

CHAPTER XLIII.

O, VERY GLOOMY IS THE HOUSE OF WOE.

Perriam Place without Sir Aubrey looked exactly the same as it had looked beneath his quiet rule. Strange that in the many forms which our grief for the lost assume there is none harder to bear than this changelessness in inanimate things, this immutable aspect of rooms and corridors, which are just the same as when that missing footstep trod them.

and forwards with bombazine and cobourg, and crape and par-ramatta, and there was a pleasant bustle of preparation in the house-keeper's room, and still room, where the maids sat by the fire running seams and stitching bodies, in an atmosphere odorous with glazed lining.

How did Lady Perriam take this awful change? That was a question which haply no one at the Place could answer. She spent all her time in seclusion, shutting her door against sympathy. The death chamber, and her old dressing-room, and indeed that end of the house where Sir Aubrey's rooms and Mr. Perriam's were situated, she avoided as if the dead had been stricken by some hideous pestilence, and even in his last icy sleep could disseminate poison.

have kept careless record of Time's steady march for Sophie Arnoult, or Marguerite Gauthier; a stand for portfolios of engravings, a dainty little bookcase filled with chosen editions of Lady Perriam's favourite poets, bound in myrtle-green morocco.

The acquirement of these things had been the first use which Sylvia made of her liberty. A childish employment, perhaps, for the solemn days between her husband's death and burial, but the distraction served to keep dark thoughts at bay, and the Monkhampton upholsterer was the most discreet of men.

"There is so little actual comfort in old-fashioned furniture," she said. Mr. Scrudd, with a natural prejudice against all furniture not supplied by himself, agreed to this proposition with enthusiasm.

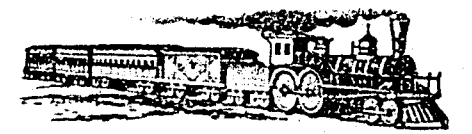
He sent in the goods for Lady Perriam's rooms under cover of the winter dusk, as stealthily as if they had been coffins, and the transformation of the apartments was made so quietly that the always-sitting Vehm Gericht, in the servants' hall, passed no vote of censure upon my lady's proceedings.

(To be continued.)

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C. J. BRYDGES, Managing Director. Montreal, October 6, 1873.

Grand Trunk Railway

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C. J. Brydges, MANAGING DIRECTOR. 7-21 u

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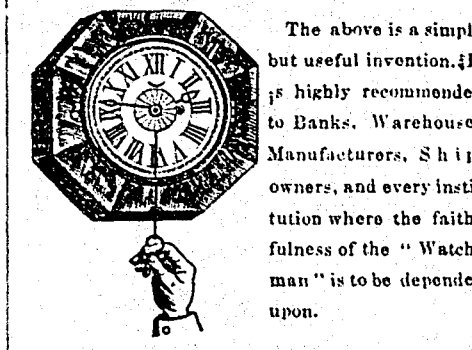
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