

THE CYNIC'S PRIZE NOVELISTS.

No. 1.

EVA HEAD.

A NAUGHTIGAL ROMANCE OF BEAUTY, BLOOD, AND BOOTY.

(Continued.)

CHAP. XV.

"On the receipt of Carrajo's message, Mr. Seward left for the island in three gunboats, respectively the *Quaker City* and his own boots." With all due deference to the printers, the author is under the impression that the above paragraph would have made Chap. XIV. appear a trifle more connected. As lucidity, however, is a quality by no means necessary to the popularity of literary productions—(witness the *News* and other periodicals in the city),—the slip above-mentioned is, perhaps, of no great moment. *A revoir*, then.

After a stormy passage, which was probably owing to the *seas-on* of the year, at which our friends waved their last adieu to their island-home, the good ship *Quaker City* landed them safely in New York; and Eva felt that her husband was once more amongst his *piers*, though *docked* of considerable money—and time, (which is money),—since he had last set eyes on Jersey City. Carrajo, immediately on landing, repaired to his old *quarters*, which had been considerably enlarged in their *dimensions* during his *absents*; and, naturally enough, his first impulse was to visit the hair-dressing saloon, in order to make himself as presentable as possible, after an absence of so many years. The artist, by-the-by, who presides over the tonsorial establishment of the "St. Nicholas," is a strange specimen of human nature,—a perfect study for a Cynic or Philosopher;—grave, taciturn,—turning his attention to nothing save his business;—a man who has amassed a vast fortune, but who, (at least when shaving), will leave few *heirs* behind him,—a man who has rais(ed) himself to the position he now occupies,—of herculean build and *strapping* proportions,—but, withal, so quiet and *sof' forty*, he is, indeed, the very personification of the "*scenter of gravity*!"

This is digressing, however; and therefore, once more to return.

While Carrajo was waiting, like a condemned culprit, for his "turn," his eye chanced to light on a daily paper called the *British Whig*, which is published in Kingston, Ont. He was too blind to read it, of course; but one of those obliging people who are always ready to do what certain writers in this city are doing, slowly, but surely,—that is, "break the *News*,"—offered to *edify* him with the contents of the *whig* aforesaid, and the Chief was speedily horrified to find that his worthy friend, the Editor, entertained a decided aversion to the patronymic with which he had been blessed or cursed. Carrajo—(for the last time, ladies and gentlemen!)—was always of an obliging disposition; he therefore set out immediately for the Patent Office in Wall Street, and, following the example set him by his illustrious predecessor,—Norfolk-Howard-Bugg,—he soon stepped out again in possession of a document which transformed him into Don Henrico di Barkerola!

"Walking down Broadway" on his return, an evil thought flashed across his brain, but it was merely a kind of spiritual "heat-lightning," and, for the time, bore no evil results. It soon fructified, however, and, alas for Eva! was acted upon. Divorce from the partner of his joys and sorrows,—from the one who had soothed his sufferings and sewed on his buttons,—who, never *niggardly* of sympathy, had, through an unfortunate fatality of race, *blackened* all his prospects. 'Twas ingratitude, indeed!

A word from Henrico, who had great influence over his bride, would make her "do just as she liked"; and, when he reached the hotel, he ordered her to apparel herself, and to perform that peculiar acrobatic feat of "holding herself" in readiness to go with him to the Notary's.

She arrayed herself, accordingly, in a robe of pure *mulin de Napiet*, or *Bombazine*, which was made in the latest fashion, with an immense "train,"—the better to display the peculiar grace of her figure,—and they set out. In doubt where to find the required lawyer, and unwilling to betray his secret, the Chief had ordered his wife to assume her longest dress,—and for good reason. They might be some time before they found what they were after,—hours might pass by in wandering to and fro,—see, then, how necessary his wife's robe was to

SCOUR THE STREETS!!

CHAP. XVI.

Henrico ate his mid-day meal in silence and alone,—in fact, with so many plans upon his mind, it might have been called a "*diner à la Russe*!" He had been in doubt, and he had played his trump; and as he thought of his failure, "The Deuce!" escaped his lips,—nothing more, for he was a man of few words, but, like the old lady's parrot, "a beggar to think!"

"There was nothing for it," as the fox said, when he watched, vainly, three hours at the mouth of a rabbit warren,—a favorite simile of Henrico's, who always got off a stale old joke about the hurrying to and fro in the same burrow, being a kind of "Warren Hastings." He could get no divorce; what was there for it but to fly? Discretion is the better part of valour ten times over; and when a man marries a woman who is

no mate for him, I think it is "mate" for him,—as the Irishman would say,—to leave her. In fact, that having doubled himself, he had *better halve* himself again as quickly as possible.

And so Henrico thought, as the setting sun shed a sickly halo over his beer,—beer, metaphorically,—for it was sherry which he sipped with the desperation of a drowning *cobbler who catches at straws*.

Wednesday,—the anniversary of everybody's marriage,—broke with a dull and dispiriting light over the roof of the far-famed "St. Nicholas";—shot its leaden rays into the chamber where slept Eva, unconscious of her fate,—tinged the smutted nose of the boot-black as he reclined amongst black-beetles in the cellar, and warmed the previously fiery proboscis of the cloak-room janitor, as he wearily unhooked himself from the peg, where he nightly slept off his troubles and his sins. Nine o'clock exactly, by the great *hall clock*, as Henrico, *all cloaked* and booted, started on his journey. Ten o'clock by the same dial as Eva awoke from her slumbers, lulled by that sweetest of *prima donnas*,

"Sweet nature's kind *Ritorni*,—gentle sleep."

and looked around. Naturally sharp-witted, she took it all in at a glance. Henrico had, too surely, taken his departure, and, without waiting for dinner, had *deserted* her. Fortunately, the Chief had left her with sufficient of the "sordid" to settle her bill at the hotel and purchase a ticket to New Orleans, which she immediately did; and while the wife, thus abruptly made a widow, travels, after the lapse of years, to rejoin her family, from whom she had been so rudely torn, take the train of thoughts, gentle reader, and follow me to Portland, Maine, where we shall next find Henrico.

The "Forest City," as its inhabitants fondly love to term it, is a collection of nondescript stores and frame-houses, inhabited by a class of hybrid, (not high-bred,) Americans. Its principal productions are soda-water and clams, which latter, on any fine day, may be taken wild in their native home in all their fresh and briny succulence. It boasts *nine* churches and *thirty-one* lawyers' establishments, and has a population of 28,379 and a half, and one child with an eye out.

Its citizens are a well-meaning, though harmless class of people, who certainly will obtain little *praise* for their observance of the *laws* of hospitality, and whose female population,—composed of blacks who don't paint, and whites who do,—may, perhaps, be best described as "*rouge et noir*." They suffer from Anglophobia, and pride themselves on "catarrh and taxation"; and, in their spite against England, are altogether unmindful of the proverb—

"It's all very well to fool with the Bull, but look out for his horns, my boy,—look out for his horns!"

Here, two days after leaving New York, Henrico found himself, and here he did the rashest act of his life,—he actually bought a ticket by the Grand Trunk Railway to Montreal, and only laid in provisions for a month!

The Chief had ample time to reflect on his folly, and he *railed* at himself during the whole of his journey. All the way to Island Pond it was a case of "Lo, the poor *Engine*!" and Henrico thought, as he was bumped along, that the Company's carriages were *rolling* stock indeed. It was a fit punishment, though, for his crimes; and, long before he reached his journey's end, the Chief knew by sad experience what it was to be

HIDDEN ON A RAIL!!

CHAP. XVII.

In the course of time, Henrico arrived at Montreal;—it was never ascertained definitely how long his trip occupied, for, when he arrived at his destination, the clocks were all stopped by order of the Mayor, in order to allow a "decent kind of Yankee" an opportunity for disposing of a large stock of wooden chronometers which he had on *hand*! He was naturally struck—as all strangers must be at first sight—with the *imposing* appearance of the Bonaventure Depot. He could see slightly, for his "eyes had been opened" by the doings of the G. T. R.; and the beams and whitewash, and the numerous means of egress to this building, proved to him that the whole pile was of the *Door ic* style of architecture. The numerous accessories, the large and well arranged book-stall, the ladies' waiting-room,—everything, in fact, seemed to bespeak the management of a Company who, as regards their Depot, are less progressive than *stationary*!

Bewildered, too, by the *hackneyed* cries of the numerous and importunate cab-drivers, Henrico knew not which way to turn; and dazzled by the bewildering beauty of the edifice, the surly incivility of the baggage-man,—who tried to *check* him in all his attempts to obtain possession of his property,—and the erratic movements of the railway clock,—the long-hand of which, forgetting itself for a while, will suddenly awake to a sense of duty and skip three minutes in as many seconds, and which evidently goes in for the *short-hand* system, (just introduced on that Railway),—dismayed and intimidated by scenes so new and strange to him, Henrico suffered himself to be inveigled by the driver of a cab for the St. Lawrence Hall, who kept him waiting for fifteen minutes while he (the aforesaid "cabby") blackened the eye of a fellow "coach," who disputed his right to the Chief's patronage. "None but the brave deserve the *fare*," and