

MEDICAL HALL.

Opposite the Post Office, and Branch in Phillip's Square.

Have you ever travelled in the Floridas, fair readers? If not, you cannot know what a sensuous, over-powering, almost intoxicating perfume loads the air. For there there are forests of Magnolia, whose great white blossoms, covering lofty trees, are bespangled with heavy dews of night, and when the morning sun comes, then these bright drops, glistening tears of the night, impregnated with the odour of the flower, are scattered and absorbed, while the perfume set free is nourishing the air, as Tom Moore says:—

"You may scatter the vase if you will. But the scent of the rose will cling round it still."

Go to Mexico and there again is the royalty of perfume ever rising from the gorgeous flowers.

Go to Seville! oh the odour of those bridal blossoms, the Orange. Now they fall like incense on our sense of smell.

Go to Nice and see the fields on fields, acres on acres of tube roses, heliotrope, and geranium. Then next examine the fields beyond—your sense of smell will guide you—there is a burst of roses, poetry is satisfied, all the senses are satisfied; the eye is astonished, for here are all the roses you ever heard or read of, and all grown, not to delight the eye, not to decorate any gallant's button hole, not to form a bouquet to adorn the virgin bosom of some beauty, nor the hair of a rustic maid, but to be plucked and crushed for market.

But ah, there are other flowers; the primrose, golden as lightest hair of gold, and the sweet briar, humble, forbidding-looking shrub, yet, like some homely face, what a perfume of soul there is within. And oh, ye beds of violets that beneath the fallen leaf open your sweet eyes towards heaven, are not your delicate perfumes like the gentlest and softest zephyrs that ever blew in fairy bower. And the rich perfume of the dried flowers whose rare fragrance is yielded up to the alembic of the Chemist. These, with a hundred other varieties, are made subsidiary to the perfumer's art.

Birds and flowers are the symbols of peace, they are the offerings of the beautiful to the brave, and the brave to the beautiful.

There are perfumes in the animal world, such as the musk, there are perfumes in the vegetable world, and of course mostly in the floral.

The ancients used these perfumes for their grand halls, and on all occasions; and we read that even Nero had a means of filling the whole of the Coliseum with sweet perfumes by the aid of evaporating steam. In modern times we perfume everything. Rimmell perfumes every programme at Theatre, Concert, or Ball in London and Paris. To pass his shops one would think there must be a perfect universe of flowers within, with the Ottar of Roses as the prime perfumer. The amount of perfume which is received from regular gardens which are devoted to the cultivation of flowers is enormous. We read of one gentleman growing 50 acres of violets, 100 acres of moss rose, 50 acres of tube rose, and 50 more of heliotrope. They are generally obtained in the form of oils, and all the various perfumes are the different proportions of certain oils combined. Having once discovered a new combination, our soaps are at once changed, in fact all our toilet apparatus. The most popular perfume at present is the "White Rose," and the perfume is of so exquisite a nature that if Cleopatra had known its secret she would never have wasted a pearl on Antony, but simply have intoxicated his senses with this delicious aroma. At the Medical Hall, CAMPBELL & Co., opposite the Post Office, there is as extensive a laboratory as any to be found in their line in the world, and the variety of articles which is here displayed is simply marvellous. Here are Lubin's Perfumes, Pomades, and Soaps, Atkinson's never dying White Rose, Rimmell's scented and charming Almanac for ladies, Hendries' Court Bouquets, containing bunches of violets, and a patent obtrusive fan; Farina's

Eau de Cologne, Smith's Lavender, Gold and Silver capped Smelling Bottles, Steam Machines for the Drawingroom to load the air with perfumes, Soaps of the best English manufacturers. But one should call and see the splendid stock, such hair brushes, such ornaments for the boudoir and the toilet table have never been seen before in Montreal. All the perfumes known in Europe are here to be found, put up in the most tasteful style.

CAMPBELL & CO.,
MEDICAL HALL,
Opposite Post Office.

And Branch Establishment, Phillip's Square.

[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

Half A Ghost!

BY FRANK KRAUSS.

CHAPTER I.

"AUTREFOIS."

Two hundred years ago Asheforde Hall was a quaint, ramshackle old building of the Tudor style, standing far away from any town or village, among the green slopes and thick forests of Staffordshire. The Hall had been built by a baronet of Henry VII.'s time, and had remained in the possession of the Asheforde family until the Protectorate, when old Sir Harry, a staunch and stern royalist, had been forced to take refuge in France, where he died some years before the Restoration, leaving an only son, a sad prodigal, who had left his home, and whose whereabouts no one knew. On leaving England Sir Harry had left the Hall in the hands of his intendant, Jasper Bellamy, to whom, shortly before his death, supposing his scapegrace son to be dead, he had bequeathed all his belongings "as a testimony to the said Jasper's devotion to his master's interests, and a reward for many years of faithful service." People wondered rather at the old baronet's liberality to the servant of whom he was wont to speak as a scoundrelly cropper, who would dare and do all for greed, but Jasper, Puritan as he was, had taken the oath of allegiance to the second Charles, and undisturbedly enjoyed the good-fortune that had befallen him, hearing little and caring less what people said of him.

It was Christmas time, or rather a week before Christmas, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-nine. But the weather was anything but Christmas-like. For days past the rain had been pouring and soaking into the earth until the roads were in many places impassable, and many of the broad Staffordshire valleys were laid completely under water. Travel was almost entirely stopped, and the inmates of many a good old English home that year lamented the absence of relations and friends who were prevented by the weather and the state of the roads from being present at the Christmas festivities.

Three persons sat at table in the dining-room of Asheforde Hall—a great, grim, gloomy apartment, floored and wainscoted with dark, time-stained oak, and lighted by broad bay-windows with latticed diamond panes. He who occupied the seat of honour at the head of the table was a man of forty-eight years of age, or thereabout, burly and heavily built, with huge shoulders and a great round bullet-head, on which the iron-gray hair was cropped short, leaving a pair of immense ears protruding. The expression of his face was anything but agreeable. The eyes were dark and piercing, but small and deep set; and his thin lips and sharp, slightly curved nose indicated a subtle and cruel nature. His crafty face wore a sanctimonious expression that suited ill its general appearance. He was dressed plainly—ostentatiously plainly for one in his position—in a black stuff doublet and Flemish hose and breeches of the same doleful hue; his long straight sword had but a black leather scabbard, and on the floor at his side lay the tall steeple-crowned hat of the sombre type generally worn by the Puritans. On his right sat an individual similarly dressed, but without a sword, and wearing the Geneva bands which betokened the non-conformist minister of the time. His finely-chiselled face wore an expression of mingled pain and resignation, as of a man who had seen much trouble, but whose lamblike nature refused to rebel, and submitted without a murmur to the cruellest strokes of fortune. And indeed the Reverend Master Bracebridge had cause to sorrow. Since the accession of the King his life had been one of continual persecution and suffering. Urged by feelings of loyalty to the Parliament which he had pledged himself to sustain, and by a rare spirit of conscientiousness which forbade him to violate this pledge, he had refused to take the oath of allegiance to the reigning sovereign, and had thenceforth been subjected to incessant persecution at the hands of the unprincipled informers of the time, who made it their business to swear alike against Papist and Puritan—Sons of Belial to whom no Naboth came amiss. Even now a

price had been set upon his head, and he had been compelled to seek shelter in the house of Bellamy, though even this hiding-place was now found to be unsafe, and he was casting about for a more secure retreat.

Opposite him sat a figure that seemed entirely out of place in such sober company—a hearty, handsome man of five-and-thirty, whose bright doublet, fine ruffles of Mechlin lace, and long brown hair and peaked beard and mustache marked him out as a very different being from his sad-faced companions. He was sitting easily and gracefully on a tall spindle-legged chair, on the high back of which hung his gay beaver, ornamented with a long white plume, in the insouciant cavalier fashion. One arm rested negligently on the table, while with the other he toyed with a tall, slim-stemmed Venetian glass, newly filled from the flask before him. The Chevalier Gifford was the younger son of a noble family, and, like most younger sons, had had his own way to make in the world. On coming of age he had entered the army of the French King, where he served with both distinction and profit.

The tall room was comfortably lit up by numerous wax tapers distributed upon the table and along the walls—for Master Bellamy used to say that it was but ill seeming to set light under a bushel—and on the old-fashioned hearth at the far end of the room sputtered and crackled a huge beech log, whose red light drove back the paler gleam of the candles from its own domain, and brightened the old oaken wainscoting and furniture with a crimson glow that struck like blood-stains against the heavy blackness of the wood. The warmth, the shelter and the bright light offered a great contrast to the state of affairs out of doors, where the rain poured in heavy torrents, and the wind whistled and souged among the old trees round the Hall in a most cheerless, dispiriting manner. The conversation had for some time past dwelt on the weather, and the chances whether Bellamy's two sons—one of whom was a student of the inner Temple, and the other a freshman at Cambridge—would be able to make their way to the Hall in time for Christmas Day. But Bellamy now changed the subject.

"And so, Master Gifford, you will back to France. I doubt not but that the French King is ever more ready to reward his servants than is his cousin of England. Yet methinks your late father would, an he were yet alive, have but small care for his son to serve King Louis when there be blows to strike for King Charles and England."

"Such is my intent, Master Bellamy," replied the personage addressed, "for King Louis was ever a kind and a gracious master, and he was wont to say that the Chevalier Gifford was of the truest of his following. As for my father, his son is not ashamed of fighting for the cause for which he both fought and fell. Yet I breathe no word against His Majesty King Charles. I owe him no grudge, and will drink him long life in the tallest beaker Venetia ever made. Methinks, Master Bellamy," he added, seeing that the others made no response to his toast, "methinks you were over hasty to charge me with disaffection. What! do you refuse such a toast, man?"

"Thou knowest full well, worthy friend Gifford," said the minister in slow and measured accents, "that we who have put off the old man from us have nought to do with such carnal vanities as the drinking of toasts and the pledging of healths. Better is the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim than the vintage of Abiezer. Nevertheless, though I do refuse to drink the health of King Charles, at whose hands I have received much hurt, yet the Scriptures do command us to love our enemies, and to pray for them that despitefully use us, and therefore do I wish His Majesty both prosperity and health, and I will ever pray that the wisdom of Solomon be given unto him to rule aright the people over whom he is set."

"Worthy Master Bracebridge is right," interrupted the host, hastily, while an angry scowl contracted his brow, "though his words have somewhat of an unaccustomed smack. But we have business on hand to-night; a secure retreat must be devised for our worthy pastor, and so, by your leave, Master—I crave pardon, Chevalier Gifford, we will withdraw to treat of these matters together, and leave you to finish your wine alone."

The two non-conformists then withdrew, and Gifford, rising from his seat, tossed off his bumper to the King; and commenced striding up and down the apartment, pausing every now and then to replenish his glass.

"The scurvy old numbskull!" he exclaimed at last, "to speak thus of my serving the French King, to whom I owe my all—wife, title, and fortune. Sdeath! 'tis but small thanks or reward a true cavalier may win in England, while these cowardly crop-ears have it all their own way as though old Noll still ruled the roast. His Majesty plays his cards but ill in thus forgetting the services of his best friends. Wisdom of Solomon, forsooth; an if King Charles possess not the wisdom, he lacks not at least the failings of his Hebrew Majesty."

After a few more turns and another pause at the table, he resumed his soliloquy.

"I like not the look of that fellow Bellamy,

albeit he is mine host. Methinks he were one to give a sly thrust in the dark, were he anywise to be profited thereby. An I knew not Master Bracebridge for a simple, honest gentleman, Puritan and parson though he be, methinks 'twere but for ill they devise together to-night. God save us!" he continued, as the sounds of loud talking reached him from the adjoining apartment, "an they be not at high words already, call me crop-eared Round-head."

And indeed the tones of the voices in the next room were both loud and menacing, and at last they reached such a pitch that each word was distinctly heard by the occupant of the dining-room.

"I tell you then, Master Bracebridge, that I will have it, cost what it may."

"And I tell you, Jasper Bellamy, that the sacred trust confided to me by my sister's husband shall not be betrayed. I will keep it sure and safe, even unto the bitter end. But 'twere well to moderate your voice, Master Bellamy, perchance the Chevalier may hear us."

"Fear not," returned the host, "yon Chevalier, as you please to call him, is hard and fast by this time. 'Twas not for nothing I placed before him by best Burgundy and Allcante, and, credit me, he hath not spared them. An he have heard aught, 'twill have slipped from his drowsy memory by morning. But once more, Master Bracebridge, will you not deliver me that I ask of you?"

"I will not," returned the minister, and steps were heard as if he were leaving the room.

"Yet stay, worthy Master Bracebridge," said Bellamy, in a softer tone, "we will speak more of this anon." Then raising his voice, he added, "to-morrow we will seek your hiding-place, where you may be safe from the snares of the hunters."

When the worthy Chevalier rose next day it was well on to noon, for truth to tell he had not spared his host's wine, and his potations, which had been both long and deep, induced a heavy slumber, from which he awoke with but misty ideas of what had occurred the night before. He was somewhat astonished then, on rising, to find slipped under his door a small packet addressed to him, and bearing a few lines in the corner, signed by Bracebridge, bidding him keep the packet unopened until such time as it should be required of him. His wonder was increased when, on descending to the scene of his last night's carouse, he was met by his host alone, who had evidently not changed his dress since the night before, and was covered with dust and mud from head to foot. Bellamy apologised for the minister's absence, and for the condition of his dress, by saying that Master Bracebridge and himself had started early that morning for the minister's retreat in the neighbouring county, that Bracebridge had remained, and that he had but that moment returned.

"Strange!" thought Gifford when his host left the room. Strange that Master Bracebridge should have left thus secretly. Can the man fear lest I betray his hiding-place. Yet, sure no, else would he not have entrusted me with the package. "Betray!"—methinks I heard that word last night."

"Master Bellamy," he continued as the Puritan re-entered the room, "I would fain have seen Master Bracebridge e'er he left, for I have that of his that I would desire to return to him. Is it not possible for an old friend to visit him?"

"Content you, content you, I pray, Master Chevalier. The hue and cry after our dear brother must needs soon be over, and till then 'twere dangerous to visit him. But if you have aught you would wish to send him you may entrust it with all safety into my keeping, and I will cause it to be delivered him."

"I would give it to none save him," returned the Chevalier curtly, and the conversation then dropped.

Day after day Gifford put the same question to his host, with invariably the same result. At last his suspicions became thoroughly roused, and one day—it was a week since he last had seen the Puritan minister—he determined upon pressing the demand. Bellamy at first returned the usual answer, but finding that the Chevalier would take no refusal, he at last consented with no good grace, and with what sounded uncommonly like a half-smothered oath. However, he immediately broke into a laugh—an unwonted relaxation with him—and added gaily;

"A wilful man must have his way, and I suppose you, Master Chevalier, will even have yours. Be it so; we will start at noon and we shall then arrive at Master Bracebridge's hiding-place under cover of night."

At noon the Chevalier, having placed in his bosom the packet which he intended returning to Bracebridge, and having wrapped himself in a thick riding cloak, for the foul weather had not yet abated, stood on the steps of the Hall anxiously awaiting the coming of his host. At last Bellamy made his appearance, and after he had given some instructions in a low tone to an attendant, the two mounted their horses. In so doing Gifford noticed with surprise a small travelling valise strapped to his saddle, while a similar one