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THE NEW MAGDALEN.

BY WILKIE COLLINS.

SECOND SCENE—*Mablethorpe House.*

CHAPTER XXVII.

MAGDALEN'S APPRENTICESHIP.

"Mr. Julian Gray has asked me to tell him, and to tell you, Mr. Holmercroft, how my troubles began. They began before my recollection. They began with my birth.

"My mother (as I have heard her say) ruined her prospects, when she was quite a young girl, by a private marriage with one of her father's servants—the groom who rode out with her. She suffered, poor creature, the usual penalty of such conduct as hers. After a short time she and her husband were separated—on the condition of her sacrificing to the man whom she had married the whole of the little fortune that she possessed in her own right.

"Gaining her freedom, my mother had to gain her daily bread next. Her family refused to take her back. She attached herself to a company of strolling players.

"She was earning a bare living in this way, when my father accidentally met with her. He was a man of high rank; proud of his position, and well-known in the society of that time, for his many accomplishments and his refined tastes. My mother's beauty fascinated him. He took her from the strolling players, and surrounded her with every luxury that a woman could desire in a house of her own.

"I don't know how long they lived together. I only know that my father, at the time of my first recollections, had abandoned her. She had excited his suspicions of her fidelity—suspicions which cruelly wronged her, as she declared to her dying day. I believed her, because she was my mother. But I cannot expect others to do as I did—I can only repeat what she said. My father left her absolutely penniless. He never saw her again; and he refused to go to her, when she sent to him in her last moments on earth.

"She was back again among the strolling players when I first remember her. It was not an unhappy time for me. I was the favourite pet and plaything of the poor actors. They taught me to sing and to dance, at an age when other children are just beginning to learn to read. At five years old I was in what is called 'the profession,' and had made my poor little reputation in booths at country fairs. As early as that, Mr. Holmercroft, I had begun to live under an assumed name—the prettiest name they could invent for me, 'to look well in the bills.' It was sometimes a hard struggle for us, in bad seasons, to keep body and soul together. Learning to sing and dance in public often meant learning to bear hunger and cold in private, when I was apprenticed to the stage. And yet I have lived to look back on my days with the strolling players as the happiest days of my life!

"I was ten years old when the first serious misfortune that I can remember fell upon me. My mother died, worn out in the prime of her life. And not long afterwards the strolling company, brought to the end of its resources by a succession of bad seasons, was broken up.

"I was left on the world, a nameless, penniless outcast, with one fatal inheritance—God knows I can speak of it without vanity, after what I have gone through!—the inheritance of my mother's beauty.

"My only friends were the poor starved out players. Two of them (husband and wife) obtained engagements in another company, and I was included in the bargain. The new manager by whom I was employed was a drunkard and a brute. One night, I made a trifling mistake in the course of the performance—and I was savagely beaten for it. Perhaps I had inherited some of my father's spirit—without, I hope, also inheriting my father's pitiless nature. However that may be, I resolved (no matter what became of me) never again to serve the man who had beaten me. I unlocked the door of our miserable lodging at daybreak the next morning; and, at ten years old, with my little bundle in my hand, I faced the world alone.

"My mother had confided to me, in her last moments, my father's name and the address of his house in London. 'He may feel some compassion for you,' (she said) 'though he feels none for me: try him.' I had a few shillings, the last pitiful remains of my wages, in my pocket, and I was not far from London. But I never went near my father: child as I was, I would have starved and died rather than go to him. I had loved my mother dearly; and I hated the man who had turned his back on her when she lay on her death-bed. It made no difference to me that he happened to be my father.

"Does this confession revolt you? You look at me, Mr. Holmercroft, as if it did?

"Think a little, sir. Does what I have just said condemn me as a heartless creature, even in my earliest years? What is a father

to a child, when the child has never sat on his knee, and never had a kiss or a present from him? If we had met in the street, we should not have known each other. Perhaps, in after-days when I was starving in London, I may have begged of my father without knowing it—and he may have thrown his daughter a penny to get rid of her, without knowing it either! What is there sacred in the relations between father and child, when they are such relations as these? Even the flowers of the field cannot grow without light and air to help them. How is a child's love to grow, with nothing to help it?

"My small savings would have been soon exhausted, even if I had been old enough and strong enough to protect them myself. As things were, my few shillings were taken from me by Gipsies. I had no reason to complain. They gave me food and the shelter of their tents; and they made me of use to them in various ways. After a while, hard times came to the Gipsies, as they had come to the strolling players. Some of them were imprisoned; the rest were dispersed. It was the season for hop-gathering at the time. I got employment among the hop-pickers next; and that done, I went to London with my new friends.

"I have no wish to weary and pain you by dwelling on this part of my childhood in detail. It will be enough if I tell you that I sank lower and lower, until I ended in selling matches in the street. My mother's legacy got me many a sixpence which my matches would never have charmed out of the pockets of strangers if I had been an ugly child. My face, which was destined to be my greatest misfortune in after-years, was my best friend in those days.

"Is there anything, Mr. Holmercroft, in the life I am now trying to describe which reminds you of a day when we were out walking together, not long since?

"I surprised and offended you, I remember; and it was not possible for me to explain my conduct at the time. Do you recollect the little wandering girl, with the miserable faded nose-gay in her hand, who ran after us and begged for a half-penny? I shocked you by bursting out crying when the child asked us to buy her a bit of bread. Now you know why I was so sorry for her. Now you know why I offended you the next day, by breaking an engagement with your mother and sisters, and going to see that child in her wretched home. After what I have confessed, you will admit that my poor little sister in adversity had the first claim on me.

"Let me go on. I am sorry if I have distressed you. Let me go on.

"The forlorn wanderers of the streets have (as I found it) one way, always open to them, of presenting their sufferings to the notice of their rich and charitable fellow-creatures. They have only to break the law—and they make a public appearance in a court of justice. If the circumstances connected with their offence are of an interesting kind, they gain a second advantage: they are advertised all over England by a report in the newspapers.

"Yes; even I have my knowledge of the law. I know that it completely overlooked me so long as I respected it; but on two different occasions it became my best friend when I set it at defiance. My first fortunate offence was committed when I was just twelve years old.

"It was evening time. I was half dead with starvation; the rain was falling; the night was coming on. I begged—openly, loudly, as only a hungry child can beg. An old lady in a carriage at a shop-door complained of my importunity. The policeman did his duty. The law gave me a supper and shelter at the station-house that night. I appeared at the police court, and, questioned by the magistrate, I told my story truly. It was the everyday story of thousands of children like me; but it had one element of interest in it. I confessed to having had a father (he was then dead) who had been a man of rank; and I owned (just as openly as I owned everything else), that I had never applied to him for help, in resentment of his treatment of my mother. This incident was new, I suppose: it led to the appearance of my 'case' in the newspapers. The reporters further served my interests by describing me as 'pretty and interesting.' Subscriptions were sent to the Court. A benevolent married couple, in a respectable sphere of life, visited the work-house to see me. I produced a favourable impression on them—especially on the wife. I was literally friendless—I had no unwelcome relatives to follow me and claim me. The wife was childless; the husband was a good-natured man. It ended in their taking me away with them to try me in service.

"I have always felt the aspiration, no matter how low I may have fallen, to struggle upwards to a position above me; to rise, in spite of fortune, superior to my lot in life. Perhaps some of my father's pride may be at the root of this restless feeling in me. It seems to be a part of my nature. It brought me into this house, and it will go with me out of this house. Is it my curse, or my blessing? I am not able to decide.

"On the first night when I slept in my new home, I said to myself: 'They have taken me to be their servant; I will be something more

than that; they shall end in taking me for their child.' Before I had been a week in the house I was the wife's favourite companion, in the absence of her husband at his place of business. She was a highly-accomplished woman; greatly her husband's superior in cultivation, and, unfortunately for herself, also his superior in years. The love was all on her side. Excepting certain occasions, on which he roused her jealousy, they lived together on sufficiently friendly terms. She was one of the many wives who resign themselves to be disappointed in their husbands, and he was one of the many husbands who never know what their wives really think of them. Her one great happiness was in teaching me. I was eager to learn; I made rapid progress. At my pliant age I soon acquired the refinements of language and manner which characterised my mistress. It is only the truth to say, that the cultivation which has made me capable of personating a lady was her work.

(To be continued.)

Varieties.

A loving swain in Maine dedicated a napkin-ring "To my almost wife."

When a Kansas lawyer quotes Latin to the jury he is fined by the judge "for profanity and contempt."

A Bostonian has had his eyes "somewhat injured," according to a local reporter, through being run into by a railway train.

The St. Louis *Republican* recommends an ambitious debating society in Kansas to take as its next subject, "Which is the butt end of a 'goat'?"

The New York *Sun* lately produced a headline, reading, "The Root of Evil in the Smiling Land of Apple Jack." It means "Money in Jersey."

There is a woman at Duluth who weighs 360 pounds. At a little distance it is difficult to tell which is the larger of the two, the town or the woman.

"Thirty-four students," says a New York daily, "were graduated" as doctors of medicine last night at the commencement of the Homeopathic College.

The maddest man in Camden is Smith. He wound up his clock regularly every night for fifteen years, and then discovered that it was an eight-day clock.

The following from a notice-board in a fashionable London suburb is a commentary on itself:—"This excellent site for a church or a public-house is to let. Apply." &c.

At a recent Lenten conference a clergyman was interrupted by a cry of "Vive la République!" He turned towards the speaker and requested he would confine himself to "modern subjects."

Somebody has written a work entitled "Useful Hints for Ugly Girls," and the New York *Commercial Advertiser* declared that the book has the smallest circulation of any literary production in the United States.

A Western clergyman, in presenting a revolver to one of the volunteers, said:—"If you get into a tight place and have to use it, ask God's blessing if you have time, but be sure and not let the enemy get the start of you. You can say 'Amen' after you shoot."

An intelligent Aberdeen preacher recently took for his text, "Adam, where art thou?" and divided his subject into three different parts—1st, All men are somewhere; 2nd, Some men are where they ought not to be; and, 3rd, Unless they take care, they will soon find themselves where they would rather not be.

On *dit*, that when Miss Nellie Grant was in London, Disraeli was asked whether he thought the American Princess pretty? "I can't say," replied the author of "Lothair," "for I have only seen her once; she was then sitting between General Senenck's two daughters, and I thought she had some indirect claims to good looks."

Here is how an auctioneer's dialect is given in "Scrope, or the Lost Library," in *Old and New*: "Half-a-dollar, halfadollarfadollafadollafadollafadollathat's bid now, give more? ye want it! Half-a-dollar five-eighths three-quarters—Three-quarters I'm bid—will you say a dollar for this standard work octavo best edition half morocco extra! Three-quarters I'm bid, three-quarters will ye give any more? Three-quarters, three-quartthreequartthreequartthree-quart—three-quart—three-quart one dollar shall I have?"

Speculation is unlimited in its scope, as the following bit of recent talk suggests: "Well, but you're not the boy I left my horse with."

"No, sir, I just speckillated, and bought 'im off 'other boy for six cents."

The young one had an older hand at finance to deal with, as he thereupon handed the boy five cents. The youth was equal to the occasion, for he hung on to the horse out of revenge till the proprietor could satisfy him that he was the rightful owner.

A chap who in some mysterious manner had received a bid to a large and fashionable party was somewhat disconcerted on finding that he was not acquainted with a single person present—nor a double one either. Finally he perceived an elderly gentleman of disconsolate mien looking over a photographic album. Our hero made for this party of the second part, and said:

"I say, you and I don't seem to know any body here. Let's go home!"

It was the head of the house!

Chess.

Solutions to problems sent in by Correspondents will be duly acknowledged.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. H., St. Liboire.—Game received and under examination.

G. E. C., Montreal.—The first position sent of your second Problem seems to us the best. Look again at No. 79.

With reference to our Problem No. 78, the composer suggests, as an improvement, placing a Black Bishop on Black's K. Kt. 2nd instead of the Black Pawn.

H. W. G.—Your game is again unavoidably crowded out, but will appear at the earliest possible opportunity.

N. P.—See Chess Praxis p. 31 for rules in regard to the question.

INTELLIGENCE.

The first annual chess match between the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, England, was played at the City of London Chess Rooms on Friday evening, March 25th, resulting in a victory for Oxford by a score of nine games won to two lost, and two drawn.

A late number of the London *Illustrated News* contains an illustration and an account of this very successful meeting, which is to be a regular one in future, and bids fair to rival in interest the annual boat race.

TORONTO V. MONTREAL.

The deciding game between these two cities, which we subjoin, was played on the evenings of Monday and Tuesday, the 14th and 15th. The players for Toronto were Prof. J. B. Cherriman, Messrs. F. T. Jones, J. H. Gordon, and H. Northcote; and for Montreal: Prof. H. Aspinwall Howe, Messrs. J. G. Ascher, and J. White.

Evans' Gambit.

White.	Black.
(Montreal.)	(Toronto.)
1. P. to K. 4th.	P. to K. 4th
2. K. Kt. to B. 3rd	Q. Kt. to B. 3rd
3. B. to Q. B. 4th	B. to Q. B. 4th
4. P. to Q. Kt. 4th	B. takes Kt. P.
5. P. to Q. B. 3rd	B. to K. 4th
6. P. to Q. 4th	P. takes P.
7. Castles.	P. takes P. (a)
8. P. to K. 5th (b)	K. Kt. to K. 2nd (c)
9. Q. to Q. Kt. 3rd (d)	Castles.
10. Q. Kt. takes P.	P. to Q. Kt. 4th (e)
11. R. takes P. (f)	R. to Q. Kt.
12. Q. to Q. 3rd	Kt. to K. Kt. 3rd
13. R. to Q. R. 3rd	K. Kt. takes K. P.
14. Kt. takes Kt. (g)	Kt. takes Kt.
15. Q. to Q. 5th	R. to K. 3rd
16. Q. to Q. 4th	Kt. takes B.
17. Q. takes Kt.	B. to Q. R. 3rd (h)
18. Resigns.	

(a) Not so good, in our opinion, as P. to Q. 3rd.
 (b) A move sometimes recommended here, as it shuts in the adverse Queen; but Q. to Q. Kt. 2nd strikes us as stronger, because the sortie of the Queen, which follows in defense, may be made a source of embarrassment.

(c) Correct. Black's play, from this point, could not have been improved.

(d) Better, now, to have played as follows.

White.	Black.
9. Kt. to K. 5th	Kt. takes K. P.
10. Kt. takes K. B. P.	Kt. takes Kt.
11. B. takes Kt. ch.	K. takes B.
12. Q. to K. 5th ch.	K. moves or P. m.
13. Q. takes B.	

In this variation, if Black Castle on their 16th move, White might play 13. Q. to K. 5th, Kt. 16. An excellent counter-attack.

(e) Injudicious, as it takes an effective piece from the main point of attack.

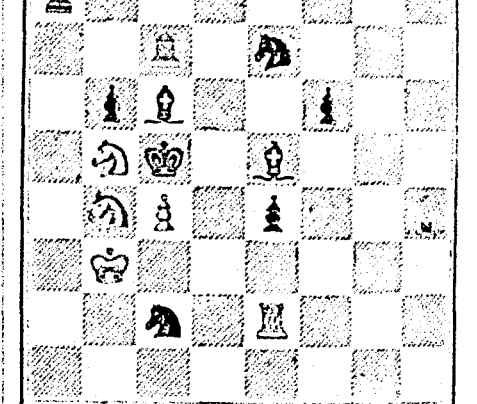
(f) Q. to Q. 5th at once would have been better.

(g) The coup-d'etat, winning a piece next move, and having two passed pawns with a secure game.

PROBLEM No. 82.

By G. E. C., Montreal.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

ENIGMA No. 26.

By G. E. C., Montreal.

WHITE.—K. at Q. R. sq.; B. at K. 5th; Kt. at K. 3rd; P. at Q. 4th and Q. B. 2nd.

BLACK.—K. at Q. R. 5th; Ps. at Q. R. 5th; Q. Kt. 4th; Q. 4th; Q. 7th, and K. R. 4th.

White to play and mate in four moves.

SOLUTION OF PROBLEM No. 78.

White. Black.

1. K. to Q. 5th dis. ch. K. to B. 2d file (a)
 2. R. takes Kt. ch. Kt. takes R.
 3. K. takes P. dis. ch. R. takes B. mate.

(a) Kt. to K. 4th
 2. B. takes Kt. ch. K. to B. 4th
 3. P. takes P. ch. Q. takes P. mate.

One of the best-dressed young men in Chicago, who parts his hair in the middle, essayed to delight a select party of ladies and gentlemen one evening by a few flashes of wit. The most noticeable scintillation of his wit was a conundrum:—"Haw," said he—"aw—when is a lady not a lady?" Nobody could tell, and the propounder of the conundrum gave the answer. "When she's a little buggy," he said. A dead silence fell on the company, and the funny man was the focus of many singular glances. He soon became conscious that "some one had blundered." So he dived into a vest pocket, brought out a newspaper scrap, read it attentively three or four times, and then brightened up. "Haw—yes," he said, "of course—haw—when she's a little sulky. Know it was some kind of a waggou."