

this time. The operas that we have listened to!—and the symphonies and the recital! The very memory gives me a headache; though of course I was glad that she should have so much enjoyment. Well, I trust, at all events, that your friend is not musical!"

"I can't say for certain; but naturally he will pretend to be. Who knows whether that pretence may not work him undoing? Meanwhile, let us not worry. We are impotent, or almost so, remember, and what is to be will be."

Mrs Hamilton, albeit no fatalist, was well aware of her impotence in certain directions. The desire of her heart was that Jack Clough and her daughter should fancy one another; but she could not make them do that, and she was pretty sure that, so far as he was concerned, efforts were needless. It only remained to hope that he was the wily diplomatist he appeared to set up for being, and to let Daphne discover for herself what a very ordinary personage this young von Kahlenburg was.

Unfortunately, such discoveries are not always made by those best situated for making them, nor can the most ordinary young man alive be considered safe from idealisation in the eyes of this or that maiden. Only a few days were required to convince the distressed and apprehensive Mrs Hamilton that her daughter was as liable as another to succumb to the attractions of the commonplace. A comely countenance, a simple, manly bearing, a flattering mixture of deference and profound admiration—these attributes, however small their intrinsic worth, have suffered from time immemorial to captivate feminine hearts. And what countervailing measures can be adopted in a place like Marienbad, where everybody necessarily meets everybody else half a dozen times between sunrise and sunset? Count Otto met Miss Daphne daily when the dew was still on the grass, met her again at the Waldquelle, whither her mother was bound to repair at half-past eleven, lunched in her company towards midday (for restaurants are open to all the world), attended her on long walks through the pine-forests during the afternoon, and partook by her side of the late dinner which, though contrary to rule, the doctor had sanctioned as a concession to British custom. It is true that on these occasions the presence of Mrs Hamilton and Captain Clough, not to speak of the doggedly determined Perkins family, gave little or no opportunity for solitary intercourse; yet progress was made and encouragement was unquestionably vouchsafed.

"Mark my words," said Mrs Perkins solemnly to her daughter; "all this will end in at least one engagement."

Minnie simpered, lowered her eyelids, and wondered aloud what mamma could mean by more than one. Mrs Hamilton and Captain Clough could have told her, had they thought it worth while, but in truth neither of them had much attention to spare for absurd side-issues.

CHAPTER IV.
RESIGNATION.

Jack Clough was an oldish man for his years. He was conscious of this, and of the disabilities entailed upon him thereby; but even if he had not recognised the humiliating fact of his having already, in Daphne's estimation, reached the confines of middle age, he would still have had common sense enough to perceive that the girl had never so much as thought of him in the light of a suitor for her hand. A certain natural refinement and scrupulousness had restrained Mrs Hamilton (to whom he was duly grateful) from thus representing him to her daughter, and his secret, so far as he could see, was likely to be kept till the end of the chapter. That, under these circumstances, he should have been more anxious for Daphne's happiness than his own, and willing to promote the former at the expense of the latter, may seem to prove conclusively that he could not in reality have been very deeply in love; but human emotions have the strangest complications and developments. Certain, at all events, it is that he received with patience the confidences of Count Otto, who poured these into his ears at great length every evening.

The young man was inclined to be sanguine. Respecting his relations with the object of his passion he was modestly reticent; Clough, having eyes to see, could judge for himself whether they were progressing favourably or not. But from the outset he

had realised the importance of overcoming Mrs. Hamilton's undisguised hostility, and his strenuous exertions to that end were beginning, he believed, to bear fruit.

"She has the air," he said, "of becoming resigned. Oh, as for liking me, no!—she does not like me. But I have observed that of late she has ceased to stare at me, as if she suspected me of being a chivalier d'industrie, which is so much gained. I think also that in the last resort she will not have the heart to oppose her daughter, whom she loves—as who would not?"

"You may take that for certain," said Clough quietly.

"Well, I hope I may. Although it is evident that she has plans for her daughter's future which I am sure your sober old head has never divined. Happily, they have no better prospect of success than the plans of our excellent Mrs. Perkins and Miss Minnie, with whom, my dear friend, you should walk more warily. You walk with her too much—oh, but indeed too much!—and in the moonlight, too, you old rascal!"

A jocosse poke in the ribs emphasised this accusation, to which the other responded: "I can lay my hand on the place where my heart ought to be, and swear that I would never walk with Miss Perkins under moon or sun if I could help it; but it seems necessary that I should walk with somebody, and the delicacy of Mrs. Perkins and Bosie, combined with your recent tactics, leaves me only one available partner."

Von Kahlenburg laughed. "Cheer up, old man!" said he, consolingly, "you shall have a holiday—two or three holidays if you like. I have made all arrangements now with my uncle's forester, and you have only to fix your own date."

He had made all arrangements for the promised shooting expedition, save that he himself (for obvious reasons) proposed to take no part in it. His English friend, however, being no longer indispensable at Marienbad, could be granted leave of absence and provided with company in the shape of sundry noble sportsmen from Vienna, to whom Captain Clough was in due course presented. With these cheery and affable comrades the superfluous one enjoyed some very fair sport in the adjacent pine forests, bringing down his share of driven roe deer and returning at the end of three days with a mixed bag, a surnatural nose and a new narrow-brimmed hat, the gift of one of the party, which was adorned at the back by the beard of a chamois, and on the side by a blackcock's tail feathers.

Then it was that the reality of Mrs. Hamilton's resignation was made manifest to him. She had not yet given in; but she was giving in, and almost admitted that she was.

"How am I to fight against fate single-handed?" she plaintively asked. "Your desertion of me amounts to acquiescence in my defeat."

"No number of helping hands would have enabled you to conquer fate," he sensibly returned; "as I told you the first day, what is to be will be."

"Yes, I remember your saying so—true, if rather depressing. But the truth generally is depressing, isn't it? You mentioned at the same time that he was either musical or would pretend to be, which has turned out to be likewise true."

"And likewise depressing?"

"Oh, not to Daphne. Between ourselves, I confess that the prospect of a cross-country journey back to Bayreuth for the sake of seeing 'Parsifal' a third time is rather depressing to me; but since they are both bent upon it, and since the doctor says that there will be no harm in my interrupting my 'cure' for a couple of days."

"I suppose you wouldn't be persuaded to come with us? The Perkins trio, I may tell you, will not be included in our party."

Possibly dread of being abandoned, alone and unprotected, to Minnie Perkins for forty-eight hours may have moved him to assent; but it was more likely that he was influenced by an appeal from Daphne, who joined him and her mother at this moment, and to whose requests he never knew how to turn a deaf ear. Her motives for desiring his society at and on the journey to Bayreuth were as evident as they were personally unflattering; yet he took no offence. Without figure of speech, he counted it a privilege to serve her.

To educated and discriminating persons the privilege of witnessing a performance which can only be witnessed in a sleepy town of Upper Franconia

is doubtless a high one and worth the high price which tickets for the same command, when purchased at the last moment; but Captain Clough's love for music did not extend much beyond appreciation of melody; so that the first act of 'Parsifal,' which stirred the lady who sat on his right hand to visible enthusiasm and seemed to satisfy the soul of her on his left, ended by boring him more than a little. He recognised, indeed, the marvellous beauty of certain orchestral passages, admired (with a few mental reservations) the skilful stage management, and was impressed—as everybody, on visiting that unique playhouse for the first time, must be—by the breathless silence and attention of the vast audience. But that interminable recitative was more than he could stand. "I can't for the life of me," he whispered to Mrs Hamilton, who occupied the place on his left, "see what music has to do with the monotonous noise produced by a couple of personages, standing there and shouting at one another till all's blue!"

Mrs Hamilton, with a slight smile, laid her finger upon her lips and glanced meaningly at Daphne. Well, he could contentedly imitate her there, at all events; he could derive a great deal of pleasure from watching Daphne, if he was no longer able to concentrate his faculties upon stage or orchestra. She was in truth worth looking at, with her parted lips, her

luminous eyes, her incomparable profile—and so young von Kahlenburg, who was seated beyond her, appeared to think. His ingenious profile (comparable to half a hundred others) expressed a homage and admiration which were probably not offered to the deceased composer, although he was ready with an intelligent nod as often as his fair neighbour, touched by some vocal or instrumental effect, turned her face towards him for a moment. A bit of a humbug he may have been, a less ardent worshipper of Wagner than of Daphne Hamilton, no doubt; yet he was at least capable of entering into her feelings, whether he shared them or not. Very plain it was to the unobserved observer that they understood one another, those two, and—what more would you have? "For my own part," he thought to himself, with a rueful, inaudible laugh, "I could do with rather less."

But he was willing in his stoical, philosophical fashion to endure what, as he was now convinced, could not be cured. When the curtain had fallen and the strangely silent audience had quitted the theatre to emerge upon the sunny hill-top where it stands, Daphne, with the last echoes of the "Graksmotiv" still ringing in her ears, turned and asked, "Well, are you not glad you came?"

"Oh, yes, I'm glad," he answered; "one is always glad to increase one's stock of knowledge. I was more or

KING'S COLLEGE, AUCKLAND.

BOARDING AND DAY SCHOOL FOR BOYS.

VISITOR—REV. W. BRATT, M.A.

PRINCIPAL—MR. GRAHAM BRUCE, B.A. (with Honours of the University of London).
Assisted by a Staff of thirteen Masters, of whom five are resident.



SUCCESSSES.

1897-98.

- Four Boys, Senior Civil Service
- Twenty-three Boys, Junior Civil Service
- Eight Boys, Matriculation
- Two Boys qualified for Board of Education Senior Scholarships, 1898, obtaining fourth and fifth places.

Prospectuses may be obtained from the Principal, or on application to Messrs. Upton & Co., Queen Street.

THE LADIES' COLLEGE, REMUERA,

FOR GIRLS OF ALL AGES.

Removed to the beautiful and extensive property known as Cleveland House (five minutes' walk from former position).



This First-class Private School provides modern high-class Education and moral training, on Christian but Unsectarian principles. Home-life is combined with the culture and disciplinary influences of School, under maternal supervision and with selected companionship. Full Staff of Resident and Visiting Professors and Governesses—English and Foreign. Prospectuses on application of Messrs. Upton & Co., or Principal.
MRS. S. A. MOORE-JONES, M.R.C.P., N.M., O.M.I., &c.