

Miss Cayley's Adventures.

BY GRANT ALLEN.

XI.—THE ADVENTURE OF THE ORIENTAL ATTENDANT.



DID not sleep that night. Next morning, I rose very early from a restless bed with a dry, hot mouth and a general feeling that the solid earth had failed beneath me.

Still no news from Harold! It was cruel, I thought. My faith almost flagged. He was a man and should be brave. How could he run away and hide himself at such a time? Even if I set my own anxiety aside, just think to what serious misapprehension it laid him open!

I sent out for the morning papers. They were full of Harold. Rumours, rumours, rumours! Mr. Tillington had deliberately chosen to put himself in the wrong by disappearing mysteriously at the last moment. He had only himself to blame if the worst interpretation were put upon his action. But the police were on his track; Scotland Yard had "a clue"; it was confidently expected an arrest would be made before evening at latest. As to details, authorities differed. The officials of the Great Western Railway at Paddington were convinced that Mr. Tillington had started, alone and undisguised, by the night express for Exeter. The South-Eastern inspectors at Charing Cross, on the other hand, were equally certain that he had slipped away with a false beard, in company with "his accomplice," Higginson, by the 8.15 p.m. to Paris. Everybody took it for granted, however, that he had left London.

Conjecture played with various ultimate destinations—Spain, Morocco, Sicily, the Argentine. In Italy, said the *Chronicle*, he might lurk for a while—he spoke Italian fluently, and could manage to put up at tiny *osterie* in out-of-the-way places seldom visited by Englishmen. He might try Albania, said the *Morning Post*, airing its exclusive "society" information: he had often hunted there, and might in turn be hunted. He would probably attempt to slink away to some remote spot in the Carpathians or the Balkans, said the *Daily News*, quite proud of its geography. Still, wherever he went, leaden-footed justice in this age, said the *Times*, must surely overtake him. The day

of universal extradition had dawned; we had no more Alsatis: even the Argentine itself gives up its rogues—at last; not an asylum for crime remains in Europe, not a refuge in Asia, Africa, America, Australia, or the Pacific Islands.

I noted with a shudder of horror that all the papers alike took his guilt as certain. In spite of a few decent pretences at not prejudging an untried cause, they treated him already as the detected criminal, the fugitive from justice. I sat in my little sitting-room at the hotel in Jermyn Street, a limp rag, looking idly out of the window with swimming eyes, and waiting for Lady Georgina. It was early, too early, but—oh, why didn't she come! Unless *somebody* soon sympathized with me, my heart would break under this load of loneliness!

Presently, as I looked out on the sloppy morning street, I was vaguely aware through the mist that floated before my dry eyes (for tears were denied me) of a very grand carriage driving up to the doorway—the porch with the four wooden Ionic pillars. I took no heed of it. I was too heart-sick for observation. My life was wrecked, and Harold's with it. Yet, dimly through the mist, I became conscious after a while that the carriage was that of an Indian prince; I could see the black faces, the white turbans, the gold brocades of the attendants in the dickey. Then it came home to me with a pang that this was the Maharajah.

It was kindly meant; yet after all that had been insinuated in court the day before, I was by no means over-pleased that his dusky Highness should come to call upon me. Walls have eyes and ears. Reporters were hanging about all over London, eager to distinguish themselves by successful eaves-dropping. They would note, with brisk innuendoes after their kind, how "the Maharajah of Moozuffernuggar called early in the day on Miss Lois Cayley, with whom he remained for at least half an hour in close consultation." I had half a mind to send down a message that I could not see him. My face still burned with the undeserved shame of the cross-eyed Q.C.'s unspeakable suggestions.

Before I could make my mind up, however, I saw to my surprise that the Maharajah did not propose to come in himself. He leaned back in his place with his lordly Eastern air, and waited, looking down on the gapers in the street, while one of the two gorgeous attendants in the dickey descended obsequiously to receive his orders. The man was dressed as usual in rich Oriental stuffs, and wore his full white turban swathed in folds round his head. I could not see his features. He bent forward respectfully with Oriental suppleness to take his Highness's orders. Then, receiving a card and bowing low, he entered the porch with the wooden Ionic pillars, and disappeared within, while the Maharajah folded his hands and seemed to resign himself to a temporary Nirvana.

A minute later, a knock sounded on my door. "Come in!" I said, faintly; and the messenger entered.

him. Even at that crucial moment of doubt and fear, I could not help noticing how admirably he made up as a handsome young Rajput. Three years earlier, at Schlangenbad, I remembered he had struck me as strangely Oriental-looking: he had the features of a high-born Indian gentleman, without the complexion. His large, poetical eyes, his regular, oval face, his even teeth, his mouth and moustache, all vaguely recalled the highest type of the Eastern temperament. Now, he had blackened his face and hands with some permanent stain—Indian ink, I learned later—and the resemblance to a Rajput chief was positively startling. In his gold brocade and ample white turban, no passer-by, I felt sure, would ever have dreamt of doubting him.

"Then you knew me at once?" he said, holding my face between his hands.



"THE MESSENGER ENTERED."

I turned and faced him. The blood rushed to my cheek. "Harold!" I cried, darting forward. My joy overcame me. He folded me in his arms. I allowed him, un-reproved. For the first time he kissed me. I did not shrink from it.

Then I stood away a little and gazed at

"That's bad, darling! I flattered myself I had transformed my face into the complete Indian."

"Love has sharp eyes," I answered. "It can see through brick walls. But the disguise is perfect. No one else would detect you."

"Love is blind, I thought."

"Not where it ought to see. There, it pierces everything. I knew you instantly, Harold. But all London, I am sure, would pass you by, unknown. You are absolute Orient."

"That's well; for all London is looking for me," he answered, bitterly. "The streets bristle with detectives. Southminster's knaveries have won the day. So I have tried this disguise. Otherwise, I should have been arrested the moment the jury brought in their verdict."

"And why were you not?" I asked, drawing back. "Oh, Harold, I trust you; but why did you disappear and make all the world believe you admitted yourself guilty?"

He opened his arms. "Can't you guess?" he cried, holding them out to me.

I nestled in them once more; but I answered through my tears—I had found tears now—"No, Harold; it baffles me."

"You remember what you promised me?" he murmured, leaning over me and clasping me. "If ever I were poor, friendless, hunted—you would marry me. Now the opportunity has come when we can both prove ourselves. To-day, except you and dear Georgey, I haven't a friend in the world. Everyone else has turned against me. Southminster holds the field. I am a suspected forger; in a very few days I shall doubtless be a convicted felon. Unjustly, as you know; yet still—we must face it—a convicted felon. So I have come to claim you. I have come to ask you now, in this moment of despair, will you keep your promise?"

I lifted my face to his. He bent over it trembling. I whispered the words in his ear. "Yes, Harold, I will keep it. I have always loved you. And now I will marry you."

"I knew you would!" he cried, and pressed me to his bosom.

We sat for some minutes, holding each other's hands, and saying nothing; we were too full of thought for words. Then suddenly, Harold roused himself. "We must make haste, darling," he cried. "We are keeping Partab outside, and every minute is precious, every minute's delay dangerous. We ought to go down at once. Partab's carriage is waiting at the door for us."

"Go down?" I exclaimed, clinging to him. "How? Why? I don't understand. What is your programme?"

"Ah, I forgot I hadn't explained to you! Listen here, dearest—quick; I can waste no words over it. I said just now I had no friends in the world but you and Georgey.

That's not true, for dear old Partab has stuck to me nobly. When all my English friends fell away, the Rajput was true to me. He arranged all this; it was his own idea; he foresaw what was coming. He urged me yesterday, just before the verdict (when he saw my acquaintances beginning to look askance), to slip quietly out of court, and make my way by unobtrusive roads to his house in Curzon Street. There, he darkened my face like his, and converted me to Hinduism. I don't suppose the disguise will serve me for more than a day or two; but it will last long enough for us to get safely away to Scotland."

"Scotland?" I murmured. "Then you mean to try a Scotch marriage?"

"It is the only thing possible. We must be married to-day, and in England, of course, we cannot do it. We would have to be called in church, or else to procure a license, either of which would involve disclosure of my identity. Besides, even the license would keep us waiting about for a day or two. In Scotland, on the other hand, we can be married at once. Partab's carriage is below, to take you to Euston. He is staunch as steel, dear fellow. Do you consent to go with me?"

My faculty for promptly making up such mind as I possess stood me once more in good stead. "Implicitly," I answered. "Dear Harold, this calamity has its happy side—for without it, much as I love you, I could never have brought myself to marry you!"

"One moment," he cried. "Before you go, recollect, this step is irrevocable. You will marry a man who may be torn from you this evening, and from whom fourteen years of prison may separate you."

"I know it," I cried, through my tears. "But—I shall be showing my confidence in you, my love for you."

He kissed me once more, fervently. "This makes amends for all," he cried. "Lois, to have won such a woman as you, I would go through it all a thousand times over. It was for this, and for this alone, that I hid myself last night. I wanted to give you the chance of showing me how much, how truly you loved me."

"And after we are married?" I asked, trembling.

"I shall give myself up at once to the police in Edinburgh."

I clung to him wistfully. My heart half urged me to urge him to escape. But I knew that was wrong. "Give yourself up,

then," I said, sobbing. "It is a brave man's place. You must stand your trial: and, come what will, I will strive to bear it with you."

"I knew you would," he cried. "I was not mistaken in you."

We embraced again, just once. It was little enough after those years of waiting.

"Now, come!" he cried. "Let us go."

I drew back. "Not with you, dearest," I whispered. "Not in the Maharajah's carriage. You must start by yourself. I will follow you at once, to Euston, in a hansom."

He saw I was right. It would avoid suspicion, and it would prevent more scandal. He withdrew without a word. "We meet," I said, "at ten, at Euston."

I did not even wait to wash the tears from my eyes. All red as they were, I put on my hat and my little brown travelling jacket. I don't think I so much as glanced once at the glass. The seconds were precious. I saw the Maharajah drive away, with Harold in the dickey, arms crossed, imperturbable, Orientally silent. He looked the very counterpart of the Rajput by his side. Then I descended the stairs and walked out boldly. As I passed through the hall, the servants and the visitors stared at me and whispered. They spoke with nods and liftings of the eyebrows. I was aware that that morning I had achieved notoriety.

At Piccadilly Circus, I jumped of a sudden into a passing hansom. "Euston!" I cried, as I mounted the step. "Drive quick! I have no time to spare." And, as the man drove off, I saw, by a convulsive dart of someone across the road, that I had given the slip to a disappointed reporter.

At the station I took a first-class ticket for Edinburgh. On the platform, the Maharajah and his attendants were waiting. He lifted his hat to me, though otherwise he took no overt notice. But I saw his keen eyes follow me down the train. Harold, in his Oriental dress, pretended not to observe me. One or two porters, and a few curious travellers, cast inquiring eyes on the Eastern prince, and made remarks about him to one another. "That's the chap as was up yesterday in the Ashurst will kise!" said one loungee to his neighbour. But nobody seemed to look at Harold; his subordinate position secured him from curiosity. The Maharajah had always two Eastern servants, gorgeously dressed, in attendance; he had been a well-known figure in London society, and at Lord's and the Oval, for two or three seasons.

"Bloomin' fine cricketer!" one porter observed to his mate as he passed.

"Yuss; not so dusty for a nigger," the other man replied. "Fust-rite bowler; but, Lord, he can't 'old a candle to good old Ranji."

As for myself, nobody seemed to recognise me. I set this fact down to the fortunate circumstance that the evening papers had published rough wood-cuts which professed to be my portrait, and which naturally led the public to look out for a brazen-faced, raw-boned, hard-featured termagant.

I took my seat in a ladies' compartment by myself. As the train was about to start, Harold strolled up as if casually for a moment. "You think it better so?" he queried, without moving his lips or seeming to look at me.

"Decidedly," I answered. "Go back to Partab. Don't come near me again till we get to Edinburgh. It is dangerous still. The police may at any moment hear we have started and stop us half-way; and now that we have once committed ourselves to this plan, it would be fatal to be interrupted before we have got married."

"You are right," he cried; "Lois, you are always right, somehow."

I wished I could think so myself; but 'twas with serious misgivings that I felt the train roll out of the station.

Oh, that long journey north, alone, in a ladies' compartment—with the feeling that Harold was so near, yet so unapproachable: it was an endless agony. *He* had the Maharajah, who loved and admired him, to keep him from brooding; but I, left alone, and confined with my own fears, conjured up before my eyes every possible misfortune that Heaven could send us. I saw clearly now that if we failed in our purpose this journey would be taken by everyone for a flight, and would deepen the suspicion under which we both laboured. It would make me still more obviously a conspirator with Harold.

Whatever happened, we must strain every nerve to reach Scotland in safety, and then to get married, in order that Harold might immediately surrender himself.

At York, I noticed with a thrill of terror that a man in plain clothes, with the obtrusively unobtrusive air of a detective, looked carefully though casually into every carriage. I felt sure he was a spy, because of his marked outer jauntiness of demeanour, which hardly masked an underlying hang-dog expression of scrutiny. When he reached my place, he took a long, careless stare at me—

a seemingly careless stare, which was yet brim-full of the keenest observation. Then he paced slowly along the line of carriages, with a glance at each, till he arrived just opposite the Maharajah's compartment. There he stared hard once more. The Maharajah descended; so did Harold and

be impossible for us to get married at Edinburgh if we were thus closely pursued. There was but one chance open; we must leave the train abruptly at the first Scotch stopping station.

The detective knew we were booked through for Edinburgh. So much I could



"HE TOOK A LONG, CARELESS STARE AT ME."

the Hindu attendant, who was dressed just like him. The man I took for a detective indulged in a frank, long gaze at the unconscious Indian prince, but cast only a hasty eye on the two apparent followers. That touch of revelation relieved my mind a little. I felt convinced the police were watching the Maharajah and myself, as suspicious persons connected with the case; but they had not yet guessed that Harold had disguised himself as one of the two invariable Rajput servants.

We steamed on northward. At Newcastle, the same detective strolled, with his hands in his pockets, along the train once more, and puffed a cigar with the nonchalant air of a sporting gentleman. But I was certain now, from the studious unconcern he was anxious to exhibit, that he must be a spy upon us. He overdid his mood of careless observation. It was too obvious an assumption. Precisely the same thing happened again when we pulled up at Berwick. I knew now that we were watched. It would

tell, because I saw him make inquiries of the ticket examiner at York, and again at Berwick, and because the ticket-examiner thereupon entered a mental note of the fact as he punched my ticket each time: "Oh, Edinburgh, miss? All right"; and then stared at me suspiciously. I could tell he had heard of the Ashurst will case. He also lingered long about the Maharajah's compartment, and then went back to confer with the detective. Thus, putting two and two together, as a woman will, I came to the conclusion that the spy did not expect us to leave the train before we reached Edinburgh. That told in our favour. Most men trust much to just such vague expectations. They form a theory, and then neglect the adverse chances. You can only get the better of a skilled detective by taking him thus, psychologically and humanly.

By this time, I confess, I felt almost like a criminal. Never in my life had danger loomed so near—not even when we returned with the Arabs from the oasis. For then

we feared for our lives alone; now, we feared for our honour.

I drew a card from my case before we left Berwick station, and scribbled a few hasty words on it in German. "We are watched. A detective! If we run through to Edinburgh, we shall doubtless be arrested or at least impeded. This train will stop at Dunbar for one minute. Just before it leaves again, get out as quietly as you can—at the last moment. I will also get out and join you. Let Partab go on; it will excite less attention.

The scheme I suggest is the only safe plan. If you agree, as soon as we have well started from Berwick, shake your handkerchief unobtrusively out of your carriage window."

I beckoned a porter noiselessly without one word. The detective was now strolling along the fore-part of the train, with his back turned towards me, peering as he went into all the windows. I gave the porter a shilling. "Take this to a black gentleman in the next carriage but one," I said, in a confidential whisper. The porter touched his hat, nodded, smiled, and took it.

Would Harold see the necessity for acting on my advice?—I wondered. I gazed out along the train as soon as we had got well clear of Berwick. A minute—two minutes—three minutes passed; and still no handkerchief. I began to despair. He was debating, no doubt. If he refused, all was lost, and we were disgraced for ever.

At last, after long waiting, as I stared still along the whizzing line, with the smoke in my eyes, and the dust half blinding me, I saw, to my intense relief, a handkerchief flutter. It fluttered once, not markedly, then a black hand withdrew it. Only just in time, for even as it disappeared, the detective's head thrust itself out of a farther window. He was not looking for anything in particular, as

far as I could tell—just observing the signals. But it gave me a strange thrill to think even now we were so nearly defeated.

My next trouble was—would the train draw up at Dunbar? The 10 a.m. from Euston is not set down to stop there in Bradshaw, for no passengers are booked to or from the station by the day express; but I remembered from of old when I lived at Edinburgh, that it used always to wait about a minute for some engine-driver's purpose. This doubt filled me with fresh fear; did it

draw up there still?—they have accelerated the service so much of late years, and abolished so many old accustomed stoppages. I counted the familiar stations with my breath held back. They seemed so much farther apart than usual. Reston—Grant's House—Cockburnspath—Innerwick.

The next was Dunbar. If we rolled past *that*, then all was lost. We could never get married. I trembled and hugged myself.

The engine screamed. Did that mean she was running through? Oh, how I wished I had learned the interpretation of the signals!

Then gradually, gently, we began to slow. Were we slowing to pass the station only? No; with a jolt she drew up. My heart gave a bound as I read the word "Dunbar" on the station notice-board.

I rose and waited, with my fingers on the door. Happily it had one of those new-fashioned slip-latches which open from inside. No need to betray myself prematurely to the detective by a hand displayed on the outer handle. I glanced out at him cautiously. His head was thrust through his window, and his sloping shoulders revealed the spy, but he was looking the other way—observing the signals, doubtless, to discover why we stopped at a place not mentioned in Bradshaw.



"I BECKONED A PORTER."

Harold's face just showed from another window close by. Too soon or too late might either of them be fatal. He glanced inquiry at me. I nodded back, "Now!" The train gave its first jerk, a faint backward jerk, indicative of the nascent intention of starting. As it braced itself to go on, I jumped out; so did Harold. We faced one another on the platform without a word. "Stand away there!" the station-master cried, in an angry voice, and waved his white flag. The detective, still absorbed on the signals, never once looked back. One second later, we were safe at Dunbar, and he was speeding away by the express for Edinburgh!

It gave us a breathing space of about an hour.

For half a minute I could not speak. My heart was in my mouth. I hardly even dared to look at Harold. Then the station-master stalked up to us with a threatening manner. "You can't get out here," he said, crustily, in

at Dunbar; and as the train happened to pull up, we thought we needn't waste time by going on all that way and then coming back again."

"Ye should have changed at Berwick," the station-master said, still gruffly, "and come on by the slow train." I could see his careful Scotch soul was vexed (incidentally) at our extravagance in paying the extra fare to Edinburgh and back again.

In spite of agitation, I managed to summon up one of my sweetest smiles—a smile that ere now had melted the hearts of rickshaw coolies and of French *douaniers*. He thawed before it visibly. "Time was important to us," I said—oh, he guessed not how important; "and besides, you know, it is so good for the company!"

"That's true," he answered, mollified. He could not tilt against the interests of the North British shareholders. "But how about



"'YOU CAN'T GET OUT HERE,' HE SAID, CRUSTILY."

a gruff Scotch voice. "This train is not timed to set down before Edinburgh."

"We *have* got out," I answered, taking it upon me to speak for my fellow-culprit, the Hindu—as he was to all seeming. "The logic of facts is with us. We were booked through to Edinburgh, but we wanted to stop

yer luggage? It'll have gone on to Edinburgh, I'm thinking."

"We *have* no luggage," I answered, boldly.

He stared at us both, puckered his brow a moment, and then burst out laughing. "Oh, ay, I see," he answered, with a comic air of amusement. "Well, well, it's none of *my*

business, no doubt, and I will not interfere with ye; though why a lady like you——” He glanced curiously at Harold.

I saw he had guessed right, and thought it best to throw myself unreservedly on his

“Can we get a trap?”

“Oh, ay, there’s machines always waiting at the station.”

We interviewed a “machine,” and drove out to Little Kirkton. There, we told our



“WE TOLD OUR TALE.”

mercy. Time was indeed important. I glanced at the station clock. It was not very far from the stroke of six, and we must manage to get married before the detective could miss us at Edinburgh, where he was due at 6.30.

So I smiled once more, that heart-softening smile. “We have each our own fancies,” I said, blushing—and, indeed (such is the pride of race among women), I felt myself blush in earnest at the bare idea that I was marrying a black man, in spite of our good Maharajah’s kindness. “He is a gentleman, and a man of education and culture.” I thought that recommendation ought to tell with a Scotchman. “We are in sore straits now, but our case is a just one. Can you tell me who in this place is most likely to sympathize—most likely to marry us?”

He looked at me—and surrendered at discretion. “I should think anybody would marry ye who saw yer pretty face and heard yer sweet voice,” he answered. “But, perhaps, ye’d better present yerself to Mr. Schoolcraft, the U.P. minister at Little Kirkton. He was ay soft-hearted.”

“How far from here?” I asked.

“About two miles,” he answered.

tale in the fewest words possible to the obliging and good-natured U.P. minister. He looked, as the station-master had said, “soft-hearted”; but he dashed our hopes to the ground at once by telling us candidly that unless we had had our residence in Scotland for twenty-one days immediately preceding the marriage, it would not be legal. “If you were Scotch,” he added, “I could go through the ceremony at once, of course; and then you could apply to the sheriff to-night for leave to register the marriage in proper form afterward: but as one of you is English, and the other I judge”—he smiled and glanced towards Harold—“an Indian-born subject of Her Majesty, it would be impossible for me to do it: the ceremony would be invalid, under Lord Brougham’s Act, without previous residence.”

This was a terrible blow. I looked away appealingly. “Harold,” I cried in despair, “do you think we could manage to hide ourselves safely anywhere in Scotland for twenty-one days?”

His face fell. “How could I escape notice? All the world is hunting for me. And then, the scandal! No matter where you stopped—however far from me—no,

Lois, darling, I could never expose you to it."

The minister glanced from one to the other of us, puzzled. "Harold?" he said, turning over the word on his tongue. "Harold? That doesn't sound like an Indian name, does it? And——" he hesitated, "you speak wonderful English!"

I saw the safest plan was to make a clean breast of it. He looked the sort of man one could trust on an emergency. "You have heard of the Ashurst will case?" I said, blurting it out suddenly.

"I have seen something about it in the newspapers; yes. But it did not interest me: I have not followed it."

I told him the whole truth; the case against us—the facts as we knew them. Then I added, slowly, "This is Mr. Harold Tillington, whom they accuse of forgery. Does he look like a forger? I want to marry him before he is tried. It is the only way by which I can prove my implicit trust in him. As soon as we are married, he will give himself up at once to the police—if you wish it, before your eyes. But married we must be. *Can't* you manage it somehow?"

My pleading voice touched him. "Harold Tillington?" he murmured. "I know of his forebears. Lady Guinevere Tillington's son, is it not? Then you must be Younger of Gledcliffe." For Scotland is a village: everyone in it seems to have heard of every other.

"What does he mean?" I asked. "Younger of Gledcliffe?" I remembered now that the phrase had occurred in Mr. Ashurst's will, though I never understood it.

"A Scotch fashion," Harold answered. "The heir to a laird is called Younger of so-and-so. My father has a small estate of that name in Dumfriesshire; a *very* small estate: I was born and brought up there."

"Then you are a Scotchman?" the minister asked.

"I have never counted myself so," Harold answered, frankly: "except by remote descent. We are trebly of the female line at Gledcliffe; still, I am no doubt more or less Scotch by domicile."

"Younger of Gledcliffe! Oh, yes, that ought certainly to be quite sufficient for our purpose. But then—the lady?"

"She is unmitigatedly English," Harold admitted, in a gloomy voice.

"Not quite," I answered. "I lived four years in Edinburgh. And I spent my holidays there while I was at Girton. I keep my boxes still at my old rooms in Maitland Street."

"Oh, that will do," the minister answered, quite relieved; for it was clear that our anxiety and the touch of romance in our tale had enlisted him in our favour. "Indeed, now I come to think of it, it suffices for the Act if one only of the parties is domiciled in Scotland. Still, I can do nothing save marry you now by religious service in the presence of my servants—which constitutes what we call an ecclesiastical marriage—it becomes legal if afterwards registered; and then you must apply to the sheriff for a warrant to register it. But I will do what I can; later on, if you like, you can be remarried by the rites of your own Church in England."

"Are you quite sure our Scotch domicile is good enough in law?" Harold asked, still doubtful.

"I can turn it up, if you wish. I have a legal hand-book. Before Lord Brougham's Act, no formalities were necessary. But the Act was passed to prevent Gretna Green marriages. The usual phrase is that such a marriage does not hold good unless one or other of the parties either has had his or her usual residence in Scotland, or else has lived there for twenty-one days immediately preceding the date of the marriage. If you like, I will wait to consult the authorities."

"No, thank you," I cried. "There is no time to lose. Marry us first, and look it up afterwards. 'One or other' will do, it seems. Mr. Tillington is Scotch enough, I am sure; we will rest our claim upon that. Even if the marriage turns out invalid, we only remain where we were. This is a preliminary ceremony to prove good faith, and to bind us to one another. We can satisfy the law, if need be, when we return to England."

The minister called in his wife and servants, and explained to them briefly. He exhorted us and prayed. We gave our solemn consent in legal form before five witnesses. Then he pronounced us duly married. In a quarter of an hour more, we had made declaration to that effect before the sheriff, and were formally affirmed to be man and wife before the law of Great Britain. I asked if it would hold in England as well.

"You couldn't be firmer married," the sheriff said, with decision, "by the Archbishop of Canterbury in Westminster Abbey."

Harold turned to the minister. "Will you send for the police?" he said, calmly. "I wish to inform them that I am the man for whom they are looking in the Ashurst will case."

Our own cabman went to fetch them. It

was a terrible moment. But Harold sat in the sheriff's study and waited, as if nothing unusual were happening. He talked freely but quietly. Never in my life had I felt so proud of him.

At last the police came, much inflated with the dignity of so great a capture, and took down our statement. "Do you give yourself in charge on a confession of forgery?" the superintendent asked, as Harold ended.

"Certainly not," Harold answered. "I have not committed forgery. But I do not wish to skulk or hide myself. I understand a warrant is out against me in London. I have come to Scotland, hurriedly, for the sake of getting married, not to escape apprehension. I am here, openly, under my own name. I tell you the facts; 'tis for you to decide: if you choose, you can arrest me."

The superintendent conferred for some time in another room with the sheriff. Then he returned to the study. "Very well, sir," he said, in a respectful tone, "I arrest you."

So that was the beginning of our married life. More than ever, I felt sure I could trust in Harold.

The police decided, after hearing by telegram from London, that we must go up at once by the night express, which they stopped for the purpose. They were forced to divide us. I took the sleeping car; Harold travelled

with two constables in an ordinary carriage. Strange to say, notwithstanding all this, so great was our relief from the tension of our flight, that we both slept soundly.

Next morning we arrived in London, Harold guarded. The police had arranged that the case should come up at Bow Street that afternoon. It was not an ideal honeymoon, and yet, I was somehow happy.

At Euston, they took him away from me. And still, I hardly cried. All the way up in the train, whenever I was awake, an idea had been haunting me—a possible clue to this trickery of Lord Southminster's. Petty details cropped up and fell into their places. I began to unravel it all now. I had an inkling of a plan to set Harold right again.

The will we had proved—but I must not anticipate.

When we parted, Harold kissed me on the forehead, and murmured rather sadly, "Now I suppose it's all up. Lois, I must go. These rogues have been too much for us."

"Not a bit of it," I answered, new hope growing stronger and stronger within me. "I see a way out. I have found a clue. I believe, dear Harold, the right will still be vindicated."

And red-eyed as I was, I jumped into a hansom, and called to the cabman to drive at once to Lady Georgina's.



"I HAVE FOUND A CLUE."