SPOTS OF THE LEOPARDESS.

A NOVEL.

[Written for the SUNDAY UNION by Gale Braith.]

CHAPTER VII.

I was always a firm believer in instinct —natural impulse. Instinct is a great gift, too slightly appreciated and loosely cultivated. And I am satisfied that half the troubles and crosses of life could be averted by following our guardian angel instinct, for, believe me, it controls our minds and actions to a universal extent. For instance, how often do we meet in our pathway through life with one who, for some unknown reason, a shuddering sense of dislike, fear, danger or repulsion overwhelm us? All animals, dogs in particular, possess this marvelous gift. Why not we, superior animals? And, believe me, when your first instinct warns you against one, beware! Perhaps, sooner or later, you may change your mind in regard to the object of your aversion. Ah, and probably be willing to acknowledge as a joke or wrong your first impression. Take my advice, don't. Your first impression, in nine cases out of ten, is the correct one. Mind, there are exceptions in all cases, but not often in this. The person for whom you conceive this instinctive dislike is quick to read your feelings, and with a keen insight, naturally makes a strong endeavor to disabuse your mind.

Human nature is a grand and deep study. Selfishness, forming the mainspring; deceit, following close upon its heels. We mankind are a great and noble race—great and noble in our own estimation. Live and do right; yes, but it is so much easier, and frequently more pleasant, to do wrong. We are placed in this globe with vague warnings and threats from our infancy. We are forever seeking—vainly, blindly searching—for the unattainable, pondering, as generations before us have forever done. We are put on this earth with our natures, the good and the evil, the evil predominating. What else could be expected but that the vast majority should be weighed in the balance of supreme justice and be found wanting? Who is to blame—we poor miserable sinners, or the power which placed us thus? But I must pause, ere I am accused of blasphemy. So be it. I will return to my former theme, "Instinct." Shun the person whom your instinct warns you against; it is seldom erroneous. and it was to this grateful gift I owed my dislike to Miss Tarrant, and will call to your remembrance what I remarked upon the morning Sir Lionel received the yellow envelope. The foreboding I experienced, and the indescribable feeling I had upon seeing her, were undeniably true. My instinct came to my assistance, warning me loud and strongly against her, whose frightful beauty was leading Sir Lional mad and sending Lady Dora to the grave.

I was aroused from a troubled slumber by a quick shooting pain. I had lightly and brokenly dreamed of a toothache, and awoke, alas! to find it a stern reality. The night was far advanced, I knew, because upon retiring a bright blaze burned warmly in the grates, and now the embers were quite dead, cold and cheerless.

I laid my aching face against the pillow, hoping to thus stop the sharp, grinding pain. I turned and turned in misery, until neither temper nor endurance could stand it longer. And remembering hearing Mrs. Dunlap speak of a positive cure which she possessed, I jumped from the bed and hastily thrusting my stockingless feet into a pair of worsted slippers, and quickly slipping into a dressing gown, wrapped a warm woolen scarf—the gift of Lady Dora—tightly around my head and face, took a chamber candle and quickly descended the stairs, nervously dreading to pass through the library, which by this time must be in total darkness. Thence, by passing through two or three smaller rooms, I could reach the housekeeper's apartments. But upon my arrival at the library door, I was the least bit startled to see a faint glimmer through the heavy oaken door, standing partly ajar. Sir Lional's study was directly off the library, and I instantly concluded he had remained up to read, or, perhaps, to do a little writing. At any other time I would have returned; but my tooth kept me in constant torture, so, drawing a long breath, which almost lifted the roof of my mouth, I boldly entered, fully expecting to find the study door open. But, no; the door was closed, and the light was reflected from a small taper burning dimly upon the long wide table in the center of the room. Instantly a fear of burglars darted across my imagination, and I in terror fully expected to feel a gag in my mouth, or, worse still, a pistol pointed at my heart or forehead. I stood trembling with fright, my knees bending and shaking beneath me. A heinous horror taking possession of all my senses, visions of knives, masks and pistols were realistically portrayed in my distorted fancy. Quaking, I glanced cautiously around, and then my eyes rested upon something white, lying a few feet from the heavy velvet curtains which separated the library from the drawing-room.

I advanced a step, rendered almost desperate with fright, paused, and then mustering courage by the exercise of superhuman will power, I took another step, and then started suddenly forward. For it was Lady Dora in her nightrobe stretched unconscious upon the crimson carpeted floor.

What has happened, and why is she here? are the thoughts which flashed in lightning-like rapidity through my brain.

What shall I do? Like a flash my instinct warned me to act, and make no outcry. I knelt upon the thick rug by her side, and then suddenly remembering that in the next room was a decanter of wine, I sprang to my feet and rushed to the curtain. But paused, with the corner upraised in speechless shame and indignation. This, then, explained fully Lady Dora's swoon.

I stood watching them in their guilty stolen caresses with rage, then like a fury tearing at my heart, rage and hate for them, but love and a deep, overpowering pity for Lady Dora.

Shudderingly I dropped the acursed curtain.

"God, in His merciful kindness, help you dear," I sobbed.

Then, with energy born of despair, I bore her slight form and laid it tenderly, reverently, upon the couch, and flew straightway to summon Mrs. Dunlap, to whom I explained in as few words as possible what had occurred, and between us we carried Lady Dora, still unconscious, to her chamber.

"Oh, Dunlap," I gasped, through my shaking lips, "if we could only contrive some miracle to let her believe it was but a dream."

"Oh, dearie," said the old woman, "such dreams as these leave a deep scar upon the heart, which time nor any act can heal or conceal, poor pritty! 'tis the rich, as well as the poor fold, do have their trials it seems."

We bathed her forehead and forced a little wine between her tightly clenched teeth. Then the lashes fluttered and the eyes opened wide, with a look of unutterable pain and misery in the blueness of their depths. A sigh deep and long, then throwing her arms around my neck, she burst into a torrent of tears, which shook the delicate frame cruelly. I gently smoothed back the soft golden hair from the childish forehead.

"Don't cry darling," I said, "it breaks my heart."

"Let me cry, Olive," she sobbed, "or I shall go mad. How can I live? My life is ended. Strange! I am not dead, for this night my life ended."

"No, no," I moaned, "you have received a shock—a painful, cruel, shameful shock, but you still live, you must live."

At that moment little Cyral, whose nursery adjoined his mother's bed chamber, awakened, no doubt disturbed by the noise, and entered, rubbing his eyes with two little round fists. He was a pretty child, but this night he looked sweetly adorable, with his fair sunny curls rumpled and tangled from the pillow, and the long night dress crumpled, and a tiny bit open at the throat, a faint flush of rose pink upon either plump cheek.

I lifted him quickly from the floor, and laid him gently in Lady Dora's arms.

"See, dear, your little son will console and comfort you. Bend your hopes upon him."

"You know then?"

"Yes. I raised the curtain. I saw them. Take your son by the hand and lead him forth from this shame-blighted roof. Come, I will help you prepare. Nay, I will accompany you. I will never, never, desert you. Come, you cannot remain longer under this roof, which shelters a harlot."

She shook her head sadly. "No matter if my husband has forgotten his vows and forfeited his honor, no reason that I should do likewise," kissing the pretty matted curls. "For my son's dear sake I remain. And you, my dearest, truest friend, you will stay near me. I am weak and helpless, and would fain have a few days of quiet."

"Indeed I will do all in my power to assist you, so now try to sleep."

I made a motion to take the child, who was slumbering again, with his head resting upon his fair young mother's white breast, and his little round dimpled arms encircling her pretty full throat.

"No, no," she whispered; "let him remain by my side. I want to feel his innocent baby arms about me, and his little soft body against my aching heart."

With a strange ache in my own heart, I kissed her good night.

CHAPTER VIII.

So things passed at Glandour Court, Lady Dora seldom leaving her apartments. They were too much occupied with their own guilty love to heed or care to know the cause of her seclusion.

One morning Simpson, the head gardener, notified Sir Lional that he had found a fawn dead and terribly mangled, but by what, he knew not.

"It looks like a wolf's work, your honor, but blessed if I know how a wolf or any other animal could get into the park. The gates and all entrances are always fastened securely."

His master gave the man strict orders concerning the fences surrounding the park, and to take double precautions in the future, for these soft-eyed, gentle creatures were Sir Lional's especial pride.

"Examine every corner well. It must not happen again," he said.

But, strange as it may seem, upon the following morning Simpson again told Sir Lional the same story; another fawn had been found mangled and dead.

Sir Lional's anger was terrible to witness. He ordered every dog upon the place shot.

"Oh, papa, papa," sobbed little Cyral, "don't shoot Trust. He is my very own. Grandpa gave him to me. He wouldn't hurt a fly. Please, papa, don't."

But Sir Lional was firm; every dog should die; nothing could alter that.

The child sobbed, with his little wet cheek pressed against the dog's shaggy neck.

"Oh, Trust," he moaned in his sweet baby voice, with his arms around the dog's noble head, "they are going to kill you. I know you never done anything bad, but I can't make them believe me, and you can't talk, poor Trust. I will try and be good, so I can meet you in heaven."

Poor little fellow. The dog loooked up at the child with its great soulful eyes, sad with almost human intelligence and licked the little hands and face sorrowfully when the man drew him roughly away.

"Come on here, you cur. It serves you right."

"Don't you dare call him cur," cried the child, springing to his feet, his blue eyes blazing and his little fist tightly clenched. "You're a cur. I wish I was a man, I would kill you," and then quivering with rage he burst into childish tears.

"Good-by, Trust, I cannot help you. I am so very sorry. Please don't blame me, poor Trusty."

The noble animal again licked the tear-stained face lovingly and his half human eyes looked into his young master's with a mute glance of appeal.

The man again jerked the rope sharply, and with a pitiful howl, poor Trust was led to his fate.

I held poor little Cyral in my arms. His grief was uncontrollable, as he placed his little fingers in his ears to deaden the sound of the fatal shot which robbed him of a life-long friend and comrade.

"They are wicked. I hate them all."

"Hush, dear," I said. "Surely you do not hate your papa; and you know it is by his order this is to be done."

"Yes, I do hate him—worse than all the rest."

"My pet, you don't know what you are saying," I replied, shocked and grieved to hear him speak so. "Your mamma would feel dreadful to hear you say such naughty, wicked words. Surely you cannot wish to make her sick again?"

"No, no; poor mamma she would cry. She cries so much now. Nearly every night when I go to bed I hear her crying. Why does she cry, Miss Longnus? Now if she had Trust and they killed him, she might have cause to cry, but—"

"Ah, dear heart," I said brokenly, "she, too, had a Trust, and it was killed—cruelly, wickedly."

The little fellow regarded me with puzzled eyes for a moment.

"It can't be, Miss Longnus. I assure you you are mistaken. Mamma never owned but one dog in her life, and that was when she was a tiny little girl. It died, and she had it buried in such a beautiful grave. Its name was Fixie. She often speaks to me about him. He was not a large dog like Trust, who you know is a very large Newfoundland, but a very small Prince Charles. Since then she never cared to own another dog. So you see it must be a mistake. Besides, why should she wait all this time to cry? She never used to cry. She never laughs now nor tells me pretty stories. But it can't be about the dog. However, I will ask her."

"No, no, dear, I cannot make you understand. Sometime you may know such things, but not now. Promise me you will not worry mamma by repeating anything I have just said to you."

Little Cyral grieved long and deeply over the loss of his pet, until finally Sir Lional, who probably suffered a pang of remorse, promised him another—a fine Siberian bloodhound—with strict injunctions. It must be chained up at night. But the child never displayed the same fondness for this one as he did for his former friend and playmate.

Lady Dora's health was growing steadily worse day by day, until Sir Lional happening to notice it, sent to London for a famous young physician whose cures were said to be remarkable, and who, it appears, was a former classmate with Sir Lional at college.

CHAPTER IX.

I was a little startled and a deal annoyed one night by Mollie, the cook, rushing to my room in search of Mrs. Dunlap, and seemingly upon the very verge of an epileptic fit.

"Oh, Miss Longnose! I have seen it. I am going to die or faint," and straightway plumped her stout person into my light willow rocker, smashing it completely.

"Seen what?" I demanded severely.

"It," she gasped, shaking with fright.

"In the name of common sense what are you talking about?"

I was growing terribly alarmed. It was late, being long past 11 P. M.; and Mollie, I knew, was in the habit of indulging in a little alcoholic spirits behind good Mrs. Dunlap's back, and I hastily jumped to the conclusion she was threatened with delirium tremens. Her face was ashy pale, and the eyes almost started from their sockets.

"Oh, Miss Longnose, I mean the thing that has been eating all the deer in the park. A horrible yellow thing all spotted with big round brown spots; and the most of all, miss, it frightened me to think of it. Its head—its head and eyes were like—"

She stopped suddenly, and trembled so violently that every thing in the room commenced shaking and rocking.

"For God's sake, Mollie," I cried, frantically, "what is it like? What was its head like?" My terror was now almost as great as her own. "What was its head like? I repeated.

"Like—" Then looking over my shoulder she uttered a shrill, sharp scream and dropped from the chair to the floor like a log.

I sprang to my feet in terror, and turning my head beheld Miss Tarrant who had, evidently, paused in passing, to hear the cook's news.

"Miss Longnus, why don't you order this woman off to bed? Don't you see she is intoxicated?"

I could not dispute her words, as I was clearly under the same impression myself.

"Still there may be some truth in what she says," I ventured.

"Nonsense; she is drunk. Just hear her snore."

And sure enough she lay snoring, fast asleep, just where she had fallen.

Miss Tarrant passed on, and I went in search of a couple of footmen to carry the cook to her own quarters.

But the next morning the servants went around with white, scared faces, and one by one they mysteriously gave warning to leave.

It puzzled me not a little as they one and all gave no reason for so doing, and they were mostly long and faithfully-tried servants.

It clapped the climax when old Raymond, the butler, tendered his resignation. There must be something wrong, surely. When questioned he sadly shook his gray head, saying he was too old for service.

Sir Lional questioned him; nay, demanded an explanation.

"Raymond, as a right I demand an explanation. Your parents before you have served the Glandour loyal and true. Why are you leaving me thus, who has treated you more as a friend than servant? Come, you must tell me."

Then the old man in his weak, trembling voice said:

"Sir Lional, as you say, we have served you true and faithfully nigh unto four generations. But things are not as they should be at Glnadour. Something is wrong, fearfully wrong."

Sir Lional's brow flushed a deep, dark crimson.

"What damned foolery are you talking? Have a care. You may go too far."

"I mean nothing against your lordship," said the old man, tears of sorrow dimming his aged eyes and coursing down his furrowed cheeks. "But the fawn in the park, sir."

"Why, man, what has that got to do with it?" heaving a sigh of relief.

"A great deal, sir. We consider our lives in danger beneath this roof."

"Are you an idiot, or what? Have I not had the dog shot that did the mischief? What else can I do? There are no more animals molested since then."

"You are mistaken, sir. There were two killed last night, a doe and a fawn."

"What?" roared Sir Lional.

"I said, sir," repeated the old man, "you are mistaken. There were two killed last night."

I remembered like a flash what Mollie had told me the night before.

Sir Lional sank into a chair.

"This is infernal devilish. Why was I not informed sooner? Was the new dog loose?"

"No, sir, safely chained up." And then the old man spoke in an awe-struck whisper.

"Mollie, the cook, sir, swears that last night she saw the thing that done it."

Sir Lional looked troubled.

"Send the woman to me this instant."

Raymond turned and walked as fast as his tottering legs would carry him, and soon returned with the cook up to her ears in flour.

She dropped a courtesy almost to the floor. Then Sir Lional asked:

"What was it you saw in the park last night, Mollie, my girl?"

Mollie confusedly hung her head.

"Sir Lional, I don't like to complain, but it frightened me so I was most dead. You see, sir, I had been out spending the evening with Jane Malloy, a cousin of mine, sir. She had just been after having her baby christened that same morning, sir; and being as she named it after me, sir," with another dip, "Mary Magdelene, sir," with a still deeper dip, "I thought it no more than right, sir, but what I should take it a bonnet or something, sir, for Sunday."

"Yes, yes," impatiently, "but tell us just what you saw."

"I'm coming to it, sir, fast as ever I can. Well, I came through the south gate—the small one—where the shrubbery grows so thick, you know, sir."

Sir Lional nodded.

"Well, as I came through the gate—James, the gardener, sir, gave me the key as I didn't know just how late I might be in getting in all right—I was a little timid at first coming through the trees; but when I got clear of them I was all right again."

"Did you drink anything?" asked Sir Lional.

"Well," said the woman, rolling her apron into a little round ball at the corner, "well, yes, we had a glass or two of hot toddy just to keep the warmth in, for it was a bitter cold night as you know, sir. Now, where was I?" she asked.

"Where you had passed the trees," I interrupted eagerly. I was deeply interested in the woman's story.

"Ah, yes, when I had passed the trees I was walking along quietly—it was bright moonlight—when straight in front of me I saw two animals standing close together. I thought nothing of that at first"—and Mollie began to tremble—"but as I came a little nearer I saw one was struggling to get away from the other, and crying almost like a child, sir. I knew it was one of the fawns. In an instant I remembered about the others being killed. I got behind one of the oaks. I could hardly stand. The poor little beast moaned and groaned, and the other thing growled and snapped like an angry dog. I could just peep around the tree and saw the fawn drop to the ground, and the other animal fell with it, its teeth fastened in the other's throat. Then it jumped up quick and stood switching its tail and looking from side to side; and as sure as I live, sir, as I looked my heart jumped and hit my nose, sir. It was a great large beast—yellow and spotted all over with big horns and yellow spots. Oh, but its head, its head—"

"Well, its head?—"

"Was like—" She uttered a frightened scream and dashed against Sir Lional, almost upsetting him, and fled from the room.

I looked around in wonder, and was annoyed to see Miss Tarrant quietly regarding us with a cynical smile curling her lips.

She walked straight up to Sir Lional, laying her white hand, with its sharp-pointed nails, upon his arm and lifting her bold, yellow eyes to his face—

"What is it? What has happened? Tell me," she asked,

Her looks seemed to enthrall him; his arm shook beneath her light, firm touch.

"Nothing for you to know, my cousin; a matter of very little consequence. It appears—something—some animal has again been after the deer. There are two more dead this morning, and I confess myself mystified."

"Ugh!" With a little cringing motion, she pressed closer against him.

With indignation I turned from the room.

"My golden eyes—never fear—"

I caught the half sentence as I hurried down the corridor.

The servants had all left the court, with the exception of Mrs. Dunlap and Mollie, which caused me to form the belief the latter most probably had indulged too liberally in parting toddies upon the night of her wonderful discovery in the park.

"For why?" I asked myself, "if she is afraid should she remain. Of all others she would certainly, if it were true what she told Sir Lional, be the first to go."

A new corps of servants being duly engaged and installed, matters progressed very fairly, and we were expecting the young doctor every day, when I again received a turn, frightening me out of my senses.

A footman requested me to come down to the servants' hall, informing me that one of the maids was in violent hysterics.

"If you please, miss," the man said, "she declares she saw an elephant in one of the rooms, but more likely," continued he, "it was a cat, or maybe a tame monkey. Women always exaggerate you know, madam."

I hurriedly followed the man, and as I neared the servants' quarters heard loud noises of distress, weeping, then peals of loud laughter, evidently proceeding from the maid as she relieved her overtaxed nerves.

The scene which I gazed upon was so highly ludicrous, so ridiculous in the extreme, I could not refrain from a burst of uncontrollable laughter. What I saw was the maid in violent hysterics lying upon a settee, while the other servants crowded around, some throwing water in her face, others fanning her, some shaking and rubbing her. But the funniest thing of all was Mollie, the cook, who probably weighed three hundred pounds or more, upon her knees on the floor convulsively clasping Mrs. Dunlap around the skirts, and in maudlin tones imploring "Good Mrs. Dunlap, sweet Mrs. Dunlap, to save her," while the housekeeper, who was very diminutive of stature, looked around, helpless and bewildered. At my entrance Mollie sprang to her feet with a howl of terror, no doubt fully expecting to experience the disagreeable and novel sensation of being swallowed alive.

When the maid became calmer, it was, at the least, a most startling story which she told.

It appears one of her duties was to take every afternoon a light repast to Lady Dora, and the maid, being a new comer, got completely lost among the numerous stairs and corridors, so that she lost all trace of her mistress' room. After wandering around she at last reached what she supposed was Lady Dora's rooms and knocked softly, as she claimed. Upon hearing voices she opened the door, thinking some one bade her enter. As she did so she dropped the tray, dishes and all, and screaming, rushed from the room, finding herself in the servants' hall, she scarce knew how.

"What I saw in the room was a great skin, yellow and brown, upon which was stretched an animal—a very large animal, spotted as the skin on which it laid: an old black woman sat in front of it near its head, and was speaking in a low, quick, strange voice and language, meanwhile making queer little motions and gestures with her hands and arms, when I screamed and ran away."

This is the story which the maid told, and one listening to her could not doubt the truth of what she was saying. Sir Lional pooh-poohed the idea, and said the girl had caught sight of the leopard skin and lost her reason—the same as Mollie who had drank too many toddies.

I will now say farewell. Mr. Felix Rossiter will take up the remaining thread of this story and remain with you until it is finished.

Very faithfully yours,
OLIVIA LONGNUS.

ROSSITER'S STORY CONTINUED.

CHAPTER I.

I have furnished Miss Longnus' statement, and will now proceed with my own.

I will begin by giving you a glimpse of my professional career. I always think a reader becomes better acquainted with writers if they give a little of their domestic life, or a sort of recommendation as it were. Though, I am sorry to say, there is nothing very interesting—for which I beg ten thousand pardons—in my past career, and if it wearies you, dear friends, just jump these pages until I come back to the story again. So to begin.

After struggling with adversity until my ambition had well nigh deserted me, I suddenly found myself the rage of London, and could now command a fee, which two months previous I could not deem possible, and why? simply because fickle fortune, or to be more explicit, fickle fashion smiled upon me; nay, not only smiled but laughed and took me impulsively by the hand in right good will.

How it all came about is a mystery, but from a struggling, almost starving medical practitioner I speedily became "Dr." Felix Rossiter, the wonderful young physician whose cures were said to be remarkable. My fame becoming so universal I immediately became the proud possessor of a noble span of thoroughbreds, the latest thing in carts, and in short established myself a bachelor *pied-a-terre* in Grovesnor Square, London. I think the secret of my success, and how it came about, was this:

One evening I was seated in true American fashion before the glowing and grateful warmth of the fire, toasting my toes upon the fender, meditating seriously upon the plan of pulling up sticks and seeking a fortune elsewhere; for that day had proved even worse than the former—no money, no patients. At least plenty of patients willing enough to pay if they possessed the means, poor creatures. But administering to the ills of the body and no income, soon eats a big round hole in a poor man's pocket-book.

With the smoke of my cigar curling above me to the ceiling—it was a good one—I can go without wine at dinner, never miss my *pousse-cafe* at breakfast; in fact, could forego numerous other dainties, which would be considered by some essential to the inner man. But one thing I could not resist and that was my cigar, and a good Havana at that. It rested, soothed and comforted me, and in its luxurious breath I forgot the cares and anxieties which I might undergo during the weary hours of the day. A good cigar is the only consolation a poor man may enjoy. But this evening my cigar failed to do its magic work. I was in a deep reverie, disconsolately musing upon my unenviable position, and something which was not habitual with me, made me envious and covet others luck. My mind wandered back to the old college days.

What a jolly set of chaps we were—myself the lightest-hearted amongst them. What larks and pranks we used to play upon the unwary freshmen.

There was Eastman, the finished stroke in the University crew; Ted Vettelton, who, for a Town and Gown row, was ever foremost, and for which he was eventually expelled, and now he is a full-fledged bishop, from whose lips eloquence flows like dripping honey, and whose name is spoken with love and reverence by all England. Then there was another, Dick Trevor, good hearted, irrevocably stupid Dick, timid to girlishness. We used to call him "Miss Dicky Bird." I laughed aloud, "Can such changes be?" At my elbow, upon the table, is the *Times*, which bears upon its printed columns a brilliant speech from the Honorable Richard Trevor, who, for years, has found no equal in the House of Commons. As a legislator he manifests a prodigious activity. Statesmen hang upon the words of the silver-toned orator. Women try to gain one utterance from his lips. Yes, as a parliamentarian he occupies the first rank.

And again. Luke Gains, simple and impulsive, now occupying a Judge's seat. I have heard and read how criminals quail before him.

"Ah, Felix, my boy," I muttered sorrowfully, "you are not in it." Ah, yes; and there was Lional Glandour, upright and honorable—my sworn chum and confidant. What a keen delight I took in the university triumphs of my friend. I would give all I possess—which I'm afraid would be very small, worse luck—if I could see him this evening. Perhaps he, too, is changed, for he was a nobleman—only son and heir. Dear handsome Lion, how I loved him—the very soul of honor. Then, too, I remember old Professor D'Herbelot, whose knowledge was somewhat marvelous, possessing the finest insight for science. He left the university to proceed to Tibet, and there continued his wonderful studies. He has but recently returned, and all London is at his feet, by whom he is regarded with superstitious awe. Poor old D'Herbelot, how very old he must now be.

My meditation was cut suddenly short by a violent pull at the door bell; and then came Mrs. Burton, my landlady, with the news.

"A carriage and four is waiting outside, and someone wants to see you immediately."

I noticed the new tone of respect in which she addressed me, for carriages and fours were few and far between amongst my patients.

"Dr. Rossiter, sir, I would advise you to wear your great coat, sir. It is bitter cold outside, and the snow is beginning to fall again."

I hurriedly caught up my hat and scrambled into my last winter's overcoat and followed her through the pitchy darkness. By the aid of a dim light in the carriage lamp I made out the muffled form of the driver and faintly discerned another figure standing, holding the door open for me to enter.

"'Hits 'er grace the Duchess of Knoxbury as wants you, sir. She's been taken with one of 'er bad spells hagen hand 'er hown. Dr. Harmstrong his hout of town, She ordered me to fetch you without delay. So jump hin."

This peremptory order I obeyed.

We rode at a rapid rate for four squares, when the driver suddenly halted with a jerk, and my companion sprang to the pavement, bidding me to follow him. He conducted me through a brilliantly lighted hall. Stairs after stairs we climbed until pausing in front of a great oaken door, my guide finally entered. I followed close at his heels trying to look and feel wise and professional. In this apartment a taper was dimly burning. A queer feeling was beginning to pass over me, when a shrill voice called from the deepest gloom.

"Eh, Maxwell! have you got him?"

My heart began to palpitate.

"Yes, your grace. 'Ere 'e his," replied the man addressed as Maxwell.

"Then turn the wick a little higher. Mercy! not so high."

Maxwell did as directed, and I beheld the very ugliest little old woman I had ever seen. I advanced with a deep professional bow and looked my very wisest.

She surveyed me critically. I asked in my most professional tones—

"Have I the pleasure of addressing the Duchess of Knoxbury?"

"Never mind," she snapped. Then uttering a shrill, little cry of pain, "oh, oh!"

A female attendant hastened at the bedside.

"Again? Poor dear! how you suffer."

I stood feeling like a fool. What ailed the woman? And who was she?

Then the female attendant spoke:

"It's the gout, sir. Her Grace is a perfect martyr to it."

"Yes," spoke the snappish voice again. "Don't stand there gaping and staring like a fool, but give me something to stop this infernal pain, can't you? Don't you see how I am suffering? Oh! oh! Maxwell, you idiot, why didn't you bring me a doctor, not a donkey?"

I turned on my heel in indignation, preparing to depart.

"Where are you going?" she screamed. "Oh! oh! Come back, I command you."

I confronted her. "Madam, who you are I neither know nor care. You have no right to insult me, nor any authority to command me that I am aware of. I wish you good evening."

Here Maxwell interrupted.

"Don't mind 'er Grace, sir. 'Er Grace don't really know what she says when she gets them shooting pains."

With a bad grace I ascertained that the old woman's ailment was a severe case of suppressed gout, which, luckily, I understood the treatment of, and from that evening my success was phenomenal. My practice becoming too extensive I was seriously contemplating taking a partner, when I received an urgent message begging me to come, without delay, to Glandour Court.

CHAPTER II.

Yes, I was summoned by my dear friend and former classmate, Sir Lional Glandour, who requested me to run down to the court and attend his wife, the Lady Dora, who had puzzled all the surrounding doctors in regard to some serious malady which she was long suffering from. Although occupied with business of importance, I was only too willing to oblige my friend.

Upon my arrival I was presented to Lady Glandour, whom I found in a delicate condition. I thought nothing remarkable about her indisposition upon that account. Miss Longnus, I perceive, has given you a very fair description of her ladyship, so I will merely mention that it is not at all overdrawn.

I found Sir Lional the same kind, genial friend as of yore, and he welcomed me heartily to the court.

Upon his inquiries regarding his wife's health I informed him it was nothing serious. Perhaps a little nervousness, which was to be expected. Then Sir Lional—who was a princely host—insisted upon my remaining some days at the court, which I was not at all loth to do. It was that same evening at Glandour Court I met with a strange experience—the greatest shock I ever remember to have received in the course of my life, and, beyond doubt, the queerest.

We were seated at the dinner table—Lady Dora, Miss Longnus, Sir Lional and myself. I noticed, without any particular curiosity that there was a vacant cover laid. My host was gayly chatting and laughing over our old college days, when a footman swung the door wide open and a lady entered, whose weird unnatural beauty staggered me. She advanced slowly—I never saw a woman walk so slow before. She seemed to pause an instant at every step. I closed my eyes and wondered if the champagne—I had not yet tasted it—could have affected my brain. Her hair! Her eyes! Ye gods! It was gold—it was brown. No use—I must be drunk—it is not possible. Her eyes! They are not eyes, but stars, bright with shining darts, rays flashing through the half-closed, curling lashes of indescribable length. I am drunk. I look at my plate. The soup is there—little round balls of fat form upon the surface as it grows cold.

I wonder what ails me. Am I going to be sick? My wine is still untouched. It cannot be that. I must be threatened with brain fever. It was a warm ride down from London. Yes, I am going to be ill. Are they observing me? I passed my hand quickly across my eyes. No. Lady Dora is still engaged with leisurely consumption of her soup, Miss Longnus, sitting prim to my left, has finished. Then I glanced towards Sir Lional's plate which, like my own, had not been touched—not a spoonful taken from it. His eyes, too, are in the same direction as my own—I must be sober—and are fastened upon her. She advanced, her eyes resting with all their splendor upon him—upon him alone. Her arm and neck are bare, and gleam like whitest silken velvet; her gown, brown and gold, like her hair, clings to the splendid generously proportioned limbs. Three or four brown, round moles add to the glorious beauty of her face. Miss Longnus, I see, has tried to describe her, but without any slight intended that lady, it is but a poor description, for no pen-picture, however cleverly drawn, could portray this woman in her overpowering majesty. There could be no comparison with her and any other. It intoxicated me, and deadened the senses like new wine.

Then Sir Lional's voice brings me to my senses again.

"Felix—Mr. Rossiter—my cousin, Miss Tarrant."

This is how I first met and saw her. Her eyes never strayed an instant from Sir Lional's, as she acknowledged the introduction, with a slight bow. I don't remember now what I said or did, but I muttered something. She seated herself to Sir Lional's right, and by degrees my senses returned. I say now she is and was the most beautiful thing I ever gazed upon. I have said enough. If I were to write from now until the day of doom, I could not hope to do her justice, nor would you understand and feel her beauty as I did.

I returned to London, promising to make another call at Glandour; probably in a week's time. I had already remained away longer than my practice or patients would allow.

[*Concluded next Sunday.*]

FEROCIOUS, EVEN IF DOCILE.

Trainer Darling Says that Lions Are Ugly Animals to Educate.

"I have found that an African lion is a curious combination of ferocity and docility," said Eduard Darling, the lion tamer who was performing in "Nero" at Niblo's Garden, recently. "I have ever found them treacherous in the extreme, watching carefully for an opportunity to attack anything not of their species. You know the ancient Romans are said to have given wonderful performances with these wild beasts, but I don't believe there are instances on record for the past two centuries in which they have been trained to give performances in the slightest degree interesting.

"Some years ago I began training animals, and I find it an easy matter to train most any kind, with the exception of these African lions. Take, for instance, the animals I use in 'Claudius Nero.' I attempted to educate over twenty-eight lions, and out of that whole number I have only succeeded in getting six that are sufficiently tractable to perform the tricks of my programme. The principal difficulty in educating lions is that they are too stubborn and vicious to be taught, or rather to be made to understand what is required of them. They certainly do not lack intelligence, as I believe the lion capable of receiving as complete an education as the horse or dog. The difficulty is in being able to impart knowledge, as the pupil, in addition to being armed with great teeth and sharp claws, is possessed of wonderful strength, and the work of placing them in command is accompanied with great danger and fatigue, and the trainer is never certain that his pupils, however great pets they may become, will not in an unexpected moment turn and attack him as fiercely as they would if at large in their native jungle.

"To give you some idea of the power of these animals, one of my lions once turned and struck me a blow on the thigh that threw me completely across the cage and lacerated my thigh pretty badly, cutting the flesh clear through to the bone. This blow would have been followed by an attack from the whole group had I not regained my feet instantly and confronted them with the whip, which is my emblem of authority. I cite this to illustrate the strength of a full-grown lion, and my opinion is that they cannot be handled as dogs, and that no matter how well they have been trained and how carefully handled they are at all times very dangerous."

Queen's College, Oxford, has just celebrated the 550th anniversary of its foundation. It was on January 18, 1340-41, that Edward III. sealed in the Tower of London a license to Robert de Eglesfield, chaplain to Queen Philippa, to found in the parish of St. Peter-in-the-East a collegiate hall of scholars, chaplains and others, under the name of the Queen's Hall of Oxford.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

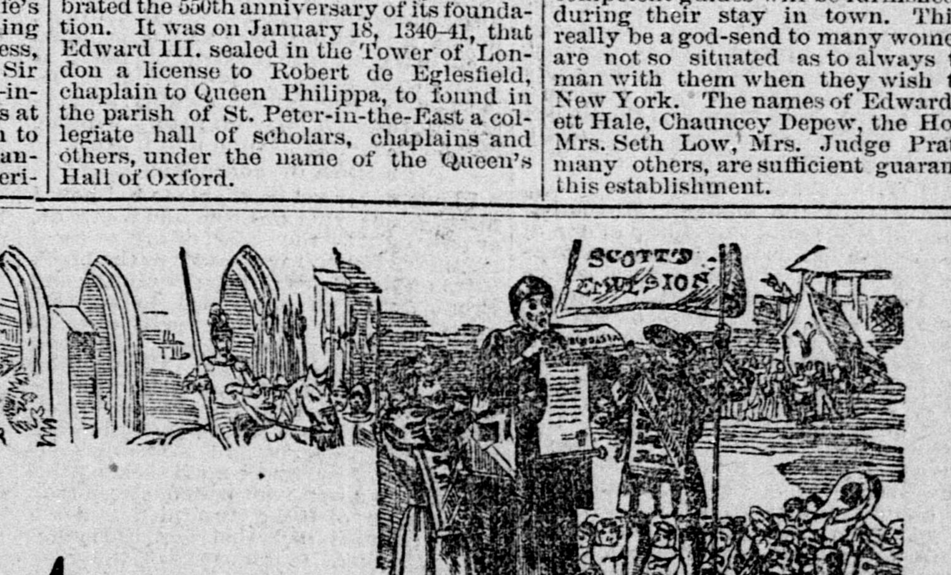
[From Edwin Arnold's New Poem, "The Light of the World."]

What was it that ye heard? the wind of Night
Playing in cheating tones, with touches light,
Amid the palm-plumes? or, one stop outblown,
Of planetary music, so far flown
Earthwards, that to those innocent ears 'twas brought
Which beat the mighty measure to their thought?
Or, haply, from breast-shaped Beth-Haccarem,
The hill of Herod, some waft sent to them
Of storming drums and trumps, at festival
Held in the Idumaean's purple hall?
Or, it may be, some Aramaic song
Of country lovers, after parting long?
Meeting anew, with much "good-will" indeed,
Blown by some swain upon his Jordan reed?
Nay, nay! your abbas back ye did not fling,
From each astonished ear, for swains to sing
Their village-verses clear; for sounds well known
Of wandering breeze, or whispering trees, or tone
Of Herod's trumpets. And ye did not gaze
Heart-startled on the stars (albeit the rays
Of that lone orb shot, sparkling from the East
Unseen before) for these, largest and least,
Were fold-lamps, lighted nightly; and ye knew
Far differing glory in the Night's dark blue
Suddenly lit with rose, and pierced with spike
Of golden spear-beam. Oh, a dream belike!
Some far-fetched Vision, new to peasant's sleep,
To sense, and yet so largely leaving freed
That we do know things are we can not know,
And high and higher on Thought's stairways go
Till each last round leads to some sudden steep
Where reason swims, and falters, or must leap
Headlong, perforce, into the Infinite.
How should we say outside this shines no light
Of lovelier scenes unseen, of lives which spread
Pleasant and unexpected for the Dead,
As our World, opening to the Babe's wide eyes
New from the womb, and full of birth's surprise?
How should this prove the All, the Last, the First?
Why shall no inner, under splendors burst
Once—twice—the Vail? Why put a marvel by
Because too rich with Hope? Why quite deny
The heavenly story, lest our doubtful hearts—
Which mark the stars, and take them for bright parts
Of boundless Being, ships of life that sail
In glittering argosies—without a tale,
Without a term—or of that shoreless Sea,
The scattered silver islets, drifting free
To destinies unmeasured—see, too, there
By help of dead, believing eyes, which were
The peoples of the Stars; and listen, meek,
To those vast voices of the Stars, which speak—
If ever they shall speak—in each man's tongue?
And truly, if Joy's music once hath rung
From lips of bands invisible, if any—
(Be they of the Dead or of the deathless Many)—
Love and serve Man, angelical Befrienders,
Glad of his weal, and from his woe Defenders—
If such, in Heaven, have pity on our tears,
Forever falling with the unmending years,
High cause had they at Bethlehem that night
To lift the curtain of Hope's hidden light,
To break decree of silence with Love's cry,
Foreseeing how this Babe, born lowly,
Should—past dispute, since now achieved is this—
Bring earth great gifts of blessing and of bliss;
Date, from that crib, the Dynasty of Love;
Strip his misused thunderbolts from Jove;
Bend to their knee Rome's Caesars, break the chain
From the slave's neck; set sick hearts free again
Bitterly bound by priests, and scribes and scrolls;
And heal, with balm of pardon, sinking souls;
Should Mercy to her vacant throne restore.
Teach Right to Kings and Patience to the poor;
Should by His sweet Name all names overthrow,
And by His lovely words the quick seeds sow
Of golden equities and brotherhood,
Of Pity, Peace and gentle praise of Good;
Of knightly honor, holding life in trust
For God, and Lord and all things pure and just;
Lowly to Women; for Maid Mary's sake
Lifting our sister from the dust, to take
In homes her equal place, the Household's Queen,
Crowned and august who sport and thrall had been
Of arts adorning Life, of charities
Gracious and wide, because the impartial skies
Roof one race in; and poor, weak, mean, oppressed,
Are children of one bounteous Mother's breast,
One Father's care; emancipating Man,
Should, from that bearing-cave, outside the Khan.
Amid the kneeling cattle, rise, and be
Light of all land, and splendor of each sea,
The sun-burst of a new morn come to earth,
Not yet, alas! broad Day, but Day's white birth
Which promiseth; and blesseth promising
These from that night! What cause of wondering
If that one Silence of all Silences
Break into music? if, for hopes like these
Angels, who love us, sang that song, and show
Of Time's fair purpose made the "great light" glow?

Club Houses for Women.

A number of very prominent and wealthy New York women have formed a stock company to establish and maintain, in suitable fashion, a sort of a club house which will receive woman travelers at all hours of the night and keep them so long as they behave with propriety. It is proposed to put women upon the same basis, so far as possible, as men are placed at a hotel or club house. It will not be assumed that because a woman is traveling alone at night she is necessarily disreputable. She will be welcomed; no questions asked; no demand for her marriage certificate made; a comfortable room will be assigned her, which she can occupy as long as she does not abuse the hospitality of the house. This house is in connection with the visitors' guide and chaperone bureau, of New York, No. 11 West Eighteenth street. The address is given for the convenience of Western women who may wish to visit New York unattended by a man. Ladies who so desire, will be met at trains and escorted to this house, and competent guides will be furnished them during their stay in town. This will really be a god-send to many women who are not so situated as to always take a man with them when they wish to visit New York. The names of Edward Everett Hale, Chauncey Depew, the Hon. and Mrs. Seth Low, Mrs. Judge Pratt and many others, are sufficient guarantee for this establishment.

Proclaim the Victory



Remember last winter's siege. Recall how trying to health were the frequent changes of the weather. What was it that helped you win the fight with disease, warded off pneumonia and possibly consumption? Did you give due credit to **SCOTT'S EMULSION** of pure Norwegian Cod Liver Oil and Hypophosphites of Lime and Soda? Did you proclaim the victory? Have you recommended this wonderful ally of health to your friends? And what will you do this winter? Use Scott's Emulsion as a preventive this time. It will fortify the system against *Coughs, Colds, Consumption, Scrofula, General Debility, and all Anæmic and Wasting Diseases (specially in Children).* **Palatable as Milk.**

SPECIAL.—Scott's Emulsion is non-secret, and is prescribed by the Medical Profession all over the world, because its ingredients are scientifically combined in such a manner as to greatly increase their remedial value.

CAUTION.—Scott's Emulsion is put up in salmon-colored wrappers. Be sure and get the genuine. Prepared only by Scott & Bowne, Manufacturing Chemists, New York. All Druggists.