

THE PHILOSOPHER'S STORY.

A STRANGE TALE OF OLD YORKSHIRE.

CHAPTER II.

HOW I WENT FORTH TO GASTER FELL.

I was still engaged upon my breakfast, when I heard the clatter of dishes, and the land-lady's footfall as she passed towards her new lodger's room. An instant afterwards she had rushed down the passage and burst in upon me with uplifted hands and startled eyes. "Lord a mercy, sir," she cried, "and asking your pardon for troubling you, but I'm feared of the young lady, sir; she is not in her room."

"Why, there she is," said I, standing up and glancing through the casement. "She has gone back for the flowers she left upon the bank."

"Oh, sir, see to her boots and her dress!" cried the landlady wildly. "I wish her mother was here, sir—I do. Where she has been is more than I ken; but her bed has not been lain on this night."

"She has felt restless, doubtless, and had gone for a walk, though the hour was certainly a strange one."

Mrs. Adams pursed her lip and shook her head. "But even as she stood at the casement, the girl beneath looked smilingly up at her, and beckoned to her with a merry gesture to open the window."

"Have you my tea there?" she asked, in a rich clear voice, with a touch of the mincing French accent.

"It is in your room, miss."

"Look at my boots, Mrs. Adams!" she cried, thrusting them out from under her skirt. "These fellows of yours are dreadful places—effroyable—one inch, twainch; never have I seen such mud—My dress, too—voilà!"

"Eh, miss, but you are in a pickle," cried the landlady, as she gazed down at the bed-ragged gown. "But you must be mainweary and heavy for sleep."

"No, no," she answered, laughing. "I care not for sleep. You will give me sleep? It is a little death—voilà tout. But for me to walk, to run, to breathe the air—that is to live. I was not tired, and so all night I have explored these fells of Yorkshire."

"Lord a mercy, miss, and where did you go?" asked Mrs. Adams.

She waved her hand round in a sweeping gesture which included the whole western horizon. "There!" she cried. "O comme elles sont tristes ces collines! But I have flowers here. You will give me water, will you not? They will wither else." She gathered her treasures into her lap, and a moment later we heard her light, springy footfall upon the stair.

So she had been out all night, this strange woman. What motive could have taken her from her snug room to the bleak windswept hills? Could it be merely the restlessness, the love of adventure of a young girl? Or was there, possibly, some deeper meaning in this nocturnal journey?

I thought, as I paced my chamber, of her drooping head, the grief upon her face, and the wild burst of sobbing which I had overheard in the garden. Her nightly mission, then, be it what it might, had left no thought of pleasure behind it. And yet, even as I walked, I could hear the merry tinkle of her laughter, and her voice upraised in protest against the motherly care wherewith Mrs. Adams insisted upon her changing her mud-stained garments. Deep as were the mysteries which my studies had taught me to solve, here was the human problem, which for the moment at least was beyond my comprehension.

I had walked out on the moor in the forenoon; and on my return, as I stopped the brow that overlooks the little town, I saw my fellow-lodger some little distance off among the gorse. She had raised a light easel in front of her, and with papered board laid across it, was preparing to paint the magnificent landscape of rock and moor which stretched away in front of her. As I watched her, I saw that she was looking anxiously to right and left. Close by me a pool of water had formed in a hollow. Dipping the cup of my pocket flask into it, I carried it across to her. "This is what you need, I think," said I, raising my cap and smiling.

"Merci, bien," she answered, pouring the water into her saucer. "I was indeed in search of some."

"Miss Cameron, I believe," said I. "I am your fellow-lodger. Upperton is my name. We must introduce ourselves in these wilds if we are not to be for ever strangers."

"Oh then, you live also with Mrs. Adams," she cried. "I had thought that there were none but peasants in this strange place."

"I am a visitor, like yourself," I answered. "I am a student, and have come for the quiet and repose which my studies demand."

"Quiet indeed," said she, glancing round at the vast circle of silent moors, with the one tiny line of gray cottages which sloped down beneath us.

"And yet not quiet enough," I answered, laughing. "For I have been forced to move farther into the fells for the absolute peace which I require."

"Have you then built a house upon the fells?" she asked, arching her eyebrows.

"I have, and hope within a few days to occupy it."

"Ah, but that is triste," she cried. "And where is it, then, this house which you have built?"

"It is over yonder," I answered. "See that stream which lies like a silver band upon the distant moor. It is the Gaster Beck, and it runs through Gaster Fell."

She started, and turned upon me her great dark questioning eyes with a look in which surprise, incredulity, and something akin to horror seemed to be struggling for a mastery.

"And you will live on the Gaster Fell?" she cried.

"So I have planned.—But what do you know of Gaster Fell, Miss Cameron?" I asked. "I had thought that you were a stranger in these parts."

"Indeed, I have never been here before," she answered. "But I have heard my brother talk of these Yorkshire moors; and if I mistake not, I have heard him name this very one as the wildest and most savage of them all."

"Very likely," said I carelessly. "It is indeed a dreary place."

"Then why live there?" she cried eagerly. "Consider the loneliness!"

"Aid! What aid should be needed on Gaster Fell?"

She looked down and shrugged her shoulders. "Sickness may come in all places," said she. "If I were a man I do not think I would live alone on Gaster Fell."

"I have braved worse dangers than that," said I, laughing; "but I fear that your picture will be spoilt, for the clouds are banking up, and already I feel a few raindrops."

Indeed, it was high time we were on our way to shelter, for even as I spoke there came the sudden steady swish of the shower. Laughing merrily, my companion threw her light shawl over her head, and, seizing picture and easel, ran with the lithe grace of a young fawn down the furze-clad slope, while I followed after with camp-stool and paint-box.

Deeply as my curiosity had been aroused by this strange waif which had been cast up in our West Riding hamlet, I found that with fuller knowledge of her my interest was stimulated rather than satisfied. Thrown together as we were, with no thought in common with the good people who surrounded us, it was not long before a friendship and confidence arose between us. Together we strolled over the moors in the morning, or stood upon the Moorstone Crag to watch the red sun sinking beneath the distant waters of Morecambe. Of herself she spoke frankly and without reserve. Her mother had died young, and her youth had been spent in the Belgian convent from which she had just finally returned. Her father and one brother, she told me, constituted the whole of her family. Yet, when she talked back to turn upon the causes which had brought her to so lonely a dwelling, a strange reserve possessed her, and she would either relapse into silence or turn the talk into another channel. For the rest, she was an admirable companion—sympathetic, well read, with the quick piquant daintiness of thought which she had brought with her from her foreign training. Yet the shadow which I had observed in her on the first morning that I had seen her was never far from her mind, and I have seen her merriest laugh frozen suddenly upon her lips, as though some dark thought lurked within her, to choke down the mirth and gaiety of her youth.

It was the eve of my departure from Kirby-Malhouse that we sat upon the green bank in the garden, she with dark dreamy eyes looking sadly out over the dreary fells; while I, with a book upon my knee, glanced covertly at her lovely profile, and marvelling to myself how twenty years of life could have stamped so sad and wistful an expression upon it.

"You have read much," I remarked at last. "Women have opportunities now such as their mothers never knew. Have you ever thought of going farther—of seeking a course of college or even a learned profession?"

She smiled wearily at the thought. "I have no aim, no ambition," she said. "My future is black—confused—a chaos. My life is like one of these paths upon the fells. You have seen them, Monsieur Upperton. They are smooth and straight and clear where they begin; but soon they wind to left and right, and so mid rocks and over crags until they lose themselves in some quagmire. At Brussels my path was straight; but now, mon Dieu, who is there can tell me where it leads?"

"It might take no prophet to do that, Miss Cameron," quoth I, with the fatherly manner which twosome years may show in a man's face. "If I may read your life, I would venture to say that you were destined to fulfil the lot of woman—to make some good man happy, and to shed around, in some wider circle, the pleasure which your society has given me since first I knew you."

"I will never marry," said she; with a sharp decision which surprised and somewhat amused me.

"Not marry; and why?"

A strange look passed over her sensitive features, and she plucked nervously at the grass on the bank beside her. "I dare not," said she, in a voice that quivered with emotion.

"Dare not?"

"It is not for me. I have other things to do. That path of which I spoke is one which I must tread alone."

"But this is morbid," said I. "Why should your lot, Miss Cameron, be separate from that of my own sisters, or the thousand other young ladies whom every season brings into the world?—But perhaps it is that you have a fear and distrust of mankind. Marriage brings a risk as well as a happiness."

"The risk would be with the man who married me," she cried. "And then in an instant, as though she had said too much, she sprang to her feet and drew her mantle round her. "The night-air is chill, Mr. Upperton," said she, and so swept swiftly away, leaving me to muse over the strange words which had fallen from her lips.

I had feared that this woman's coming might draw me from my studies; but never had I anticipated that my thoughts and interests could have been changed in so short a time. I sat late that night in my little study, pondering over my future course. She was young, she was fair, she was alluring, both from her own beauty and from the strange mystery that surrounded her. And yet, what was she, that she should turn me from the high studies that filled my mind, or change me from the line of life which I had marked out for myself? I was no boy, that I should be awayed and shaken by dark eyes or a woman's smile, and yet three days had passed, and my work lay where I had left it. Clearly, it was time that I should go I set my teeth, and vowed that another day should not have passed before I should have snatched this newly-formed tie, and sought the lonely retreat which awaited me upon the moors.

Breakfast was hardly over in the morning before a peasant dragged up to the door the rude hand-cart which was to convey my few personal belongings to my new dwelling. My fellow-lodger had kept her room; and steered as my mind was against her influence, I was yet conscious of a little throb of disappointment that she should allow me to depart without a word of farewell. My hand-cart with its load of books had already started, and I, having shaken hands with Mrs. Adams, was about to follow it, when there was a quick scurry of feet on the stair, and there she was beside me all panting with her own haste.

"Then you go, you really go?" said she.

"My studies call me."

"And to master Fell?" she asked.

"Yes, to the cottage which I have built there."

"And you will live alone there?"

"With my hundred companions who lie in that cart."

"Ah, books!" she cried, with a pretty shrug of her graceful shoulders. "But you will make me a promise?"

"What is it?" I asked in surprise.

"It is a small thing; you will not refuse me?"

"You have but to ask it."

She bent forward her beautiful face with an expression of the utmost and most intense earnestness. "You will bolt your door at night?" said she, and was gone ere I could say a word in answer to her extraordinary request.

It was a strange thing for me to find myself at last duly installed in my lonely dwelling. For me, now, the horizon was bounded by the barren circle of wiry unprofitable grass, patched over with furze bushes and scared by the protrusion of Nature's gaunt and granite ribs. A duller, wearier want I have never seen; but its dullness was its very charm. What was there in the faded rolling hills, or in the blue silent arch of heaven, to distract my thoughts from the high thoughts which engrossed them? I had left the great drove of mankind, and had wandered away, for better or worse, upon a side-path of my own. With them, I had hoped to leave grief, disappointment, and emotion, and all other petty human weaknesses. To live for knowledge, and knowledge alone, that was the highest aim which life could offer. And yet upon the very first night which I spent at Gaster Fell there came a strange incident to lead my thoughts back once more to the world which I had left behind me.

It had been a sullen and sultry evening, with great livid cloud-banks mustering in the west. As the night wore on, the air within my little cabin became closer and more oppressive. A weight seemed to rest upon my brow and my chest. From far away, the low rumble of thunder came moaning over the moor. Unable to sleep, I dressed, and standing at my cottage door, looked on the black solitude which surrounded me. There was no breeze below; but above, the clouds were sweeping majestically across the sky, with half a moon peeping at times between the rifts. The ripple of the Gaster Beck and the dull hooting of a distant owl were the only sounds which broke upon my ear. Taking the narrow sheep path which ran by the stream, I strolled along it for some hundred yards, and had turned to retrace my steps, when the moon was finally buried beneath an ink-black cloud, and the darkness deepened so suddenly, that I could see neither the path at my feet, the stream upon my right, nor the rocks upon my left. I was standing groping about in the thick gloom, when there came a crash of thunder with a flash of lightning which lit up the whole vast fell, so that every bush and rock stood out clear and hard in the livid light. It was but for an instant, and yet that momentary view struck a thrill of fear and astonishment through me, for in my very path, not twenty yards before me, there stood a woman, the livid light beaming upon her face and showing up every detail of her dress and features. There was no mistaking those dark eyes, that tall graceful figure. It was she—Eva Cameron, the woman whom I thought I had never seen before. For an instant I stood petrified, marvelling whether this could indeed be she, or whether it was some figment conjured up by my excited brain. Then I ran swiftly forward in the direction where I had seen her, calling loudly upon her, but without result. Again I called, and again no answer came back, save the melancholy wail of the owl, and the moon burst out from behind its cloud. But I could not, though I climbed upon a knoll which overlooked the whole moor, see any sign of this strange midnight wanderer. For an hour or more I traversed the fell, and at last found myself back at my little cabin, still uncertain as to whether it had been a woman or a shadow upon which I had gazed.

For the three days which followed this midnight storm I bent myself doggedly to my work. From early morn till late at night I immersed myself in my little study, with my parchments and my books, and it was not until the last of them that I had reached that haven of rest, that oasis of study for which I had often sighed. But alas for my hopes and my plans! Within a week of my flight from Kirby-Malhouse, a strange and most unforeseen series of events not only broke in upon the calm of my existence, but filled me with emotions so acute as to drive all other considerations from my mind.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The French Ministry having resolved upon issuing a new loan of \$170,000,000, decided to give the people an opportunity of subscribing thereto and becoming the Government's creditors. Saturday, the 10th, was the day appointed for receiving subscriptions. Long before daylight the crowd of applicants began to gather. Indeed, many spent the whole night out in the snow before the doors of the Ministry of Finance, so as to be on hand in good time to subscribe. All classes of citizens were represented, capitalists, artisans, laboring men and even working women were there to deposit their money with the Government. This eagerness on the part of the people to entrust their savings with their rulers will hardly be received with unbounded satisfaction by the Count of Paris and his Royalist friends who long for the restoration of monarchy. Evidently the people believe in the stability and permanency of the present order and have no strong desire to see it pass away.

The attempt to reduce the Edward Bellamy theory to practice has not resulted very successfully with the housekeepers of Evanston, a number of whom had formed themselves into an association on the co-operation plan. With liabilities \$900 in excess of assets the little company has been compelled to go through the vulgar process of making an assignment. Of course, like as one swallow does not make a spring, so this one failure does not prove that the idea cannot be successfully applied. It does prove, however, that it is easier to theorize than to practice, and that no theory, however good and wise, will take the place of prudence and honesty in the conduct of our affairs. It is stated that the president was altogether too extravagant and acted as though she imagined she had the capital of the biggest restaurant in Paris behind her, and that she expended several thousand dollars to no purpose when the association was first organized. Moreover it is claimed that, considering the fare, the prices charged were too low.

As touching the Hawaiian islands which for upwards of a hundred years have been known to the civilized world—having been discovered by Capt. Cook in 1788—they are the most important Polynesian group in the North Pacific. They are twelve in number, eight inhabited, and four uninhabited. The natives which belong to the Malayo-Polynesian race, are thus described by a writer in the Britannica: "The Hawaiians are a good-tempered, light-hearted, and pleasure-loving race. The reddish-brown skin has been compared to the hue of tarnished copper. The hair, usually raven black, is straight or at most wavy; the beard is thin, the face broad, the profile not prominent, the nose rather flattened, and the lips thick. The bulk of the population are of moderate stature, but the chiefs and the women of their families are remarkable for height." Like the natives of Polynesia generally the Hawaiians were originally idolaters and cannibals. Despite the moral and material progress which has been made in the islands since the introduction of Christianity in 1820 the race is dying out, and, indeed, is threatened with extinction in the course of a few years. Captain Cook estimated the natives at 400,000; in 1823 the Americans calculated them to be only 142,000; the census of 1832 showed the population to be 130,313 and the census of 1878 proved that the number of natives was not more than 44,088. This decadence is attributed to the poisoning of the blood of the natives by the introduction of foreign diseases. Another instance in which the voice of Christians (?) have brought desolation and death to the native races.

Every man has a right to utter what he thinks truth, and every other man has a right to knock him down for it. Martyrdoms the test.—[Dr. Johnson.]

THE AMERICAN MARINE.

What are the Causes of the Decline of U. S. Shipping.

According to the annual report of the New York Chamber of Commerce \$1,773,263,839 worth of foreign merchandise was imported into the United States during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1890. Of this amount \$222,023,679 worth was carried by American vessels, and \$1,423,409,454 by foreign vessels. Not since the earliest official record has the disproportion between the amounts carried by the two classes of vessels been so great. In 1888 the amount of the ocean trade of that country, which was carried on by the vessels of other countries was sixth and one-fifth times as much as that of their own merchant marine; but for 1890 the figures are six and one-half to one. This state of things can hardly be regarded with equable feelings by that ambitious and energetic people. Indeed, many and great are the lamentations which are being made by public-spirited citizens in the manner in which outsiders are supplanting them upon the seas. What deepens the humiliation is the fact that it was not always so.

In 1826 it was the boast of Daniel Webster that they had a commerce which left no sea unexplored. Then America led the world with her merchant marine, and American vessels brought to their ports more than twelve-thirteenths of all their imports. This, however, was the year of their greatest relative prosperity. The next year American vessels carried only ten times as much as foreign vessels. Since that time with varying but slight fluctuation the decadence in her merchant marine has steadily progressed. In 1862, the second year of the Civil War, the amount carried by foreign and native ships respectively was equal.

This proportion has never since occurred, the foreign vessels gradually gaining until as we have seen, they have seized nearly seven-eighths of the entire ocean carrying trade.

Concerning the reason or reasons for this decline the politicians and economists are not fully agreed. On the contrary, the divergence of opinion is very great, some charging it to the effect of the civil war, some to high tariff, some to party influence, some to legislation, &c. Now, whatever may be said as to the combined influence of these causes, it is clear that no one cause is sufficient to account for the effect or fact which is so deeply deplored. Certainly the Civil War is not a sufficient cause, for this paralyzing event did not occur until nearly forty years after the decadence had set in, and until the foreign vessels had wrested from the native nearly one-half of the ocean trade. Nor can those who plead high tariffs make good their statement, since in 1890 the tariff rates were 48.9 per cent. on dutiable goods and 45.3 on total imports, a point which they have never since reached, the nearest approach being in 1866, the year after the war, when the rates stood 48.8 per cent. on dutiable and 41.8 per cent. on total imports. So far from tariff rates explaining the decadence, it is an undeniable fact that during the thirty years between 1830 and 1860 in which the American vessels lost nearly one-half of their trade, the tariff rates were gradually reduced from 48.9 to 19.7 per cent. on dutiable goods, and from 45.3 to 15.7 per cent. on total imports. It is true that since the war tariffs have been generally high, but the rate of "decadence" has not been any greater during the quarter of a century since, than it was during the quarter of a century before that bloody period. In like manner those who charge upon party influence the destruction of their merchant marine have set for themselves a difficult task. It was when John Quincy Adams, a Democrat-Republican sat in the chief seat of the nation that American merchant-ships occupied their most commanding position. Since the time of Adams there have been thirteen presidents of the Union, of whom six have been Democrats, five Republicans, and two, Whigs. Evidently therefore it does not lie in the mouth of one party to charge the other with the decadence in question, seeing that both parties are so deeply involved. What then is the cause of this remarkable and humiliating decline? Without attempting to decide as to what extent if any the afore-mentioned influences combined produced it is reasonable to suppose that a principal cause of the decline is found in the fact that the people of the republic, having a large and new country to open up, have given their attention to the things which made for the internal upbuilding of the nation; in other words, being so wrapped up in the work of developing their country they have practically overlooked the fact that they were losing their rank upon the waters.

The editor of the New York Times is in a quandary. Being of a philosophical turn of mind, and scientific withal, he has been endeavoring to harmonize all the facts with the modern theory which teaches that man is an evolution from the lower orders of being. The particulars of this puzzle puzzles this sprightly philosopher is, whence comes the joke? He finds that the sense of the ludicrous and the propensity to joke is one of the most common traits of human nature as we know it, but that, judging from the actions, the sense is absolutely unknown among the lower animals. Many of these give evidence of possessing intelligence and reason, some indeed, as for example, the elephant among the wild animals and the horse and dog among the domestics, performing actions that can be accounted for only by granting them a liberal share of intelligence. The same may be said of the simian family from which man is declared to have more directly descended. Many things they appear to know but as the Times remarks, in none of the ways in which they put their knowledge to practical use is there the slightest trace of wisdom and the application of it in various circumstances. In none of their antics and pseudo sports is there any trace of a sense even of the ludicrous, of the incongruous, or of the merely absurd. That the lower animals possess the faculty and that they use it to use it, or that they "take their pleasures sadly" is exceedingly improbable, inasmuch as this would indicate a degree of intelligence of which no other hint is given. In view of these facts the Times concludes:

"If then—and it seems impossible to escape the conclusion—none of man's ancestors or cousins, or distant relatives of any sort, and in any degree, show any sense even of the ludicrous, which is one of the commonest traits of human beings from philosophers to Hottentots, how, on the lines of evolution, are we to account for the presence in man of the highest forms of wit, for the most, for the brilliant repartee, for the epigram? Intellect itself is easy enough to account for in the evolution way, since its germs are everywhere and scattered all through the lower, though perhaps not through the lowest, forms of life. But when and how did wit slip into intellect, and when did the all-wise humor creep into a place where once all was either dreadful stupidity or fearful and abounding wisdom? What in a word, is the genesis of the joke?"

Will the materialistic evolutionist rise and explain?

Child Life Insurance.

The subject of child life insurance is at present attracting considerable attention in England. Statistics show that out of a total number of about five million insurable children, four millions, or eighty per cent, are on the books of the insurance companies. The purpose of the insurance is to make provision for funeral and other incidental expenses in case of the death of children. It is charged against the system that it tends to child murder. This is the opinion of the Bishop of Peterborough, of Justices Day and Wills, and of many English Coroners. So convinced of this tendency is the Bishop of Peterborough that he has brought forward a measure in the House of Lords limiting the sum for which a child may be insured to about the cost of burial and prohibiting the insurance of children under ten years of age.

Mr. Justice Day has spoken of the child life insurance societies as "those pests of society; those deadly societies which insure children, which seem to be instituted for the destruction of children, for the perpetration of murder"; and Mr. Justice Wills has said: "Oftentimes it would be a much more correct definition of these so-called life insurance societies to say that they are death insurance societies." On the other hand the practice is not without defenders. In an article in the Fortnightly Review Capt. Pembroke Marshall contends that the opposers of the practice have not made out a good case. He states that while only 45 Coroners have expressed the opinion that child life insurance is an incentive to murder, 118 Coroners have stated that "insurance for burial money had not the evil influence alleged." He argues that the deaths of insured children from neglect and starvation are due to the ignorance and poverty of the lower classes, and that the privilege of child life insurance is an advantage to the thrifty poor and greatly valued by them. He quotes one authority as saying that "in case the system is interfered with the independence which the working classes of the country so much value would be seriously sapped, and the practice might be restored of taking around the hat, which was now looked upon as a disgrace." One of the opposers of the present practice suggests that instead of life insurance societies, burial clubs be established on a plan similar to that of the "sick clubs" in which the payment goes not to the parent but to the doctor. So in burial clubs let the payment go, not to the parent but to the undertaker. The burial clubs, he thinks, would serve the purpose of the insurance societies and would present no temptation to crime.

The Dressed Beef Industry.

A decision of considerable importance to the dressed-beef industry of the Western States has just been rendered by the Supreme Court of the United States. The particular question at issue was, whether the statutes of Virginia which make it an offence to offer for sale fresh meats slaughtered more than one hundred miles from the place of sale unless first inspected, and which allow to the inspector one cent a pound compensation in *infra vires* of the State legislature. The Court contended that it was not, that the heavy charge of one cent a pound for inspection was really a prohibition (which no doubt the Virginians intended it to be, notwithstanding the pretence of guarding the public health), and that while a State has undoubtedly the right to protect the people against unwholesome meats it may not, under the guise of exerting its police powers or enacting inspection laws, make discriminations against the products and industries of its own or other States. On the ground, therefore, that the freedom of the commerce among the States was obstructed the Court declared the law unconstitutional and void. The case is interesting as serving to show how a just and righteous principle may be made to seemingly support a most unjust and iniquitous law.

Seak clothes that fade over night in water in which has been dissolved one ounce of sugar of lead to a pailful of rain water.