

THE ROMANCE OF A BRAIN

THE ROMANCE OF A BRAIN. A STORY OF THE SEA. Mad? Oh no, not mad! Only sad. With a lifetime's grief wrought in a day! No hope, no ray of glad relief. To break the gloom, Save in the tomb! Bad words, you say, While yet are given Young life and health And hope of heaven. Yet, yes! you're right: There is my wealth, My guiding light— The hope of heaven— For 'tis my all. My very all! Hard! hard! be still! Did you hear, dear? Methought 'twas Will Spoken to me Across the sea! "Fare ye—may be! Yet, ever and aye, Just as today, When winds blow shrill, I seem to hear My Will, my Will, And lead and clear, "God bless you, dear, Ring out once more Above the roar Of wind and sea. "God bless you, dear! Keep you for me!" 'Twas the morn before Our wedding day, And with a smile I stood awhile In the market-way, And contented'er My little store Of gold, and thought "Was I should buy For him, my King, But as I thought Fit gift to find— A gem, a ring— He crept behind, In his dear way, And kissed me there, And all the day Was fair, so fair! That day the wind Blew loud and long, And the cruel sea Based furiously, And, laid the throng Upon the quay— Pikes spray-sprayed, Listening intent To the signal gun— I found my dear, My own dear one, A volunteer, With the lifeboat crew And I cried out then: "You shall not go! Your life you owe To me alone! 'Tis not your own You shall not go!" But, with a sigh, He put me by, And said, "Dear love, To Omp above I owe my life, My promised wife, My joy, my all; And at his call I needs must go! Then in my own And rage and pride, I madly cried: "Go, then, for good! Good-by for aye!" And as I stood Baring away With his sad self, The boat went off! Yet, praised be God! I still could hear, Above the sea: "God bless you, dear! Keep you for me!" The hours passed by, And the sun went down, The sun went down, And the waves beat high, And the angry sky Was black, so black! But the boat, the boat, It never came back!

(George Westbury in the Quiver for June)

THE ROMANCE OF A BRAIN

By JOHN T. COLLIER

(Continued)

During an uneventful passage I had sufficient time to think about my future. I soon resolved to take a nurse. I had an intuitive aptitude for attending to the sick. Nursing would afford me congenial employment; it alleviated the pains of others; I might perchance forget my own deep grief. On my arrival in London, I entered Guy's Hospital as a probationer. I soon found favor in the sight of the surgeons. I was as enthusiastic as I was indefatigable; I was every ready to oblige; I was slow to take offence. I gained the respect of the nurses and the love of the patients. I never wrote to any one in Barbadoes, neither did I wish to communicate with any of my friends in England. I was unknown and completely isolated. Two years ago I applied for the matronship of Ramsbury Hospital; but I had small hope of securing that post, as there were fifty others who were applicants. I was pleasantly surprised when I received a note from the secretary informing me that I was one of three selected, and that I was to appear before the Board on the day of election. The day arrived. Need I say that I was intensely anxious and excited? but I had the consolation that I was in no worse condition than my two rivals. They were older and more experienced than I was, but I was decidedly prettier than either of them. I felt strangely confident that I should be successful. How nervous I felt when I entered the crowded board-room! Nothing could I see but the faces of men—bearded faces, bare shaven faces, old faces, handsome faces, ugly faces; but let me confess that every

face looked with a kindly and encouraging gaze on mine! Mr. Hilton, one of the surgeons, spoke strongly on my behalf. I was from his old hospital, and he had heard of my good deeds. Owing chiefly to his influence, I was elected matron. A proud and happy woman was I on that day.

A week after my election, I was startled by reading in the Times the following announcement—

"On March 2nd, at Six Avenue Hotel, New York, Algernon Vernon, aged 36 years."

And so poor Algernon was dead, and I was free. I felt relieved, but profoundly sad. My old love for him seemed to return. I tried to forget his cruelty and only remember his tenderness and affection. I devoted myself to my new duties with redoubled energy. Work kills grief; if the hands are busy, the memory is idle. The days passed away quickly for I was constantly employed. I was conversant with the details of every case in the hospital. I nursed many of the more serious cases. Many a long night have I sat up attending to the wants of some bruised and mutilated man, or hushing to sleep some burnt child. I often felt excessively weary, yet my health improved, and color began to bloom on my cheeks.

The storm increased in fury, but I heeded it not; for, as I sat and gazed at the dying embers, tears dimmed my eyes, as I thought of that day ten years ago. I kept my mind's eye intently fixed on that one happy day. I thought of the bright, glad sunshine, the calm ocean, the unclouded azure of the heavens; and I thought of Algernon, so handsome, so loving, so kind. Did he not on that day vow solemnly before God that he would ever love and protect me? And yet— Well, all was over. He was dead. Might he rest in peace on that stormy night!

Suddenly my reverie was disturbed by the loud clangour of the accident bell. Like the crash of cymbals it echoed and re-echoed through the long corridors. I started up, and flew down the broad white stone steps. Along the dim and gusty passage I saw the two porters carrying a stretcher, on which lay the body of a man. As they passed under a gas-lamp, I saw a splash of blood on the man's face. I shuddered, and grasped at the balustrade. The midnight hour was chill and weird, and I was nervous and agitated after my prolonged retrospection. In the hall, one of the porters accosted me—

"Please, ma'am, the house surgeon's compliments, and would you be so good as to see about nurses? A man with a frightful smashed head has come in. I'm going for the surgeons."

I gave directions to the nurses, and then retired to my room to await the arrival of the surgeons. Mr. Hilton, with his accustomed alacrity, soon made his appearance; and, as was his wont, he came to my room to have a little conversation until Dr. Winslow, the senior surgeon, would come. Mr. Hilton was about ten years my senior; he was not tall, but was sufficiently broad. He had a fine forehead, a pair of small, sharp, black eyes, and a beard which covered the greater part of his face. He was given to reverie, and was somewhat abrupt and spasmodic in his manner. His heart was full of kindness and sympathy; his intellect was keen and active.

"I have just seen the patient," he exclaimed rapidly. "He has got a nasty fracture of the skull. His eye will need a little repairing; got the scalp and brain lacerated."

"Poor fellow! Do you think you can do anything for him?" I asked anxiously. "Oh, yes—yes! Capital case for the pruning knife! Just a chance for him. They say he had a quarrel in 'The Black Horse Inn.' He was very violent. Some one gave him a push; he lost his balance, and fell against a sharp corner of a box. He seems unconscious now."

Mr. Hilton, for some unknown reason, was very restless. He rubbed his hands together; he crossed and re-crossed his legs; coughed and indulged in a series of mock yawns.

"He will learn sense as he grows older."

"Yes, but that does not make it more pleasant for me."

"No, no—Oh, certainly not! Some young men are such asses! Indeed worse, for the most vicious of donkeys won't kick unless it is teased." Dr. Veevor was the house-surgeon. He was a very fastidious and elegant young man. He spoke but little, and tried to be sarcastic. He had a long pale face which was chiefly remarkable for its peculiar cork-screw moustache and large dreamy brown eyes. He entertained decided views on the dignity of the house-surgeon, and the inferiority of the matron. He was extremely self-opinionated, and thought more of his ability than did any one else. He was continually annoying and wounding me in some petty way, and but for Mr. Hilton's support, my position, which was very trying, would have been unbearable.

"Well, I wonder at anyone disagreeing with you. It is quite inexplicable to me," said Mr. Hilton warmly.

"Ah! every one is not like you, Mr. Hilton. You have been very kind to me. I can never be grateful enough to you for all your goodness," I said, not without some show of feeling.

Mr. Hilton as he fixed his steady penetrating gaze on me.

"You are certainly worthy of more," I murmured.

"Ah! I don't know that," he said earnestly. "I only wish I was worthy of your love. Already you have gained mine. I trust it is not impossible for you to return it?"

"No, no—it is not impossible. Who could help liking one who is so good and true? And yet there are serious reasons why—" A knock at the door prevented me from finishing my sentence.

"Please, Dr. Veevor says all is ready for the operation," said the porter.

As we walked along the corridor, Dr. Hilton said, in a low eager voice, "Think over it—won't you?"

"Yes," I whispered.

I was not surprised at Mr. Hilton's declaration. With a woman's instinct, I had already divined his secret, and had even come to a decision before he asked me to think over it. I certainly liked Mr. Hilton. He was a generous as well as a clever man. Though he had a good practice, yet he never neglected his hospital patients. He neither spared pains nor time, and did even more than his duty. All the poor creatures loved him. He had a bright smile and an encouraging word for every one. He delighted in surgery; perhaps his only fault was that he was too fond of it. At least some of his professional brethren hinted as much. To keep himself in touch with every improvement in the craft of surgery, he spent his holidays in the London, or Vienna, or Paris hospitals. I believe it was my devotion and attention to his cases that was the primary cause of his regard for me. I knew he was very sincere and genuine, and that he always meant what he said. I was by no means displeased with his avowal. My husband had been dead two years, and I saw no just reason why I should refuse Mr. Hilton. My position at the hospital was not without its annoyances. I had much responsibility, and but little power to support it. Mr. Hilton offered me a comfortable home; he honored me by asking me to be his companion and partner. In my own mind I came to the sensible conclusion that it would be wrong and foolish of me to decline the honor.

We entered the ward together. It was a small room and was reserved for serious cases. Behind a high screen lay the injured man on a low bed. Dr. Veevor was administering ether to him. Two nurses were gliding in and out of the ward. Mr. Hilton was the only surgeon present. Dr. Winslow, the senior surgeon, had retired to rest, and being a stout, drowsy old man would probably hardly have arisen if the roof-tree had been burning over his head.

On one side of the bed there was a tray on which were knives, forceps, ligatures, trophines, and other necessary implements. Mr. Hilton was carefully examining them; and I, thinking but little of the coming operation, stood near him.

"He consumes a deuced lot of ether," drawled Dr. Veevor, as he poured some more on the mask. Presently the man began to breathe loudly and rapidly.

Hilton proceeded to examine the wound carefully. I did not care to look, for indeed my thoughts were with my heart.

"Ah! the frontal convolution, the ascending frontal, is lacerated. I am afraid that the poor fellow has a bad chance." I heard Mr. Hilton murmur.

At that moment a nurse entered, and addressed the house-surgeon.

"John Talks is just hexpiring sir." The nurse seemed to be added for the sake of emphasis.

"Ah! Well—did you bring me a pocket-handkerchief? No? You didn't expect I should weep?" he said ironically.

"I thought I ought to report," said the abashed nurse.

"Quite right, nurse," exclaimed Mr. Hilton.

"It's a pity you could not utilize such a good brain to patch up this one," I said, with queer jesting jealousy.

"I question whether old Talks has any brain," sneered Dr. Veevor, without looking up.

"Well, he has a good heart," I said. "I never knew such a nice, gentle old man."

"Old hypocrite—with his bible and hymn-book and prayers!" muttered Dr. Veevor.

Mr. Hilton said not a word. He only tugged very hard at his short beard. Suddenly he exclaimed with startling earnestness, "I'll do it!"

"Do what, pray?" asked Dr. Veevor perplexed.

"Why, what Mrs. Vernon suggests. A most brilliant and bold suggestion it is. Now, what I propose to do is this; the minute old John Talks expires, I will trephine his skull and will remove the portion of brain corresponding to that which is lacerated in this case. Then, after carefully removing all loose pieces of bone, &c., I will apply part of the frontal convolution of the late Talks to the damaged frontal convolution of our worthy friend here. Union will take place, and thus paralysis and a host of evils will be averted. What do you say, Veevor, eh?"

"Oh, really I don't think it matters two straws what you do," Dr. Veevor carelessly remarked. "This fellow is as sure to die as old Talks, but we may as well experiment a little. It will be somewhat of a novelty."

cried Mr. Hilton; "and it will not add to the danger in the least; quite the opposite. I have been several more formidable operations on the brain, though none were like this."

"You will make Ramsbury famous," was Dr. Veevor's only reply.

"Mrs. Vernon can give the ether until we return. She is quite capable," said Mr. Hilton, as he cast a kindly glance at me.

Cautiously I administered the anæsthetic. I had frequently done so before in an emergency. After keeping the mask to the man's face for a few minutes, I removed it to ascertain if I had given him a sufficient quantity. I raised the eyelid and touched the eye to see if voluntary movement was annihilated. But such was not the case, for the eyelid was immediately and forcibly closed. Then in a few seconds both eyes were opened, and were moved about in a strange bewildered way. Next the man's head began to turn slowly. He alarmed me by trying to raise himself on his elbow.

"Oh, you must lie down again and be very good and quiet!" I said coaxingly. The dark eyes stared at me with a look that seemed to stun and paralyse me. The pale lips were parted.

"I—have—found you at last—Alice—I'll not miss you—this time."

The voice was the voice of my husband.

I stood as pale and motionless as a marble monument. Vigor and activity returned to the man; he sat up in the bed. In a second he grasped at one of the knives in the tray. Quite automatically I stretched forth my arm to intercept him. With his two hands he clutched it, and savagely sank his teeth into my arm. My vision grew dim and blurred, and I felt very faint. The next moment he relaxed his grasp and fell back on the bed as one dead. Loudly I called for a nurse. With supreme determination and self-control I brought him fully under ether. Soon the surgeons returned.

"What a capital woman you are, Mrs. Vernon!" exclaimed Mr. Hilton, whose face shone with a glow of excitement. We have got a beautiful section from old Talks' brain!"

"Let us hope that the hour of his death will be of more benefit to mankind than all the long years of his life," remarked Dr. Veevor.

(To be continued.)

An Odd Freak of Actresses.

One of the dingiest, dirtiest and most dangerous streets in all Paris was recently chosen as the locality of a remarkable fete. About noon, the aboriginal natives of the notorious Place Maubert, which readers of Eugene Sue will remember, were surprised to see two or three open vehicles laden with handsome ladies in brilliant plumage, and "ultrachics" in bord plat hats and resuscitated invertebrates, sweep down from the Boulevard St. Germain into the dismal Rue Galande. The procession stopped before the red-painted Chateau Rouge, which formerly belonged to Gabrielle d'Estrees, and is now the midnight resort of the greatest out-throats and ruffians in Paris. The occupants of the vehicles, followed by a crowd of gaping gamins, pick-pockets and general metropolitan marauders, went into the hideous hostelry, where they actually had a luncheon which was washed down by a copious shower of champagne. The well-dressed guests who had thus honored the Rue Castle with their temporary presence were some of the most charming actresses in Paris, who, for the novelty of the thing, had agreed to lunch at the sinister tavern with some of their cavaliers. After the repast, one of the actresses recited some verses by Francois Coppee, and then some of the aboriginal musicians and "artists" of the locality, who had been invited to the junketing, were listened to with considerable amusement.

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THE GAZETTE'S PLATFORM:

Below are enumerated some of the weekly features of the Gazette. It will not be possible to open up all the departments in the first issue but those omitted this week will appear next.

The Saturday Gazette will differ materially from existing publications in the lower provinces, and will endeavour to fill a field long vacant. It will be a paper for the family, and will be conducted with the aim to make it a welcome visitor in every home.

Stories, short and continued, will be provided in each issue and care will be taken, in making selections, to obtain the productions of authors already known to fame, and whose works all will appreciate.

Women and Women's Work, will be dealt with by contributors who understand what women like to know and most want to learn. The household, the fashions, and the progress of womankind in the arts, professions and employments, besides the many different phases the woman question assumes will be discussed from week to week by intelligent writers. Society gossip from various points will be a weekly feature.

The Saturday Gazette will not be a newspaper, in the generally accepted sense, but this will not preclude the discussion of important local and general matters in its columns. Indeed the great aim of The Gazette will be to deal candidly with all questions, in which the people among whom it circulates are concerned; Neither fear of, nor favor for interested ones, will prevent the exposure of any sham, be it either in religious, social or political life. The greatest good to the greatest number, will always be our motto.

In dealing with Political Questions, The Gazette will have nothing to do with political parties. Believing that there are often times when both parties are right, while at others, from a national standpoint, both are wrong; and holding that the length to which party warfare is sometimes carried in Canada, by politicians and journalists, is detrimental to the best interests of the country The Gazette will endeavour to consider all important questions in the light of their effect on the country at large, rather than the ground usually taken, their effect on one or the other political party. Honest government at Ottawa, greater economy and less senseless bickering among Provincial legislators, the simplification and cheapening of Provincial legislation generally, and the union of the Maritime Provinces will be the chief planks of The Gazette's political platform.

Literary, Theatrical and Sporting Matters will be dealt with by competent writers, and the latest news and gossip under these heads will be found in every number. Members of the various Secret Societies will find items of especial interest to them in the columns of The Gazette, from time to time.

In short the Saturday Gazette will be a weekly journal for men and women containing the things they most want to know; written in a breezy, intelligent manner by the best writers on and off the press of the Maritime Provinces and elsewhere. Honest criticism of all things will be the Gazette's king post.

As its name implies the Saturday Gazette will be published every Saturday Morning, and will be on sale at 3 cents a copy, by all news dealers in the Maritime Provinces, as soon after publication as fast railroad express trains and steamboats can get it to the different points.

The subscription prices will be \$1.50 per annum in advance, and may be sent to the undersigned.

JOHN A. BOWES, Editor and Manager.