

York, and also has herself visited the little patients, to the great delight of the authorities and the children themselves.

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THE Marchioness of Dufferin will, next May, give an account, at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, of the work done in India through the instrumentality of the noble fund which bears her name. This will be the first time her ladyship has spoken publicly in England, and, as she is a very able speaker, it is sure to be a most interesting meeting.

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THE Council of the Maria Grey Training College has bestowed on Miss Emily Williams, who was trained at the College, the travelling scholarship of the value of £50, given by the Gilbert trustees.

VEVA KARSLAND.

THE VICAR'S DAUGHTER.*

An Autobiographical Story.

BY GEORGE MACDONALD, LL.D.,

Author of "David Elginbrod," "Alec Forbes," "Within and Without," "Malcolm," &c.

CHAPTER XL.—A STUPID CHAPTER.

BEFORE proceeding with my own story, I must mention that my father took every means in his power to find out something about the woman, and the gang of gipsies to which she appeared to belong. I believe he had no definite end in view further than the desire to be able at some future time to enter into such relations with her, for her own and her daughter's sake—if indeed Theodora were her daughter—as might be possible. But the very next day he found that they had already vanished from the place; and all the inquiries he set on foot, by means of friends and through the country constabulary, were of no avail. I believe he was dissatisfied with himself in what had occurred, thinking he ought to have laid himself out at the time to discover whether she was indeed the mother, and in that case to do for her what he could. Probably, had he done so, he would only have heaped difficulty upon difficulty; but as it was, if he was saved from trouble, he was not delivered from uneasiness. Clearly, however, the child must not be exposed to the danger of the repetition of the attempt; and the whole household was now so fully alive to the necessity of not losing sight of her for a moment, that her danger was far less than it had been at any time before.

I continued at the Hall for six weeks, during which my husband came several times to see me; and at the close of that period took me back with him to my dear little home. The rooms, all but the study, looked very small after those I had left; but I felt notwithstanding that the place was my home. I was at first a little ashamed of the feeling; for why should I be anywhere more at home than in the house of such parents as mine? But I presume there is a certain amount of the queenly element in every woman, so that she cannot feel perfectly at ease without something to govern—however small, and however troublesome her queendom may be. At my father's I had every ministration possible, and all comforts in profusion; but I had no responsibilities, and no rule; so that sometimes I could not help feeling as if I was idle, although I knew I was not to blame. Besides, I could not be at all sure that my big bear was properly attended to; and the knowledge that he was the most independent of comforts of all the men I had ever come into any relation with, made me only feel the more anxious that he should not be left to his own neglect. For, although my father, for instance, was ready to part with anything, even to a favourite volume, if the good reason of another's need showed itself, he was not at all indifferent in his own person to being comfortable. One with his intense power of enjoying the gentleness of the universe could not be so. Hence it was always easy to make him a little present, whereas I have still to rack my brains for weeks before my bear's birthday comes round, to think of something that will in itself have a chance of giving him pleasure. Of course it would be comparatively easy if I had plenty of money to spare, and hadn't "to muddle it all away" in paying butchers and bakers, and such like people.

So home I went, to be queen again. Friends came to see me, but I returned few of their calls. I liked best to sit in my bedroom. I would have preferred sitting in my wonderful little room off the study, and I tried that first; but the same morning somebody called on Percivale, and straightway I felt myself a prisoner. The moment I heard the strange voice through the door, I wanted to get out, and could not, of course. Such a risk I would not run again. And when Percivale asked me the next day if I would not go down with him, I told him I could not bear the feeling of confinement it gave me.

"I did mean," he said, "to have had a door made into the garden for you; and I consulted an architect friend on the subject; but he soon satisfied me it would make the room much too cold for you, and so I was compelled to give up the thought."

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