

markings; a lesser proportion are of various shades of rose and purple; the yellow-flowered kinds are rarely without some brown spots or markings, the white kinds rarely without some yellow or green coloring. Bright red or scarlet flowered kinds are rare, and those of any shade of blue are the rarest in the whole family. The prevalence of green, yellow, and white flowered species seems to be suggestive of the modern origin and develop-

ment of the order. Complicated as is their structure, most botanists are agreed that when compared with the "marsh horse-tails," or with the cycads, the orchids are in the infancy of their evolutionary growth. Nature is as busy in the making of new forms as ever; in a word, she is evolving new orchids in her tropical "wild garden" just as surely as our hybridizers are rearing new forms in our hot-houses at home.

## AN ELECTIVE COURSE.

LINES FOUND AMONG THE PAPERS OF A HARVARD UNDERGRADUATE.

THE bloom that lies on Fanny's cheek  
Is all my Latin, all my Greek;  
The only sciences I know  
Are frowns that gloom and smiles that glow;  
Siberia and Italy  
Lie in her sweet geography;  
No scholarship have I but such  
As teaches me to love her much.

Why should I strive to read the skies,  
Who know the midnight of her eyes?  
No star that swims within the scope  
Of Pickering's best telescope  
Ever reveals so much as when  
She stares and droops her eyes again.  
Graybeards, who seek to bridge the chasm  
'Twixt man to-day and protoplasm,  
How trivial your aims appear!  
Enough for me that Fanny's here.

Linnaeus, avaunt! I only care  
To know what flower she wants to wear.  
I leave it to the addle-pated  
To guess how pinks originated.  
As if it mattered! The chief thing  
Is that we have them in the spring,  
And Fanny likes them. When they come,  
I straightway go and purchase some.  
"The Origin of Plants"—go to!  
Their proper end I have in view.

O loveliest book that ever man  
Looked into since the world began  
Is Woman! As I turn those pages,  
As fresh as in the primal ages,  
As day by day I scan, perplexed,  
The ever subtly changing text,  
I feel that I am slowly growing  
To think no other book worth knowing.  
And in my copy, one of many  
(*Edition de luxe* called Fanny),  
I find no thing set down but such  
As teaches me to love it much.

## DE BARBADOESA'S LITTLE HOUR.

BY LUCY C. LILLIE.

### I.

IT all began on a certain December afternoon when Norris had declared he would see nobody. The decision had occurred to him when he was quite alone, and the MacFinlay, his man-servant, factotum, and sometime model, was entirely out of hearing, but the next moment he was at his studio door, and called out his idea to that faithful slave. But MacFinlay, who was trying to write a letter home to Dublin, only half heard, and misconstrued the words into meaning that his master was expecting somebody, and being in the midst of very doubtful orthography, said, "Ye', surr, ye', surr—I will, surr," and Norris went back to his sofa, where for a time he lay full length, with his hands behind his head and his eyes fixed on the tangle of green above his studio window.

He had a very pleasant occupation for his mind. His cousin Margaret was coming home after some five years' absence in Europe, and as Margaret and he had always been sworn friends, the devoted allies people with a certain bond of relationship can be, it was extremely pleasant to think of her return, and with it the picking up of their piquant intercourse of last year in Paris and London. "What fun it will be," thought Norris, "to take her about, to watch her first season in New York society!" She was sure to be admired, for Miss Fenn, although scarcely two-and-twenty, had the air of a young princess, and the type of beauty hereditary with her race. Norris's interest in Margaret was tinged by a strong sense of brotherly protection, for the young lady was nearly alone in the world—in fact, worse than alone, since her chaperon, Mrs. Troop, was for such an office possibly the least qualified woman in existence. It was a source of perpetual mystery to Norris how any Fenn could be related even distantly to so vulgar an old woman; but these curious connections occur in the most perfectly regulated families, and in this case it was chiefly exasperating because, on her father's death, Mrs. Troop had seemed to be Margaret's only friend, and as such had taken possession of the girl, and won her gratitude for kindnesses shown her in her obscurity.

Margaret's dominant trait was fidelity; gratefulness belongs to this characteristic, I believe it is allowed; so, for the sake of the past, Margaret bore with everything vulgar and wearying in the Mrs. Troop of to-day. It would undoubtedly be delightful to have Margaret in society this season, but, alas, alas, that she should be thus chaperoned! In London the old lady had been laid up with influenza half the time, and so Margaret had been taken out by Lady This or That, friends of her mother's, or by some of Norris's own acquaintances in aristocratic Bohemia; but now, here in her own home, to appear for the first time preceded, or, as Norris said, with a grim smile, battlemented, by Mrs. Troop, was hideous in the extreme. But again arose the picture of Margaret's delicate loveliness, the high-bred, simple manner which must disarm the unfriendliest criticism of her companion. After all, Norris thought, things might be worse; and at this juncture of his reflections the tread of MacFinlay was heard, and, behind his, other footsteps. Norris sprang to his feet just as the door was opened, and then remained rooted to the spot. Before him stood the most remarkable-looking man he had ever seen. MacFinlay, at one side, was struggling with the stranger's name, when the latter, in a deep voice, said, "I presume you do not know me, sir—the Count de Barbadoesa."

"I have not the pleasure, certainly, sir," said Norris, with a ghastly effort at keeping his countenance, for the man before him was as grotesque as he was singular. He was certainly over six feet in height, and if not large by nature, had been carefully expanded under the hands of his tailor. His large, melancholy face was nearly shrouded in loosely flying black locks, one of which in a wavering line hung in the middle of his forehead; his eyes were fine, but their expression of intelligence or good-will was defied by the cunning of the mouth; on his breast were innumerable decorations, and a huge topaz sparkled in a ring on his ungloved hand. With the other hand he supported his rather small waist.

The spectacle was so completely ludicrous that Norris felt he must speak or suffocate.

"May I venture to ask to what I am indebted for the pleasure—" He really could not go on, but waved the stranger to a chair, which he took without once removing his melancholy gaze from Norris's face, though he now placed his gloved hand on his knee, crooking his elbow and turning his fingers inward.

"The Count de Barbadoesa," murmured Norris, looking at him with interest.

The count bowed. "I have the honor," he began, with a partial attempt to toss back the vagrant curl—"the honor to be the bearer of a letter for your cousin, Miss Fenn."

"Miss Fenn!" Norris said, in quite another tone.

"Exactly, sir; and not finding her at home, I brought it to you," and he produced from a deep breast pocket an envelop truly enough addressed to Margaret.

Norris's face had flushed. He looked very much inclined to show the noble stranger the door.

"It is from my friend Count Giuseppe Antonini," pursued the man. "The correspondence, according to Miss Fenn's desire, is to be conducted through me. They are"—here the count again tossed the curl, which instantly returned to his left eyebrow—"they are betrothed."

"What do you mean?" half roared Norris. "What confounded nonsense are you talking? Do you know that I am Miss Fenn's cousin, sir? If there is any impertinent joke in this—"

But De Barbadoesa waved his hand and smiled. "Do not be alarmed, sir; you have only to inquire of your cousin, or the excellent Madame Troop."

"By Jove," thought Norris, "that old idiot is at the bottom of this;" and it occurred to him to take some conciliatory measures with the aristocrat before him.

"Very well," he said, rather stiffly. "I shall certainly see Miss Fenn at once on the subject, and perhaps you will call again? By-the-way, where is your friend Yussipi—what did you say his name was?"

"Giuseppe Antonini, thirteenth of the name," pronounced the stranger.

"He shall be the last of his line, then," thought Norris. But he said aloud: "Many thanks for your kind office. Shall Miss Fenn answer this—document to your address?"

De Barbadoesa drew from his card case a much emblazoned piece of pasteboard

with his name rather alarmingly full upon it. This he handed with much dignity to Norris, who perceived the address to be at one of the new apartment-houses rather uptown. There seemed to be nothing more to say, and the nobleman, bowing gravely, left Norris standing in the middle of the room, a prey to perplexity and despair.

What in the name of all that was sensible did it mean? That Margaret had been doing something Quixotic or foolish he did not doubt, but that she had engaged herself to this lunatic's friend he did not credit for an instant. His first idea was to hunt the Barbadoesa up, to beard him, as it were, in his own apartment, and investigate his character. But a second's reflection showed him that would not do. Better find out the truth, or what could be told of it, from Margaret herself. She had specially requested him not to meet her at the steamer, but he knew that by this time she and Mrs. Troop were to be found at their friend Mrs. Ivors's, on Twenty-second Street, where they were to stay until Margaret's new house near the Park was entirely habitable. Yes, it was the only thing to do, and Norris, feeling his delight of an hour previous considerably dampened, sat down to await as best he might seven o'clock. On this evening, as he knew, Mrs. Ivors had invited a few friends to welcome Margaret at dinner, so there would be no chance of a *tête-à-tête* with his cousin until very late. What on earth had induced her to refuse to see him at the wharf? It was incredible in simple, honest, conscientious Margaret.

"But, after all," thought Norris, ruefully, "she's a woman; there's that to be said of it."

## II.

Mrs. Ivors's guests had nearly all assembled when Dick, with a rather cynical aspect, made his way into her drawing-room. Even as he answered Mrs. Ivors's greeting his eyes searched eagerly for a glimpse of Margaret. She was standing in a little recessed window, talking to two or three reverently admiring young men, and Dick made his way quickly to the group. "Well," he exclaimed, coming forward; and Margaret, starting a little at his voice, turned her face joyfully toward him. "My dear Dick," she said, holding out her hand, and as Norris took it warmly he observed that she was pret-

tier than ever, although a trifle thin and pale.

"It's good to see you again," she said, almost in a whisper, and her eyes were fairly shining.

"Then why couldn't you let me meet you?" Dick said, a little sharply. "You know you needed me."

A swift color came and went in Miss Fenn's cheeks.

"I—I didn't want you to, really, Dick," she murmured; "and as for needing, in one sense, you know we had Barton and my maid Alice, and they saw to the trunks."

"All the better, we could have had a little chat, and it seems odd to have to see you for the first time at a party."

Margaret laughed a little nervously, and contrived to make the conversation general; but it was some satisfaction to find himself at dinner placed next his cousin.

"And how shall I like New York?" she said to him at the first opportunity.

"Morally, mentally, or socially?" he inquired.

She laughed. "Morally, I know I shall; mentally, well, after London, Dick? Now don't think me unpatriotic, but shall I find evenings such as you remember at the Velmar-Tornes', the Von Scholtts', the—"

"I am glad you are going to be fastidious," put in Dick, "for evidently your mentally includes socially. No, my dear Meg, you will not find anything like the Tornes' or the Von Scholtts', simply because neither Torne nor Von Scholtz happens to live here, but I can promise you you will see ample material for such people to make use of—that is, if you are as keen as you used to be."

Miss Fenn opened her eyes with a little wounded look in them.

"Why, Dick," she said, "pray tell me what I have done."

He had to smile. She was so very pretty and delightful when she looked vexed.

"What you have done, Meg," he responded, gravely, "I don't pretend to fathom. It is a problem time must work out, unless you choose at once to solve the mystery."

Miss Fenn's flexible mouth curved with some disdain. "It is evident," she remarked, looking at her plate, "that there is at least a circle of advanced thinkers

over here. Pray tell me if your society is given to a very abstract way of putting things. Perhaps I shall learn to consider the charming circle at the Tornes' mere babes in wisdom."

"Go on," said Norris. Then, as a sudden idea struck him, he added: "I will promise you some foreign element. There seems to be a very distinguished nobleman over here, the Count de Barbadoesa."

As he spoke the name, Norris looked at her keenly, and across her cheeks, her brow, the bit of her soft white throat that he could see, a perfect wave of color spread, and the next instant she had averted her face and was talking to the man on her other side. Dick could have wrung his hands, have uttered loud groans and imprecations, then and there. Indeed, I believe it was only a fine sense of the fitness of things which prevented him from, in some fashion, giving vent to the anguish within. At how many such banquets, he was thinking, do guests sit longing to scream aloud?—for it was now but too plainly evident that the terrible De Barbadoesa had spoken the truth. If he had cherished the least doubt of this, his cousin had put it to flight. She turned a face quite set and hard upon him.

"May I ask," she inquired, icily, "where you have met the count?"

"He called at my studio to-day," Dick answered, quickly, and in a tone no less chilling than her own, "and he left a letter for you from his friend."

"Let me have it, if you please."

"Here—here at the table, Margaret?"

"You can slip it in beneath the table," she said, imperiously. "There, you can see I have put my hand down for it."

By this time Norris had decided that their two tragic countenances would be remarked, so with what must have appeared to the people opposite a very sinister smile, he contrived to get the note into his cousin's hidden fingers. He saw by the flutter of the roses in her gown that she sighed, but he determined not to look at her again, and turned his eyes upon the young lady he had taken in to dinner.

"I am so glad Miss Fenn has come back!" said this lady—Miss Barlow. "Isn't her house lovely?" she went on. "I hope she means to be very gay, and give us some excitement."

Dick, unable to resist his impulse, turned to Margaret with: "Margaret, here is Miss Barlow hoping you will give us some