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URIEL; Or, the Chapel of the Holy Angels.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE AUSTRALIAN DUKE; OR, THE NEW UTOPIA," ETC.

CHAPTER IV. SWINBURNE PARK.

"Have you really asked Mr. Houghton for this evening, mamma?—it's a heavy price to pay for the pleasure of Cousin Julian's society. Whom can we put to sit next him at dinner? Somebody who will do all the talking. He never opens his lips." The speaker was Miss Mabel Holmes Abbott, who, with her younger sister Eugenia, was holding a family conference with Lady Annabel on the programme for the day.

"Resign yourself, my dear Mabel," said Eugenia; "remember that we came to Cornwall with a mission to convert the savages, and the mission would fail entirely if there were no savages to convert."

"The supply is not likely to fail if we invite all the surrounding farmers," said Mabel; "and we shall make a famous beginning to-day. I never see Mr. Houghton without thinking of Tony Lumpkin off the stage."

"A descendant of one of the ancient race of Cornish giants," said Eugenia, "which probably accounts for his connection with the people of Merylin. It must be admitted, Mabel, that he has an attraction for high life, or that high life has an attraction for him."

"Nonsense," said Mabel, who was conscious of a certain tone of sarcasm in her sister's words; "the Pendargones have employed him, I believe, as their bailiff, and a very good bailiff, I dare say, he has made—but I should never dream of there being any other connection between them."

"My dear, you are really mistaken," said Lady Annabel. "Mr. Geoffrey Houghton a bailiff! I never heard anything so absurd. His family has lived at Levantor for generations past—ask your cousin Julian, who respects him immensely."

"With all respect for Cousin Julian," replied Mabel, "I don't think his intimacy would be any guarantee for Mr. Houghton's not being a ploughman. His taste for associates is, as Rodolph Berestord said the other day, somewhat eclectic."

"Well, anyhow, on the present occasion, it may enable poor Mr. Houghton to pass muster to-night," said Eugenia. "Even Tony Lumpkin himself might be tolerated if introduced by the bearer of sixteen quarterings."

"I hope the sixteen quarterings will teach him good manners, then," said Mabel; "but really, mamma, if he is not their bailiff, what has Mr. Houghton to do with the Merylin family?"

"It is a long story," replied Lady Annabel, "and I never heard it very correctly. It all took place before we came to Swinburne: dreadful family troubles which almost turned the old man's brain, and threw them quite out of society; and Mr. Houghton acted as their friend, I believe, and took care of the estate."

"I have often wondered why they kept so completely out of everything," said Mabel. "Is it a romance, do you suppose? It would be charming to make Tony Lumpkin relate it."

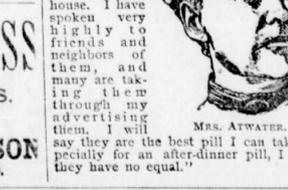
"Something for you to try your hand on, this evening," said Eugenia; "it would be grand to watch your tele-a-tele together in a conversational corner. I shall keep at a discreet

In a State of Bankruptcy



—is the condition of our system if the liver becomes inactive so that the germs and poisons can accumulate within the body. Keep the liver and bowels active and we're in a condition of healthy prosperity and have sufficiently well-invested capital to draw upon in the hour of need. The liver filters out the poisonous germs which enter the system. Just so surely as the liver regulates the system, so do Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets regulate the liver. Keep this in mind, and you solve the problem of good health and good living. The "Pleasant Pellets" have a tonic, strengthening effect upon the lining membranes of the stomach and bowels, which effectually cures Biliousness, Sick Headache, Costiveness, or Constipation, Indigestion, Loss of Appetite, Bad Taste in Mouth, Sour Risings from Stomach, and will often cure Dyspepsia. The "Pellets" are tiny, because the vegetable extracts are refined and concentrated. Easy in action, no gripping as with old-fashioned pills. As a "dinner pill," to promote digestion, take one each day after dinner. To relieve the distress arising from over-eating, nothing equals one of these little "Pellets."

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distance when I see you fairly launched on the legend of Merylin."

"How did Cousin Julian come to make his acquaintance?" said Mabel; "that is another point I have never understood."

"It was after he returned from abroad," said Lady Annabel. "He came down to Cornwall on a painting tour, caught a chill, and was laid up with fever in the little inn at Tremadoc. Mr. Houghton found him out there. Thinking he was a poor wandering artist, he brought him home to Levantor, and nursed him there till he was well. It was just the sort of adventure to suit Julian's taste; and, good simpton that he is, Mr. Houghton never found out he had been entertaining an earl's grandson, till after he had returned to London. After that they remained great friends, and Julian declares he is the most genuine man in the compass of the British Isles."

"How excessively like Julian, to pass himself off for a wandering artist!" said Mabel.

"And how excessively like the Good Samaritan on the part of Mr. Houghton, to carry him to Levantor, and take care of him!" suggested Eugenia. "It was a romantic beginning of a romantic friendship, only who would ever dream of Tony Lumpkin figuring in a romance!"

"Well, I hope you understand now that there is nothing against his figuring at our dinner-table," said Lady Annabel—"thought, I grant, he is not ornamental—more solid than shiny, there is no doubt of that—but still a most respectable person, and one to whom your father particularly wishes us to be civil for electioneering reasons."

Mabel replied by a comic expression of resignation, and the remark that there could be no question to Mr. Houghton's *solidity*, at any rate; and Eugenia entreated her mother to let her volunteer for the post of next door neighbor to Mr. Houghton during dinner, that the night have more ample opportunities of studying his originalities—a proposal to which Lady Annabel gladly assented, feeling, as she expressed it, that Mr. Houghton would be safe in her younger daughter's hands.

We must claim the privilege of a story-teller to pass over some intervening hours, and pray to be excused from chronicling too exactly the opening of that evening's entertainment at Swinburne, the progress of the dinner, or the relative position of the guests. They were a mixed assortment, some being of that distinguished character anticipated in Geoffrey's forebodings, and others neighbors and acquaintances, invited, like himself, to sun themselves for a while in the superior atmosphere thus provided for their benefit and edification. There were all members of the family: sons gathered in from various professional out-posts, with gentleman friends invited with a view to pleasant shooting; and there was Holmes Abbot himself, a good-natured, bald-headed man, who gave a cheery welcome to all his guests, the selection of whom was left entirely in the hands of his better half. As there are but few of the company with whom our readers will have to make any close acquaintance, this general review will be sufficient for our present purpose; and, passing over the cumbersome duties of the dinner hour, we prefer introducing ourselves somewhat later, when the whole party had re-assembled in the drawing room, having made some sort of mutual acquaintance.

During the previous course of the evening two games of skill had been in progress: the efforts of Mabel Abbott to attack Mr. Houghton, and amuse herself at his expense had been so far successfully parried by Eugenia; and Lady Annabel's attempts at introducing her cousin, Julian Wyvern, to her guests (in the position of a lion, had proved equally abortive, owing to the obstinate resistance of that eccentric gentleman to assume the character chosen for him. He would neither talk politics with Count Gleichen, the German ambassador, nor aesthetics with Mr. Paxton, the popular poet of the day.

He might have been wholly uninterested in the existence of lifeboats, to judge from the poverty of his remarks when that subject was introduced, and he was at this moment concealed in a corner at a safe distance from all other celebrities, and engaged with old Miss Abbott, Holmes Abbott's venerable aunt, in a discussion on the relative merits, as parlor pets, of pug dogs, or terriers. Geoffrey, meanwhile, had provided himself with a volume of prints, chiefly for the purpose of giving safe employment to his hands, and trusted to be allowed to get through the remainder of the evening in happy obscurity. But in this he was mistaken: Mabel Abbott had watched her opportunity, and seeing a flank position left unguarded, she advanced promptly and filled the vacant place.

"I am so glad to see you among us again, Mr. Houghton," she said; "I have been longing for the opportunity of asking you a thousand questions."

"Indeed!" said Geoffrey, with more surprise than pleasure at the prospect of such a cross examination. "On what subject can I be so fortunate as to give you any information?"

"On a hundred, at least," replied Mabel. "It has only been within the last day or two that I knew what wonderful chapters of our family history you have been mixed up in—your first acquaintance with Cousin Julian, for instance, under his romantic disguise, and the commencement of your disinterested friendship."

Geoffrey's gray eyes surveyed the speaker with a puzzled expression.

"Do you know," he said, "I have not a notion what you mean."

"Haven't you?" responded Mabel, who was bent on rallying him. "The wandering artist found dying at a village inn by the master of Levantor, and supposed by him to be one of the family of Brown, Jones or Robinson; carried at once to the Manor House, and charitably tended, and discovered on his departure to be an earl's grandson in disguise; I assure you, in the hands of Mr. Paxton, you'd work up into a new idyl. Shall I ask him to try?"

"Ah, I see," said Geoffrey; "you are thinking of Julian Wyvern's first appearance in these parts; but it strikes me some one has been playing a joke upon you. He wasn't in disguise, and he didn't give his name as Robinson. I found him at the inn, certainly, and drove him to Levantor in the dog cart."

"Now, you are talking of me," said a voice over Mabel's shoulder, and the next minute Julian himself had taken a seat beside them. "Are you conscious, my dear cousin, of the peculiar shiver which, waking or sleeping, betokens that some one is making use of your name? I felt it on the ottoman there, and resolved on discovering the centre whence issued the magnetic influence, and my infallible instinct guided me hither."

"Yes," said Mabel, "we were talking of the interesting commencement of your friendship with Mr. Houghton. He was going to tell me all about it, and had got as far as the dog-cart."

"And he was trying to persuade you that I was not in disguise," said Julian, who had heard more of the previous conversation than Mabel guessed, "like a true friend endeavoring to conceal my youthful follies. But I will be candid with you and confess that, when first discovered, I wore a pink hose and a Spanish hat and feather, and that the name by which I was known at 'The Three Jolly Fiddlers' was Timothy Jenkins."

Mabel began to feel an uncomfortable suspicion that Julian had joined them for the purpose of shielding his friend from the shafts of her ridicule and perhaps discharging at her some of his own; and that the process by which he proposed to do so was a little innocent cramming of herself. She had only recently made anything like close acquaintance with this genius of a cousin; and had not yet been able to determine when he was in jest and when in earnest; so she prudently resolved to change the subject.

"Well, but your rescue from 'The Three Jolly Fiddlers,' with or without the pink hose, was not the only subject on which I wanted Mr. Houghton to enlighten me. They tell me he is the only man in all Cornwall who knows the secrets of Merylin Castle: can't you persuade him to reveal them, Cousin Julian? we should listen with rapt attention."

"Merylin Castle has no secrets, that I know of," replied Geoffrey. "It's a queer old place. Mr. Lindesay can tell you more about it than I can; I believe he is writing its history; and, as he spoke, he looked in the direction of a gentleman in a clerical garb, who was engaging the great poet in conversation within earshot of their group.

"A skillful movement that," thought Julian. "I had no notion old Geoffrey could be so deep; I must follow up his lead," and emerging from the obscurity in which he had hitherto chosen to keep himself, he approached Mr. Lindesay, and warned him that his services as a story-teller were put in requisition, and that there was a universal demand on the part of the company for one of his most romantic legends.

Mr. Lindesay was the rector of Tremadoc, and devoted the intervals of his professional duties to antiquarian researches in the history of his own parish. The opportunity of producing some of the results before an appreciative audience was far from disagreeable to him, though, like some lady singers, he made a show of wanting to be pressed.

But having once thrown himself into the general current, Julian soon succeeded in directing it as he wished. It needed but a judicious word or two from him to persuade everybody that a Cornish legend related round the blazing fire was just the very entertainment they had all been longing for. It was a charming proposal. Lady Annabel declared; and in five minutes the circle of listeners had drawn in their chairs, and a well-selected post had been assigned to the story-teller.

CHAPTER V. THE FORTUNE OF CARADOC.

"I suppose you all know that Merylin Castle dates back from a remote antiquity, and that the Pendargones family can boast of royal British blood. In what precise degree of kindred they may stand to the renowned King Arthur would puzzle more learned genealogists than I am to determine; all that is necessary for you and me to know to-night is that their British descent is as undoubted as its exact origin is obscure. I do not know if the fact is to be reckoned as their privilege or their misfortune—something, probably, of both. It has generated and kept alive among them a peculiar form of family pride, of which there are the most grotesque examples on record. No Pendargones has ever been known to appear at an English court, and I believe until a comparatively recent period certain forms were observed by their own servants and retainers, when in attendance on the head of the family, required only in a royal presence. Time was when they even refused to take the oaths like other liege subjects, and claimed as their peculiar privilege to be sworn only 'on the faith of a Pendargones.' These and a thousand other extravagant things are related as belonging to old times, when Cornwall was a world by itself, cut off from the rest of the island by difficulty of communication; and in those days, I fancy, the inhabitants of the country, for twenty miles round Tremadoc, cared more for the Pendargones of Merylin than for any of the sovereigns that were crowned at Westminster, whatever were their race or name. So, you see, family pride came to be a sort of inheritance among them, and they stuck to it as they would have done to their coat-of-arms. How they managed with their consciences I don't exactly know, but they seemed to have regarded it as something very like a virtue."

"I dare say some of the present company who know our wild country may be acquainted with the steep road, scarcely more than a bridle path, that winds along the edge of the cliff from Tremadoc to the platform above on which the castle stands. A better and safer road has been cut of late years, and the old path is seldom used; but those who have explored it will remember a stone cross which stands at one spot, just on the verge of a giddy precipice, which among the country folk still goes by the name of 'The Fortune of Caradoc.'"

"I remember it well," said Julian; "it was sketching that cross, in the face of a north-east wind, which nearly finished me off at 'The Three Jolly Fiddlers.'"

"Oh," said Mr. Lindesay, "I remember the incident. And, probably, if you had taken counsel with the hostess of that excellent establishment, she would have warned you to avoid the spot as an uncanny one for man or beast. It bears an ill-name in these parts, for that cross marks the spot where Sir Caradoc Pendargones, whom his neighbors and tenants were wont to call Sir Caradoc the Wicked, met with the judgment of heaven on his crimes. This Sir Caradoc held rule at Merylin in the reign of Charles II. His uncle, Sir Arthur, a cavalier of the fine old stock, defended his castle against Cromwell's bull-dogs, and afterwards died on the scaffold for his king. At the Restoration, of course, the loyal Pendargones were in great favor, and got back all their sequestered estates; but, unhappily, as was the case with so many other noble families, the successor of the gallant and chivalrous cavalier, was a spendthrift and a profligate, and Merylin became the scene of wild revelling and disgraceful disorders of every kind. Even this, perhaps, was not the worst; up to that time the Pendargones, with all their faults, had been the fathers of the people—open-handed and hospitable to rich and poor, and as princely in their almsgiving as in their bearing. But the mad extravagance of Sir Caradoc drove him to every kind of unworthy straits. The money which he gambled away with his boon companions was wrung out of the very hearts of his tenants; it was nothing to him what they suffered provided they furnished him with the means for carrying on his shameful course. He is even said to have made sport of their troubles by riding with horse and hound through their standing corn; and when one man, bolder than his fellows, dared to face him and reproach him for his misdeeds, he swore at him as a base-born peasant, and ordered his huntsmen to set the dogs on his track."

"One day, as Sir Caradoc was returning with a party of his companions from the hunt, there rose up suddenly before his horse's head the figure of a tall, gaunt woman, who seemed to have been watching for him by the wayside—one well known in the neighborhood as a half-crazed fish-wife, whose wretched hovel was perched on the cliff above Tremadoc. Alice Spier-the-Span, as she was called, was dreaded by young and old, and her words were universally held to carry a ban with them when she foretold any evil. No one would put to sea if Alice had been heard to threaten foul weather; and it was commonly said that she had been seen in more than one spot on our terrible coast where mischief was brewing at times when she was known by her neighbors to have been within the walls of her own hovel at Tremadoc. Her appearance, however, caused no dismay to Sir Caradoc, though for the moment it startled his horse, and checked his progress. 'Out of my road, old witch!' he exclaimed, 'or I

may chance to give you a taste of my whiplong. Let go the horse's head, I tell you,' he continued, as Alice, without heeding his words, grasped at the rein; 'would you have me ride over your miserable carcass?'

"'Thou hast done worse than that ere now, Caradoc the Wicked,' she replied, 'and I come to warn thee that the time of vengeance is at hand. Thou hast trampled on the poor, and hast mocked at his woes; ay! and thou hast set thy dogs to hunt him over thy lands. But look well, Sir Caradoc, to your own gate—the proud big gate of Merylin. Look at it well, and read your doom; for the rede that is written there shall surely be accomplished.'"

"Sir Caradoc scarcely heeded her words, though he was stung to fury at her insolence. He spurred his horse with the intent of riding her down, but the old woman only laughed at his rage; and as she quitted his bridle rein, and the foaming animal plunged onwards, Sir Caradoc still caught the words: 'Ride on, Caradoc the Wicked! ride on to your own gate, and read the doom of heaven!'

"Sir Caradoc was not the first of the party to reach the gates of Merylin; his passage with Alice Spier-the-Span had delayed him some minutes, and several of his retainers and comrades in the hunt had reached home before him. But none had entered; and as Sir Caradoc rode up he saw them gathered around the great oaken grate, which opens into the courtyard, as though something unusual was the matter. Riding into the midst of the group, he bade them throw open the gates to admit his train; but as he did so his eyes rested on a strange object, which had evidently arrested the notice of the others, and which sent a cold thrill through his heart. It was a parchment scroll, fastened to the outer gate by a dagger, which was stuck deep into the wood, and which seemed to recall the words of the old fishwife. He bade them pluck it out and bring him the scroll; but no hand was stirred to obey his bidding. Then he rode up himself and with a bold, strong hand he grasped the dagger and tore it from the wood, and the deep rent it left behind may be seen to this day. Then taking the scroll he beheld written, in strange but legible characters, the following words:

"Fortune shall fail the Dragon's race, Till fall'n its heir by fell disgrace, Angel by name, with angel face, A peasant horn shall fill his place."

"He laughed a laugh of scorn at the words, which were unintelligible enough, and clear only in containing a prophecy of misfortune; and swore a terrible oath that the morrow's sun should not set ere in return for the old witch's evil spell he would burn her hut over her head."

"And hereafter it in earnest the words he had spoken; for the next day, assembling his men at the foot of the cliff on which Alice's strange abode was perched, he bade them scale the rocks and fire the witch's hovel, whether she was in it or no. But not a man would obey his commands; whatever their fear of their lawless master's wrath, their dread of Alice Spier-the-Span was greater. Cursing them for a pack of faint-hearted cowards, Sir Caradoc seized a torch and spurred his horse up the rocky path of which I have told you, with the purpose of himself setting fire to the dry thatched roof; but as he reached a sharp turn just below the house, there appeared on the rocks above him the form of the old woman, who, with outstretched arms and streaming hair, called aloud, in her shrill and awful accents: 'Ride on, Caradoc the Wicked! ride on and meet your doom! and, startled by the sudden apparition, and the horse swerved aside, reared, and the next moment fell backward over the precipice, carrying with him his unhappy rider, whose body was literally dashed to pieces on the sharp rocks below. The spot has ever since been shunned as one of evil repute, and the stone cross that marks the scene of the disaster still bears the name of 'The Fortune of Caradoc.'"

"A famous story," said Mr. Paxton, who had been scribbling some lines in his note-book as Lindesay was speaking; "and capitolly told, too, only it wants some explanatory notes. How about the old dame's prophecy? I have jotted it down here, and, I think, like the handwriting on the wall, it wants an interpreter."

"From that day," said Mr. Lindesay, "the good fortune of the Pendargones began to fail. They lost lands, they lost wealth; again and again the direct heir has failed, and, as in poor Sir Michael's case, the hopes of the family have been blasted. There are still, indeed, golden-haired Pendargones of Merylin, but they promise fair to become extinct—at least in the old line—and when the present baronet dies his lands and his honors will pass to the Pendargones of Eaglehurst—a very remote and obscure branch of the family. It really seems to be true that since the death of Sir Caradoc in the way I have described

"Fortune has failed the Dragon's race." "Yes, but that does not explain the prophecy by any means," persisted Paxton; "this is a prophecy of misfortune and of restoration, as it seems to me. Put into plain English, I read it to mean, 'The good fortune of the Pendargones shall fail until the heir shall fall into some terrible disgrace and his place shall be filled by one of the peasant birth.' But that until clearly points to a change for the better."

TO BE CONTINUED.

Not that Kind

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