The PLANTS of DOMINA

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SYNOPSIS.

John Valiant, a rich society favorite, suddenly discovers that the Valiant corporation, which his father founded and which was the principal source of his wealth, has failed. He voluntarily turns over his private fortune to the receiver for the corporation. His entire remaining possessions consist of an old motor car, a white bull dog and Damory court, a neglected estate in Virginia. On the way to Damory court he meets Shirley Dandridge, an auburn-haired beauty, and decides that he is going to like Virginia immensely. Shirley's mother, Mrs. Dandridge, and Major Bristow exchange reminiscences during which it is revealed that the major, Valiant's father, and a man named Sassoon were rivals for the hand of Mrs. Dandridge in her youth. Sassoon and Valiant fought a duel on her account in which the former was killed. Valiant finds Damory court overgrown with weeds and cobwebs and decides to rehabilitate the place. Valiant saves Shirley from the bite of a snake, which bites him. Knowing the deadliness of the bite, Shirley sucks the poison from the wound and saves his life. Valiant learns for the first time that his father left Virginia on account of a duel in which Doctor Southall and Major Bristow acted as his father's seconds. Valiant and Shirley become good friends. Mrs. Dandridge faints when she meets Valiant for the first time. Valiant discovers that he has a fortune in old walnut trees.

CHAPTER XXII—Continued.

"I got over it before I was old enough to make myself a butt of hilarity," the doctor retorted. "I see by the papers they've invented a new dance called the grizzly bear. I believe there's another named the yip-kyoodle. I hope you've got 'em down pat to show the young folk tonight, Bristow."

The major got up with some irritation. "Southall," he said, "sometimes I'm tempted to think your remarks verge upon the personal. You don't have to watch me dance if you don't choose to."

"No, thank God," muttered the doctor. "I prefer to remember you when you still preserved a trace of dignity—twenty odd years ago."

"If dignity—" the major's blood was rising now,—"consists in your eternal tasteless bickerings, I want none of it. What on earth do you do it for? You had some friends once."

"Friends!" snapped the other, "the fewer I have the better!"

The major clapped on his straw hat angrily, strode to the door, and opened it. But on the threshold he stopped, and presently shut it, turned back slowly and resumed his chair. The doctor was relighting his cigar, but an odd furtive look had slipped to his face, and the hand that struck the match was unsteady.

For a time both sat smoking, at first in silence, then talking in a desultory way on indifferent topics. Finally the major rose and tossed his cigar into the empty grate.

"I'll be off now," he said. "I must be on the field before the others."

As he went down the steps a carriage, drawn by a pair of dancing grays, plunged past. "Who are those people with the Chalmers, I wonder," said the doctor. "They're strangers here."

The major peered. "Oh," he said, over his shoulder, "I forgot to tell you. That's Silas Fargo, the railroad president from New York, and his daughter Katharine. His private car's down on the siding. They're at the judge's—he's chief counsel for the road in this state. They'll be at the tournament, I reckon. You'll be there, won't you?"

The doctor was putting some phials and instruments into a worn leather bag. "No," he said, shortly. "I'm going to take a ten-mile drive—to add to this county's population, I expect. But I'm coming to the dance. Promised Valiant I would, in a moment of temporary aberration."

CHAPTER XXII.

A Virginian Runnymede.

"June in Virginia is something to remember." Today the master of Damory Court deemed this a true saying. For the air was like wine, and the drifting white wings of cloud, piled above the amethystine ramparts of the far Blue Ridge, looked down upon a violet world bound in green and silver.

In his bedroom Valiant stood looking into the depths of an ancient wardrobe. Presently he took from a hook a suit of white flannel in which he arrayed himself. Over his soft shirt he knotted a pale gray scarf. The modish white suit and the rolling Panama threw out in fine contrast the keen sun-tanned face and dark brown eyes.

In the hall below he looked about him with satisfaction. For the last three days he had labored tirelessly to fit the place for the evening's event. The parlor now showed walls rimmed with straight-back chairs and the grand piano—long ago put in order—had been relegated to the library. That instinct for the artistic, which had made him a last resort in the vexing problems of club entertainments, had aided him in the Court's adornment.

Out of the kitchens Cassandra's egg-beating chatted like a watchman's rattle, while Aunt Daphne put the finishing touches to an array of lighter edibles destined to grace the long table on the rear porch, now walled in with snow-white muslin and hung with candle-lusters. Under the trees Uncle Jefferson was even then experimenting with various punch compounds, and a delicious aroma of vanilla came to Valiant's nostrils.

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The Red Road, as Valiant's car passed, was dotted with straggling pedestrians: humble country folk who trudged along the grassy foot-path with no sullen regard for the swift cars and comfortable carriage that left them behind; sturdy barefooted children who called shrilly after him, and happy-go-lucky negro youths clad in their best with Sunday shoes dangling over their shoulders, slouching regardlessly in the dust—all bound for the same Mecca, which presently rose before him, a gateway of painted canvas proclaiming the field to which it opened Runnymede.

He halted his car at the end of the field and snapped a leash in the bulldog's collar. "I hate to do it, old man," he said apologetically to Chum's reproachful look, "but I've got to. There are to be some stunts, and in such occasions you're apt to be convinced you're the main one of the contestants, which might cause a mix-up. Never mind; I'll anchor you where you won't miss anything."

With the excited dog tugging before him, he threaded his way through the press with keen exhilaration. Now and then his gloved hand touched his cap at a salutation. He was conscious of swift bird-like glances from pretty girls. Here was none of the rigid straight-ahead gaze or vacant stare of the city boulevard; the eyes that looked at him, frankly curious and inquiring, were full of easy open comradeship. Some of the girls wore gowns and hats that might that morning have issued from the Rue de la Paix; others were habited in cheap materials. But about the latter hung no benumbing self-consciousness. All bore themselves alike. He was beginning to realize that there might really exist straitened circumstances, even actual poverty, which yet created no sort of social difference.

Opposite the canvas-covered grand stand sat twelve small mushroom tents, each with a staff and tiny flag. Midway lines of flaxen ropes stretched between rows of slender peeled saplings from whose tops floated fanged streamers of vivid bunting. A pavilion of purple cloth, open at the sides, curved brim was wound with a shaded plume of the same tint. Her mother was not with her. She was not looking his way as he passed—her arms at the moment being held out in an adorable gesture toward a little child in a smiling matron's lap—and but a single glance was vouchsafed to him before the major seized upon him and bore him to the purple pavilion, for he was one of the committee.

But for this distraction, he might have seen, entering the stand with the Chalmers just as the band struck up a delicious whirl of "Dixie," the two strangers whom the doctor had observed an hour before as they whirled by the Merrywether Mason house behind the judge's grays. Silas Fargo might have passed in any gathering for the unobtrusive city man. Katharine was noticeable anywhere, and today her tall willowy figure in its champagne-color lingerie gown and hat garnished with bronze and gold thistles, setting in relief her ivory statuesque face, drew a wave of whispered comment which left a sibilant wake behind him. The party made a picturesque group as they now disposed themselves, Katharine's colorless loveliness contrasting with the eager sparkle of pretty Nancy Chalmers and the gipsy-like beauty of Betty Page.

"You call it a tournament, don't you?" asked Katharine of the judge.

"Yes," he replied. "It's a kind of contest in which twelve riders compete for the privilege of naming a Queen of Beauty. There's a ball tonight, at which the lucky lady is crowned. Those little tents are where the noble knights don their shining armor. See, there go their caparisoned chargers."

A file of negroes was approaching the tents, each leading a horse whose saddle and bridle were decorated with fringes of various hues. In the center of the roped lists, directly in front of the stand, others were planting upright in the ground a tall pole from whose top projected a horizontal arm like a slender gallows. From this was suspended a cord at whose end swung a tiny object that whirled and glittered in the sun.

The judge explained. "On the end of the cord is a silver ring, at which the knights tilt with lances. Twelve rings are used. The pike-points are made to fit them, and the knight who carries off the greatest number of the twelve is the victor. The whole thing is a custom as ancient as Virginia—a relic, of course, of the old jousting of the feudal ages. The ring is supposed to represent the device on the boss of the shield, at which the lance thrust was aimed."

"How interesting!" exclaimed Katharine, and turning, swept the stand with her lorgnette. "I suppose all the county's F. F. V.'s are here," she said laughingly to Nancy Chalmers. "I've often wondered, by the way, what became of the Second Families of Virginia."

"Oh, they've mostly emigrated North," answered Nancy. "The ones that are left are all ancient. There are families here that don't admit they ever began at all."

Silas Fargo shook his stooped shoulders with laughter. "Up North," he said genially, "we've got regular factories that turn out readymade family trees for anybody who wants to roost in one."

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And now over the fluttering stand and the crowd about the barriers, a stir was discernible. Katharine looked again at the field. "Who is that splendid old man giving directions? The one who looks like a lion. He's coming this way, now."

"That's Major Montague Bristow," said the judge. "He's been master of the heralds for years. The tournament could hardly happen without the major."

"I'm sure I'd like him," she answered. "What a lovely girl he is talking to!"

It was Shirley who had beckoned the major from the lists. She was leaning over the railing. "Why has Ridgeley Pendleton left?" she asked in a low voice. "Isn't he one of the twelve?"

"He was. But he's ill. He wasn't feeling up to it when he came, but he didn't give up till half an hour ago. We'll have to get along with eleven knights."

She made an exclamation of dismay. "Poor Ridge! And what a pity! There have never been less than 12 full number. It will spoil the royal quadrille tonight, too. Why doesn't the committee choose some one in his place? Listen. Why not ask Mr. Valiant? He is our host tonight. I'm sure he'd be glad to help out, even without the costume."

"Egad!" he said, pulling his imperial. "None of us had thought of him. He could ride Pendleton's mount, of course." He reflected a moment. I'll do it. It's exactly the right thing. You're a clever girl, Shirley."

He hastily crossed the field, while she leaned back, her eyes on the fan-veiled figure—long since recognized—under the purple pavilion. She saw the committe put their heads together and hurriedly enter.

In the moment's wait, Shirley's gloved fingers clasped and unclasped somewhat nervously. The riders had been chosen long before John Valiant's coming. If a saddle, however, was perforce to be vacant, what more appropriate than that he should fill it? The thought had come to her instantly, bred of an underlying regret, which she had all along cherished, that he was not to take part. But beneath this was a deeper passionate wish that she did not attempt to analyze to see him assume his place with others long habituated to that closed circle—a place rightfully his by reason of birth and name—and to lighten the gloomy shadow that must rest on his thoughts of his father, with warmer sunnier things. She heaved a secret sigh of satisfaction as the white-clad figure rose in acquiescence.

The major returned to the grand stand and held up his hand for silence.

"Our gracious liege," he proclaimed, in his big vibrant voice, "Queen of Beauty yet unknown, Lords, Knights and Esquires, Fair Dames and gentles all! Whereas divers noble persons have enterprized and taken upon them to hold jousts royal and tourney, you are hereby acquainted that the lists of Runnymede are about to open for that achievement of arms and grand and noble tournament for which they have so long been famed. But an hour since one of our noble knights, pricking hither to tilt for his lady, was beset by a grievous malady. However, lest our jousting lack the royal number, a new champion hath at this last hour been found to fill the Table Round, who of his courtesy doth consent to ride without armor."

A buzz ran over the assemblage. "It must be Pendleton who has defaulted," said Judge Chalmers. "I heard this morning he was sick. Who's the substitute knight, I wonder?"

At the moment a single mounted herald before the tents blew a long blast on a silver horn. Their flaps parted and eleven knights issued to mount their steeds and draw into line behind him. They were brilliantly decked in feathlings with slashed doublets and plumed chapeaus, and short jeweled cloaks drooped from their shoulders. Pages handed each a long lance which was held perpendicular, the butt resting on the right stirrup.

Under the pavilion, just for the fraction of a second, Valiant hesitated. Then he turned swiftly to the twelfth tent. Its flag-staff bore a long streamer of deep blood-red. He snatched this from its place, flung it about his waist and knotted it sash-wise. He drew the rose from his lapel and thrust it through the band of his Panama, leaped to the saddle of the horse the major had beckoned, and with a quick thrust of his heel, swung to the end of the stamping line.

The field and grand stand had seen the quick decision, with its instant action, and as the hoofs thudded over the turf, a wave of hand-clapping ran across the seats like a silver rain. "Neatly done, upon my word!" said the judge, delighted. "What a daring idea! Who is it? Is it—bless my soul, it is!"

Katharine Fargo had dropped her lorgnette with an exclamation. She stood up, her wide eyes fixed on that figure in pure white, with the blood-red cordon flaunting across his horse's flanks and the single crimson blossom glowing in his hat.

"The White Knight!" she breathed. "Who is he?"

Judge Chalmers looked round in sudden illumination. "I forgot that you would be likely to know him, he said. "That is Mr. John Valiant of Damory Court."

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Knight of the Crimson Rose.

The row of horsemen had halted in a curving line before the grand stand, and now in the silence the herald, holding a parchment scroll, spurred before each rider in turn, demanding his title. As this was given he whirled to proclaim it, accompanying each evolution with a blast on his horn. "Knight of the Golden Spur," "Knight of Castlewood," "Lord of Brandon," "Westover's Knight," "Knight of the Silver Cross": the names, fanciful, or those of family estates, fell on John Valiant's ear with a pungent flavor of medievalism. He started as he became aware that the rider next him had answered and that the herald had paused before him.

"Knight of the Crimson Rose!" It sprang to his lips without forethought, an echo, perhaps, of the improvised sash and the flower in his hat-band, but the shout of the herald and the trumpet's blare seemed to make the words fairly bulge with inevitability. And through this struck a sudden appalled feeling that he had really spoken Shirley's name, and that every one had heard. He could not see her face, and clutched his lance fiercely to overcome an insane desire to stoop hideously in his saddle and peer under the shading hat-brim. Lest he should do this, he fastened his eyes determinedly on the major, who now proceeded to deliver himself of the "Charge to the Knights."

The major made an appealing center to the charming picture as he stood on the green turf, "the glass of fashion and the mold of form," his head bare, his shock of blond-gray hair thrown back, and one hand thrust between the buttons of his snowy waistcoat. His rich bass voice rolled out to the farthest corner of the field:

"Sir Knights:

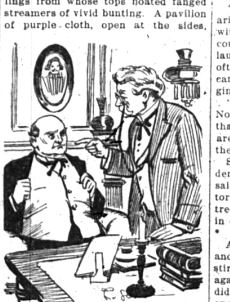
"The tournament to which we are gathered today is to us traditional; a rite of antiquity and a monument of ancient generations. This relic of the jousts of the Field of the Cloth-of-Gold points us back to an era of knightly deeds, fidelity to sacred trust, obligation to duty and loyalty to woman—the watchwords of true knighthood.

"We like to think that when our forefathers, offspring of men who established chivalry, came from overseas, they brought with them not only this ancient play, but the precepts it symbolizes. We may be proud, indeed, knowing that this is no hollow ceremonial, but an earnest that the flower of knighthood has not withered in the world, that in an age when the greed of gold was never so dazzling, the spirit of true gallantry has not faded but blooms luxuriant in the sparkling dews of the heart of this commonwealth.

"Most Noble Knights! In the name of that high tradition which this day preserves! In the memory of the other knights who practiced the tourney in its old-time glory! In the sight of your Queen of Beauty! I charge you, Southern gentlemen, to joust with that valor, fairness and truth which are the enduring glories of the knighthood of Virginia!"

Over the ringing applause, Nancy Chalmers looked at him with a little smile, quizzical yet soft. "Dear old major!" she whispered to Betty Page. "How he loves the center of the stage! And he's effective, too. Thirty years ago, father says, he might have been anything he wanted to—even United States Senator. But he would never leave the state. Not that I blame him for that," she added; "I'd rather be a church-mouse in Virginia than Croesus' daughter anywhere else."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



"Friends!" Snapped the Other, "The Fewer I Have the Better!"

"Who Is That Splendid Old Man Giving Directions? The One Who Looks Like a Lion."

SENT TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Vast Amounts of British Capital Invested in Colonies and in North America.

Take first the capital supplied to new countries for the development of their railways, their oil fields, their rubber plantations, their agriculture. We all remember the political catchword of "capital going abroad," and the campaign against British investments, organized and controlled by the unionist party, remarks the London Chronicle. The unionist leaders and the unionist ex-chancellor of the exchequer solemnly told the country that money was safer abroad than at home, and there is no doubt that the investing classes, which are largely unionist, took their word for it and did invest abroad. Believing that Diaz, Madero or Huerta was a safer guide than Campbell-Bannerman, Asquith or Lloyd-George, they neglected everything English and subscribed for anything foreign—a policy that they may bitterly repent today.

The result of this attitude in England was great activity in the new undeveloped countries. In the capital market, when the flap is working easily, some one is sure to be there with a bucket, and foreign borrowers did take money from London in bucketfuls. Exactly how much has been subscribed in the last few years no one can say, but the Economist figures, which are the most conservative of all the published statistics, place the amount of new capital publicly raised in England during the last five years at £1,044,609,000—one thousand millions in five years in advertised prospectuses alone! Of this sum by far the greater part has gone to British colonies and South America. Canada alone, taking nearly £200,000,000 and Argentina nearly £100,000,000.

His Sympathy for the Old Maids.

It is being told that the mayor of an Iowa city is an old bachelor and witty, and among his constituents are a family of spinsters who are precise and cranky. One night a charivari occurred near the home of the spins, and disturbed their slumbers and peace of mind, and the following morning they called on the mayor to remonstrate. It is a shame that small boys are permitted to make such hideous noises in this city," said one of the spins, who assumed great dignity. "Ladies, I assure you that I am shocked at the conduct of those boys, and had I known that a charivari was going on I certainly would have sent the entire police department to the scene of the grewsome activity," said the mayor. "I agree with you that nothing like that should have occurred in this city of civilized people. And if everybody were like you and me there would be no mean little brats to make such a hideous racket."—Kansas City Star.

Are You Alive?

There is no way by which you can "probe" to another that you "are alive." It is a matter of consciousness, of your own consciousness, and he who doubts your existence must keep on doubting so far as any argument that you may be able to offer him is concerned. It he will not take your word on the matter, the whole controversy is forever settled.

FELT CALLED ON TO REBUKE

Deacon Had Suffered From Appearance of Evil and Realized Sense of Duty.

One day a western deacon went to make a fraternal call on an esteemed brother, and while engaged in conversation there came a knock at the door and the host was summoned to attend to a matter of business.

"Brother," impressively remarked the deacon when the host returned, "I feel that it is my duty to tell you that you should avoid even the appearance of evil."

"Why, deacon," responded the host in a surprised voice, "to what are you referring?"

"Those decanters on the sideboard," solemnly answered the deacon, "each of them is filled with what appears to be ardent spirits."

"That's a conceit of my wife's, deacon," laughed the host, greatly relieved. "The bottles were so pretty that she filled them with floor stain and furniture polish just for a show."

"That's all right. I'm cautioning you, brother," sadly rejoined the deacon. "Feeling a trifle weak and faint, I helped myself from the larger bottle."

Russia's National Debt.

For several years Russia has been increasing its national debt, and figures show that over 45 per cent. of loans emitting in the course of the last five years were subscribed in foreign countries.

The Russian government is anxious to get money from other lands and is expected to seek further safety in European markets very shortly with which to meet requirements for the present year.

Statistics show that during the past five years 5169.6 million rubles were raised by Russia, 3657.1 millions in the country, and 1959.3 abroad. The value of a ruble is about 51 cents.

Very striking is the manner in which the Russian national debt has been increased in the course of the last two years, as also the additional amount of money borrowed on foreign markets in the year 1912, which jumped from 256.6 million in 1911 to 448.3 millions last year.

Transparent Fabrics in Summer Gowns

FOR the dance or the garden party or for any other of summer's festivities the airiest and prettiest of gowns may be made like this one of sheer organdy pictured here. And there is any number of transparent or semi-transparent materials from which to make a choice suited to the design. There are the plain and figured nets, voiles, swiss organdy, batiste, and the finer lawns, besides silk muslin and chiffon.

This is an American design, original and simple. It is prettily girlish and need not shrink from comparison with the product of any French establishment. There is an underskirt and waist of silk muslin. For this underslip the thin washable Chinese and Japanese silks are desirable, for they can be readily cleaned. A baby waist, with rather full sleeves, and a plain, moderately full skirt, answers this purpose and is to be made as a separate garment.

The outside skirt is also straight and plain. It is trimmed into very shallow scallops at the bottom and these are finished with a narrow ruffle of very fine point d'esprit or val lace, for which, fine plain net may be substituted.

Over this skirt there is an overskirt, somewhat fuller than the underskirt, and cut at the bottom in the same way, in shallow scallops, finished with the lace edging. The overskirt drops over a ruffle made of the organdy edged with lace. The ruffle follows the lines of the drapery in the overskirt, which is caught up at each side by a group of nine tiny tucks placed over the hips.

The neck is cut square in front and there is a square turnover collar of lace in the back and edging of lace set in at the front. A strand of pearls is worn, most appropriately, with this, as a neck finish. Two smart accessories complete the costume. They are a wide girdle of figured ribbon and a cluster of little flowers, forget-me-nots and June roses, fastened under the overskirt at the left side. The girdle is finished at the back with a flat bow.

If it were not for the sleeves one might say this gown lacks any distinctively original and picturesque touch. But they are features of importance. The bodice, cut in kimono fashion, with full short sleeves, depends upon them for its smartness. Set on the short sleeve are shaped ruffles of organdy headed by a full puff of the same. The ruffles are cut into long points in the manner of old-fashioned "angel" sleeves. They seem appropriately named in the vapory material of this gown.

The unusually wide brim of the hat worn with this gown is an innovation in shapes. The hat is made of malline with horsehair lace over it on the crown and upper brim. There is a sash of ribbon about the crown, with flower medallions affixed to it.

Style Features in New Coiffures

A COIFFURE that is popular with "Miss Manhattan" must possess certain style features which are worth inquiring into, since this young lady is very sophisticated and keen and discriminating, when it comes to the matter of making selections. One of those new hairdressings which have compelled her approval is shown here and since imitation is sincerest flattery the French twist, made of a mass of waved hair, may consider itself flattered.

The most noticeable points in this style are the waving of all the hair and the side part. There is a return to waves and curls and the promise, already occasionally fulfilled, of puffs in the coming styles in coiffures. Far more than half of the prettiest effects show the hair parted at one or both sides and massed on the top of the head.

The hair is combed more away from the face than it has been. This is the effect of hats which set less far down on the head than those that preceded them.

It not difficult to arrange the hair in the manner pictured, but the waving is not so easy. A side comb is worn with the long twist at the back, and for dressy occasions a Spanish comb makes an effective finish, thrust in at the side near the top or at any angle that is becoming to the wearer.

It is quite the style to show the forehead bare at one or both sides. In the side part, as pictured here, the left forehead is bare and a lock of hair falls down at the right side and center. Little love wisps of hair about the face are curled in tight ringlets. The ears are almost uncovered, marking the last of the innovations which hairdressers are introducing.

JULIA BOTTOMLEY.

Heavy Smoker.

Unique among the devotees of "My Lady Nicotine" is a Dutch sailor named Berkin, whose boast it is that for the last 65 years his pipe has consumed a pound of tobacco weekly. It requires no skill in arithmetic to discover that the "Dutch chimney," as he is proud to be known, has dissipated in smoke more than 30 hundredweight of tobacco, which is exactly 24 times his own weight!

Adjusting Children's Sashes.

It takes an artistic hand and a deft touch to tie broad, handsome ribbon into the sash bow that is to adorn a little girl's frock. Most women can tie the ordinary bow with its two loops and two ends, but the sash to be properly tied today needs more skill than that. The correctly tied sash at present has upstanding loops, and a shower effect below of loops and ends requiring a good deal of ribbon and adjusting. When such a bow has been arranged it should be sewed into position, and snap fasteners placed under it, thus avoiding the difficulty of retying each time it is put on.

Raisin and Rhubarb Pie.

The following comes from old Virginia: Cut rhubarb into inch lengths and stew as usual, or scald in boiling water, then drain. To every pint of rhubarb allow half a pint of fine raisins, stemmed and seeded. Bake between two crusts after it has been sweetened to taste.