in the country; people told of her marvellous singing, of how she could bring tears to the most obdurate eyes by her rendering of simple stories; they said her acting was nothing short of genius.

With all these acomplishments added to her extraordinary beauty, she would inevitably have been the reigning beauty in London at the coming season; but when it was known that she was to be the Marchioness of Melrose, the furor to see and know her reached such a height that all the most exclusive houses in the country were eager to count her among their visitors.

Lady Romley hardly knew whether to be delighted or not. It was gratifying to her that her protegee was such a success; but she knew better than any other how little Erna; was what she seemed; how scornful the girl was of it all.

Erna gave no other outward sign of an inward turbulence than an occasional sudden dilating of the pupils of her eyes, and a hardening of the muscles of the face; showing, to the watchful, anxious eyes of Lady Romley, a hidden agony more heart-rending than the wildest expression of grief and pain.

Lady Romley had anticipated that Erna would find indemnification in tormenting the marquis and by coquetting with all other men; but in this Erna surprised her. Her treatment of the marquis was most sweet and womanly, as if she recognized and appriciated his nobility of nature, in spite of his not always dignified eagerness to anticipate her wishes.

She did indeed throw herself with feverish eagerness into all the dissipation offered by the gay world into which she had leaped; but she coquetted with no one, although scores of men, fascinated by the indescribable charm of her manner, hung about her, ready to throw themselves at her feet, eager to win her away from the old marquis.

It seemed to be understood everywhere that she and the Earl of Aubrey were not to meet; for not once did she find herself in the same house with him. She heard of him often enough; for he had thrown himself into the gay world with as much fervor as she had; and he and Lady Gertrude were heard of together everywhere.

And at last came the news for which everybody was prepared: The Earl of Aubrey was to wed Lady Gertrude Moreham. Lady Romley told Erna of it. It was not a pleasant task for the old lady; but she had grown to love Erna so much that it was her constant endeavor to stand between her and the consequences of her act.

"You are as devoted as Melrose," said Lord Romley, laughingly, to his spouse, one day.

"Yes," Lady Romley had replied, "I am. I know what the poor child is suffering. Talk of the heroic fortitude of the American Indian. It is nothing to hers. She has torn her quivering heart from her own breast, and is forcing herself to go through the world with a serene, smiling face. I don't know how it will end, Romley; but there is a tragedy in that girl's eyes."

"Yes," said Lord Romley, "I feel as if I were living on the very crater of a volcano. Of course I love Erna—couldn't help it if I wished—but, to my common male understanding, the whole affair is about as irrational as anything well could be."

"Oh, you are a man" replied Lady Romley in a tone that conveyed more than the words.

"Yes I have that misfortune; and I suppose that is why I cannot comprehend why Erna should think it necessary to reject Aubrey with contumely and scorn when she loves him to distraction and he would give his soul to have her."

"There are delicate points in the matter which you cannot appreciate" was Lady Romley's rejoinder.

Lord Romley shrugged his shoulders a gesture which always irritated the marchioness.

"You are utterly without sentiment" said she; then sighed and went on: "And now I must tell Erna about the Earl of Aubrey's engagement to Lady Gertrude."

"Why must you? She will learn of it soon enough."

"Yes, from some one who will be watching her face to see her wince."

The marquis smiled faintly.

"Won't you watch her face for the same thing, my dear?"

Lady Romley simply stared at him; which was the wisest thing she could have done, since down in her heart she knew that she was woman enough to be curious to see how Erna would take it.

"Erna," she said, later, when she was alone with her, "I have something to tell you about Earl of Aubrey."

Erna looked at her calmly enough, but the pupils of her great brown eyes dilated until the eyes looked black.

"Yes?" was all she said.

"His engagement to Lady Gertrude is announced."

"Poor Gertrude!" was Erna's calm comment; and then she changed the subject. "When do we return to Romley?" she asked.

They were then at the Earl of Dykeham's, where Erna had been displaying her mimic talents, and gaining the extravagant applause of all who witnessed her performance. Lord Dykeham had the first private theatre in the realm.

"Day after to-morrow is set for our return," replied Lady Romley.

"I shall be glad to get home," said Erna. "It seems odd to call it home, too; for I have been there so little."

"You will like it when you know it well," said the marchioness. "It is time you did get some rest, anyhow; for the season will begin soon, and you should be fresh to enter the whirl."

"I suppose so," replied Erna, a little wearily.

Lady Romley looked sharply at her. It seemed to her that a new expression had crept into her eyes—one of repugnance.

"Erna," she cried, impulsively, "it is not too late yet."

Erna turned her eyes full on her, and seemed to look through her old friend.

"You are mistaken," she said, with a calmness that was terrible; "it is too late. How much too late neither you nor anybody can guess. I cannot go back, Lady Romley; and I do not wish that I could."

"Erna, dear," said the old lady, tears standing in her eyes, "you wring my heart with your despair. Why did you do it? Why won't you undo it?"

Erna put her hand caressingly on the other's withered hand.

"I do not deserve that you should love me as you do, Lady Romley. I have come into your life like a whirlwind, bringing discomfort and trouble. I shall fulfil my mission by going out of it in the same way. I hope you will then find the peace and serenity of which I have robbed you."

"My child! what do you mean?" cried the marchioness, in alarm, seeming to see something sinister in Erna's words.

The strangely sad expression which had been creeping over the beautiful young face was swept away, so to speak, by a wave of consciousness; and Erna resumed the mask of half-mocking serenity which she had worn for so many weeks.

"Mean!" she repeated; "what should I mean but leaving you to be the Marchioness of Melrose? The poor marquis! I am sorry for him, Lady Romley. It would be a blessed thing for him if I should elope with one of his young rivals. He is too good a man to be cursed with such a bride."

"My dear!"

Erna laughed in a gay, half-reckless way that came upon her once in a while, and Lady Romley, knowing words would be useless, left her. But she watched her more anxiously than ever after that conversation; for the conviction was forced upon her that the wayward girl was bent on some deed of sheer desperation.

She could not dream what it would be; but her thoughts reverted often to the notion that Erna might even be contemplating the last touch of ruin to her life, by eloping as she had suggested.

Consequently, for the following two days—until they started for Remley, in fact—the old lady followed every movement of Erna and those of her admirers, in order that she might guess, if possible, which one, if any, Erna might select for her companion in such a mad escapade.

But Erna did not vary in the least of her treatment of any of the young gallants, and was quite ready to leave them all when the hour of departure came. Lord Melrose accompanied them, and it appeared to Lady Romley that Erna was especially kind and gentle to her aged lover.

Indeed, from the moment of their departure for Dykeham, Erna had dropped her brilliant manner for a quieter one; and many times during the ride Lady Romley surprised a yearning look in the brown eyes as they rested on her or on the old marquis.

Something was going on in that enigmatical brain which filled Lady Romley with sad foreboding; but rack her own brain as she would, she could not arrive at any satisfactory conclusion. But she could not endure silent waiting for a catastrophe; so, when Romley was reached, she drew Lord Melrose aside, and said to him:

"Melrose, have you noticed the change in Erna?"

He looked her in the eyes, and for the first time the old lady noticed that the old air of foppery was gone from him, and in its place was a patient kindliness.

"Yes, marchioness."

"I am afraid it means something," she said.

"I fear so, too."

"Do you suspect the direction it will take?" she demanded.

"No," he replied. "I only know that her heart is breaking; and that I would readily give what remains of my useless old life to make her happy. I try not to trouble her by noticing what is going on within her, or by asking questions; and it is enough for me that she does not laugh at the old fool she has consented to marry."

Lady Romley indignantly brushed a tear from her eye. It seemed disgraceful to her that one who had fought so many social battles as she had should have any tears left. But the self-abnegation of the marquis touched her.

"You are better worth her, Melrose," she cried, "than half the young men who surround her."

"Ah," he replied, "I don't think that; but I believe I am more considerate of her than any of them would be. But that is nothing if it cannot help her. Have you noticed lately how her eyes have filled now and again with a searching, wistful look? As if her mind were made up to something, which she would carry through; but which she knew would hurt us—you and me."

"That is just it!" cried Lady Romley. "She is going to do something. But what it is, I cannot guess."

"Nor I. And cannot either prevent her doing it, or help her to do it."

Lady Romley looked at him wonderingly. Such a sublime devotion as his she could admire when she could not comprehend it.

Lord Melrose was to remain at Romley but a day, before returning home; and he and his fiancee were not to meet again until the season opened in London. The evening before he was to go home, he had an opportunity to be alone with Erna for a short time.

She had been singing for him; and he stood by the piano, watching her in such a way as would not annoy her. She remained at the piano her fingers running lightly over the keys. Apparently she had forgotten him; for she was softly humming the song she had sung the first time he had ever heard her sing. In some way he had learned that it was a tune she had found in the nursery at Aubrey; and he knew now that her thoughts were with the earl.

"Erna," he said, gently.

She ceased her song, and looked at him with the gentle comprehending expression she almost always wore for him.

"You know I go away to-morrow?" he said.

"Yes, and I had determined to make this an evening to dwell pleasantly in your memory," she said; "and yet here I have been dreaming by myself. Shall I sing something again? Is there anything you would prefer?"

"There is nothing I like better than another when you sing," he answered.

"Oh, fie!" she said, gayly, "that is flattery."

"No," he said, "it is sober truth. But I don't wish you to entertain me. It is quite enough for me, now as always, to simply be with you and look at you. And yet, Erna, I would not wish to annoy or weary you with my presence or admiration."

"Don't say that!" she cried, her eyes deepening with a look of pain. "I want you to understand—to be sure that there is no man, it does not matter who, whom I am more restful with than with you. You never weary, never annoy me. Have I ever given you cause to think so?" and she looked with anxious questioning into his face.

"No," he replied, "you have been so kind and gentle with me that I have lived in a sort of paradise since the day you said you would be the Marchioness of Melrose."

"I have merely tried to show my appreciation of you," she said, in a low tone.

"I know that," he answered; "and it is because I am sure that there is a better understanding between us than any explanation would ever have brought about, that I wish to say something before I go away from you."

She looked inquiringly at him; and he could see she was endeavoring to divine his meaning before he spoke.

"Will you let me say what is on my mind, without interruption?" he asked.

"It sounds as if you were intending something disagreeable," she said, with a faint smile. "But you shall speak without interruption. Go on!"

He hesitated a moment, and his face betrayed unusual emotion. Then he went on, in a low, subdued tone, as if holding himself severely in check:

"I am an old man, and there is something incongruous in talking of love to a radiant young creature like you. But I do love you—love you in a way that no young man could. I love you so well, Erna dear, that I would give you up to another for your greater happiness. I speak so now, because I have soon how you have suffered; and I would help you if I could. Can you, will you confide in me—not as to a prospective husband, but as to a father?"

Erna's hands fell from the keys into her lap, and across her face passed a look of keenest anguish. Tears formed in her eyes, gathered and rolled in great round drops over her smooth cheeks. Then she sprang to her feet, her eyes upraised to heaven, and wailed:

"Oh, why have you said this? Was my task not hard enough already?"

Then she was gone, leaving him alone by the piano. He made no effort to call her back for an explanation, but followed her sadly with his eyes; and when she was gone out of sight, murmured:

"Proud, passionate, ungoverned, noble creature! Since I cannot help you in my way, I will help you in your own, Heaven helping me."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Erna returned no more to the drawing room that evening. She had gone to her own apartments, and had locked herself in, sending her maid away, when the latter came to assist her in retiring.

"I shall not need you again," she had said, peremptorily.

The maid went away shrugging her French shoulders, but hardly surprised; for Erna had long ago taught her to be surprised at nothing she did.

Erna meanwhile was pacing her apartments from one end to the other, wrestling with a demon of her own conjuring; and suffering as only those can suffer whose trouble is intangible.

But by and by her face became set in determined lines, and she sat down at her little desk and wrote sheet after sheet of hurried writing. Then she stopped and tore all in shreds. After that she wrote fewer words, more deliberately. These words she read over; folded the sheet, and placed it in an envelope addressed to Lady Romley.

Her movements were now quite steady, if not calm, though the drawn, haggard face would have told any one seeing her that she was suffering still.

First she gathered together certain of her dresses, and such other clothing as might have been necessary for a few days' wear. These she packed in a handbag, which was new, as if purchased for the purpose.

All her jewels, excepting a few simple ones of no value, she left in their cases; but what money she had—and it was so considerable in amount as to indicate that she had laid it by for a purpose—she put in a purse, together with an address which she looked at as if it were important.

After that she sat down and waited until she was sure the last servant had retired, when she got up, put on her cloak and hat, and took her satchel in her hand.

She was going to leave the Castle. She intended to leave the life she was leading; and the note she left on her dressing table, addressed to Lady Romley, said so.

"Dear Lady Romley," it said, "when you receive this, I shall be gone from your home. I know such a course will receive your condemnation, but I must reap as I have sown, and I see nothing else before me but this very step. I have been contemplating it for a long time; and it will be useless to seek me with the idea that I will ever return to the life I am leading, and which is killing me.

"I know I have had your loving sympathy, and that this action of mine will seem like ingratitude; but believe me when I say that I shall ever cherish all your unspoken love, as well as that which was made so plain to me. I have deserved nothing, and you have given me everything.

"Please say to Lord Melrose that if I believed he would be happier for having me by his side, I would even now remain and fulfill my engagement with him; but that I am convinced that the evil which is rampant within me would wreck his life as well as my own.

(To be continued.)

Destructive Rats.

According to a recent report of the biological survey of the Department of Agriculture, rats destroy annually $100,000,000 worth of American grain. It is estimated that one rat will eat 60 cents' worth of grain in a year, while of oatmeal it will consume $1.80 worth. Rat-proof construction, especially the use of concrete foundations, is urged, as well as some rational method of disposing of garbage and storing food.

A woman will sacrifice all for the man she loves, but she begrudges her sister-in-law her worn-out gloves.

THE KIND I LIKE.

Tell you what I like the best—
Gim-me it an' take the rest—
Jes a fiddle an' a bow,
Tune 'er up an' let 'er go.
Don't want no fany truck—
Somehow I hain't stuck—
On 'at 'ere rancy sawin'
Hop-scotchin' an' a-gnawin'
Here an' there on a string,
Not a-playin' ennything
'At a feller understands—
Bet you! don't meet my demands.

Fancy music hain't no good—
Druther be a-sawin' wood
Than listenin' to fancy stuff,
Squealin', rakin', raspin', rough—
Jes notes strung on a string,
Not a-meaning ennything.

My kind o' fiddlin' is
The kind 'at gits down to biz,
An' thins out all your care,
Hangs on to you ever'where—
Makes you want to pat your feet—
Git out somewhere an' meet
All the neighbor gals 'at feel
Like dancin' ol' "Virginy Reel"—
'At's the music makes a man
Feel like he was borned ag'in.

Gim-me tunes like "Leather Britches,"
Want 'em, too, 'thout fancy stitches—
Finest tune ever played—
Take my music all ho'-made!
"Nigger in a Woodpile, Run, Boys, Run,"
Golly, 'at ol' tune makes fun!
Seems to me I hear 'em call,
"Honor pardners, balance all"—

An' the "Bell Cow"—drive 'er in—
"All dance purty, swing 'em again,
Down the centre, fored an' back,"
Fairly make the rafters crack.
"Dance to the gal 'at loves you best"—
I'm livin' over other days,
Ol' time, home-spun ways;
'Ats the kind 'at ketches me—
Sich music sets my sperit free.
An' I want to raise an' fly
Fancy fiddlin' ain't deuce high!

Tell you what I like the best—
Gim-me it an' take the rest—
Jes a fiddle an' a bow,
Tune 'er up an' let er' go.

—Tom. M. Morgan.

RECIPE FOR KEEPING COOL.

(Ottawa Free Press.)

Say to yourself aloud, slowly and convincingly, the following:

"I am seated in a wicker chair on the northwest corner of a country porch. The breeze is from the northwest. At my elbow is a table. On this table is a tall glass containing a cooling compound. At regular intervals I raise this tall glass to my lips. The chinking of ice falls pleasantly on my ears. I am about to light a 5-cent cigar and send for more of the cooling compound.'

Repeat this formula until chilled through.

Friendship's Tribute.

Ehmeralda—Mildred has such a speaking countenance!"

Gwendolen—Yes; it seems to be always saying "I've never been kissed!".

Giving Dad Away.

"id, what does yer dad work at fur a livin'?"

"He don't work at nothin'. He's a p'liceman at one o' the railroad deepos."

Asparagus in abundance grows wild in in Poland.

SOCIETY QUESTION.

What Should be the Social Status of a Hangman?

An American paper puts the question, What should be, in a civilized country, the social status of a hangman? This has been asked before now, but is surely a somewhat idle query. Nevertheless, the position of the executioner has undoubtedly varied at different periods and in defferent countries. In France, "Monsieur de Paris," as the representative of la haute justice was called, seems usually to have been held in some esteem, and students of French history are familiar with the tradition that the executioner Tristan was one of the favorite gossips of that powerful, eccentric Sovereign Louis XI. At a very recent execution in France, the manipulator of the guillotine, Diebler, was cheered both on entering and on leaving the town. In Russia at the present day an executioner would scarcely be received on these terms, but the opinion of the law ought not to be blamed for the law's unrighteousness. Dr. Mercier discusses the subject in the chapter entitled "Wrongdoing,,, in his treaties on "Criminal Responsibility." The hangman does not merit execration as such if he fulfils his ugly duty in a proper and seemly manner. It was rightly held to be misbecoming when an executioner, some years ago,, pretending to lecture on his business, exhibited his ropes, straps and white cap, and attempted to show how a victim was "worked off"; but this was an abuse of the hangman's office and position. Dr. Mercier says:

"No doubt a hangman derives a certain satisfaction from turning off his victims in a workmanlike manner—the satisfaction that we all derive from dexterity and success in whatever undertaking—but, though we look askance upon this occupation, we do not regard him as a wrongdoer, so long as his primary motive is to earn his wages, to carry out the contract he has made, or to perform a public duty. But the man who should hang another merely to gratify his own desires, merely to obtain gratification by so doing . . . or to obtain his victim's clothes, or in any way to obtain satisfaction to himself would do wrong.' The case of the hangman is, of course, an especial one. We should not, as Dr. Mercier says, care to eat with him, drink with him, or shake hands with him; but, though we may and do look askance upon his calling we cannot fairly class him with the bravo who stabs in the dark to satisfy the private vengeance of the person who has hired him. We feel, or should feel that the hangman, though he works for hire, does not work solely for hire. He undertakes to kill or a certain wags some person whom society, as personated by the law, has decided must be slain for the welfare of the community. The hangman who acts thus is merely giving effect to the wish expressed by society—is, in fact, and to this extent, co-operating with society.—Law Times.

NEW CHANCELLOR.

DR. VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG, German philosopher and statesman, who succeeds Prince Von Buelow as Chancellor, the office created for Bismarck.

After making a most careful study of the matter, U. S. Government scientists state definitely that the common house fly is the principal means of distributing typhoid fever, diphtheria and smallpox. Wilson's Fly Pads kill the flies and the disease germs, too.

THE ART OF CANNING FRUIT

MRS. ALICE G. CLARK.

SPICED CURRANTS.

Material — Currants, one quart; sugar, four cups; vinegar, three-fourths pint; ground cloves, one teaspoonful; ground cinnamon, one teaspoonful.

Utensils — Porcelain-lined kettle, measuring cup, tablespoon, teaspoon, wooden spoon.

Directions—Wash and stem the currants, then measure and arrange proportions as given. Put the vinegar into the kettle with the sugar, stirring until dissolved. Add the fruit and spices and boil slowly two hours, or until it jellies. Watch carefully that it does not burn. Turn when done into sterilized glasses and finish same as jelly.

Ripe gooseberries and cherries are delicious spiced in this manner, and all are nice served with meats.

RASPBERRY ROLYPOLY.

Mix together one pint of sifted flour, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one teaspoonful sugar and one teaspoonful baking powder, and rub in two tablespoonfuls of butter. Mix with sufficient sweet milk to make a soft dough, turn out on a floured board, work with the hands for a moment, then roll out in a sheet one-half of an inch thick. Spread thickly with black or red raspberries, sprinkle with a spoonful or two of sugar, and roll up like a jelly roll, pinching the ends to keep in the juice. Lay on a greased pie plate and steam for half an hour, then place in a hot oven for 10 minutes to dry off the crust. Serve with sweetened cream or hard sauce.