

## Poetry.

## THE TEMPERANCE LIFE BOAT.

Not upon the stormy ocean  
Is our noble life-boat found,  
But amid the rocks and breakers  
That overspread the solid ground.

Not alone, our aim to rescue  
Men from an untimely grave,  
But from depths of hopeless misery  
Erring ones we seek to save.

Back intemperance's snging billows,  
Sweep across these lovely plains  
Desolating cot and palace,  
Causing bitter tears and pains.

See our friends and neighbors sinking  
In the dark and turbid stream,  
Haste! oh, hasten to their rescue  
While of hope there's yet a gleam.

Quickly launch the Temperance Life-Boat,  
Manned by noble hearts and brave,  
Speed it o'er the fiery billows,  
Snatch them from a drunkard's grave.

Do! despair not, shipwrecked brother,  
There is succor near at hand,  
In the Total Abstinence Life-Boat  
We will bear you safe to land. P. J. O.

## THREE MAIDENS MARRIED.

## CHAPTER I.

HOW THE NEW SURGEON CAME TO THE VILLAGE OF EBURY TO SETTLE, AND OF ANOTHER STRANGE PERSON.

A powerful sensation was created one day in the village of Ebury, by a report that somebody had taken the long-inhabited house, which was situate in the centre of the street.

Who could have hired it? the whole village were asking, one of another. Those cousins of the Smiths? or the people who had come on a visit to the Hall, and professed to like Ebury so well? No, none of these; it was a stranger from London, quite unknown to everybody: for there soon appeared a shining zinc plate on the newly finished oak door bearing in large, to-be-read-at-a-great-distance-off-letters, 'Mr. Gervase Castonel. Consulting Surgeon.'

Ebury was in an ecstasy. A fashionable doctor was what the place wanted above all things; as to Winninton, he was nothing but an apothecary, old now, and stupid. Only three days before (so the tale went round the whist tables), when he was called in to Mrs. Major Acre, an elderly dowager, he had the insolence to tell her he could do her little good; that if she would eat less and walk more, she would not want a doctor. They had put up with Winninton, especially when he had his young and agreeable partner, a gentleman of fortune and position, who had joined him some time before. But this gentleman's wife had fallen into ill health, which had caused him to quit Ebury, and seek a warmer climate. Mr. Gervase Castonel arrived, and took possession of his residence. You all know how fond we are apt to be of fresh faces, but you cannot know how rapturously fond Ebury at once grew of his.—And yet, to a dispassionate observer, it was not a prepossessing face; it was silent, pale, and unfathomable, with a gray, impenetrable eye that disliked to look at you, and dark hair. They tried to guess his age: some said five-and-twenty, some thirty; it is most probable he was near the latter, a small-made man, of middle height.

Poor Mr. Winninton! he had attended Ebury and the country round for forty years, walking unostentatiously on his two legs, and never, unless the distance was really beyond them, using a horse or carriage, and then it was borrowed or hired. But he had to witness the debut of Mr. Castonel in a stylish cab with a tiger behind it; both of the newest London importation; Mr. Castonel's arms being emblazoned on the cab, and Mr. Castonel's taste on the boy's dress. He never stirred a professional yard without this cab; did a patient at the next door call him in, the cab took him there. Generally the boy would be hoisted up, holding on by the back straps, after the approved manner of tigers; sometimes, when it was Mr. Castonel's pleasure not to drive himself, he sat by his master's side and took the reins. Mr. Castonel had a habit of sitting very back in his cab, and the lad also, so that when its head was up they were invisible; and in this way the cab would go dashing at a fierce rate up and down the street. Until Ebury became familiar with this peculiarity, it was the cause of no end of terror; the pedestrians believing that the spirited horse, without the guide, was making for their unfortunate bodies. Two of these horses were possessed by Mr. Castonel, fine, valuable animals, and

one or other was always to be seen, with the cab behind him. Sure never did a stranger fall into so extensive a practice (to judge by appearances), as did Mr. Gervase Castonel.

The first patient he was summoned to was Mrs. Major Acre. It may be observed that a family in Ebury wrote a note of invitation to Mrs. Major Acre and omitted the 'Major.' She at once returned the letter, with an intimation that Mrs. Major Acre declined acquaintance with them: so we will take care not to fall under a similar calamity. Mr. Castonel was called in to Mrs. Major Acre, and she was charmed with him. He sympathized so feelingly with her ailments, but assured her that in a little time, under his treatment, she would not have a symptom left. That horrid Winninton, she imparted to him, had told her she wanted nothing but walking and fasting. Oh, as to Winninton, Mr. Castonel rejoined, with a contemptuous curl of his wire-drawn, impenetrable lips, what could be expected of an apothecary?—He (Mr. Castonel) hoped soon to leave no patients at the mercy of him. And this was repeated by Mrs. Major Acre wherever she went: and she took care to go every where to land the praises of the consulting surgeon: so that people almost longed for a tender fit of sickness, that they might put themselves under the bland and fostering care of Mr. Castonel.

Nor was there only one house taken, nor only one stranger who had come to settle in Ebury. At the same time a lady, attended by one female servant,—a young and handsome lady, it was said, became the tenant of Beech Lodge. Her name no one knew, her business was no one's business. She lived secluded—declined visitors, and rarely if ever stirred out. It was not until sometime afterward that it was found that she was an acquaintance—a family connection, he carelessly observed—of the new surgeon. Gossip kept a sharp scrutiny on the couple, but even gossip could make nothing out. The new come lady was circumspect—rather haughtily so, however; and except the fact of her seclusion, which was highly censurable in such a place as Ebury, she gave no offence. Gossip would have grown tired of her, and turned its attention to some one else, and did when any one else came, but in default of new matter, the mysterious lady at Beech Lodge gave rise to the most earnest conjecture, and served as a standing dish at Ebury tea-tables.

## CHAPTER II.

ABOUT THE ENGAGEMENT OF THE NEW SURGEON TO THE OLD SURGEON'S NIECE.

Time goes on with us all, and it did with Ebury. In six months not a single patient remained with Mr. Winninton; all had flown to Mr. Gervase Castonel: for that gentleman, in spite of his glaring zinc plate, proved to be a general practitioner. We must except one or two intimate friends of Mr. Winninton's; and we must except the poor, those who could not pay. Mr. Castonel had made an ostentatious announcement that he should give advice gratis from nine to ten o'clock on Tuesdays and Fridays, but the few poor who accepted the invitation found him so repellent and unsympathizing, that they were thankful to return to kind old Mr. Winninton, who had not only attended them without charge at their own homes, but had done much toward supplying their bodily wants. Mr. Winninton had been neglectful of gain; perhaps his having no family rendered him so. He had never married, he and his sister having always lived together: but just before her death, a niece, Caroline Hall, then left an orphan, came home to them. To describe his affection for this girl would be impossible: it may be questioned if Caroline returned it as it deserved—but when is the love of the aged for the young ever repaid in kind? The pleasure and delights of visiting filled her heart, and her uncle's home and society were only regarded as things to be escaped from. Was he yet awake to this? There was something worse for him to awake to, by-and-by, something as yet he suspected not. He was much changed: had been changing ever since the establishment in Ebury of Mr. Castonel: his face had acquired a gray cast like his hair, his merry tongue was hushed, and people said he looked as if his heart were breaking. It is hard to bear ingratitude—ingratitude from those with whom we have lived for sixty years. It was not for the value of the practice; no, no; he had that which would last him his life, and leave something behind him: but it was the unkindness that was telling upon Mr. Winninton, the desertion of him for a stranger, one in reality less skilled than he was.

Frances Chavasse stood in her mother's drawing-room, and, with her, the daughter of the Rector of Ebury, the Reverend Christopher Leicester. Ellen Leicester had come in after dinner to spend the afternoon; for

Ebury, though it called itself an aristocratic place, usually dined in the middle of the day. They were both lovely girls, about nineteen, though unlike in feature as in disposition. They were called the beauties of Ebury. Caroline Hall got classed with them also, but it arose from her constantly associating with them, not from her good looks. She was two or three years older, had a sallow face with dark hair, and lively, pleasant dark eyes. An absurd story had gone abroad, but died away again, that Mr. Castonel, upon being asked which of the three was most to his taste, replied that only one of them was, but he'd marry the three, for all that.

The two young ladies were talking eagerly, for Mrs. Major Acre had just paid them a visit, and disclosed a piece of intelligence which completely astounded her hearers—that Miss Hall was about to be married to Mr. Castonel.

'It is impossible that it can be true,' Mrs. Chavasse and her daughter had exclaimed in the same quick, positive, eager tone, for they were the counterpart of each other in manner. 'Old Winninton hates Mr. Castonel like poison.'

'I know he does. And I was told it was for that very reason Mr. Castonel is bent upon having her,' said Mrs. Major; 'that he may mortify the old apothecary, and take from him the only treasure he has left—Caroline.'

'Oh, that's Ebury gossip,' decided Mrs. Chavasse. 'A well-established man like Mr. Castonel will take care to marry according to his fancy, not to gratify pique. Mr. Winninton will never give his consent.'

'He has given it,' answered the major's widow. 'Caroline's will is law, there. I wish she may find it so in her new home.'

'Well,' added Mrs. Chavasse, dubiously, 'I don't know that Mr. Castonel is altogether the man I should choose to give a daughter to. Such curious things are said of him—about that mysterious person, you know.'

'Grapes are sour,' thought Mrs. Major Acre to herself. 'And now I have told you the news, I must go,' she said, rising. 'Good-by to you all. My compliments at the parsonage, my dear Miss Ellen.'

Mrs. Chavasse went out with the lady, and it happened that immediately afterward Caroline Hall entered. Ellen and Frances regarded her with a curiosity they had never yet manifested, and Frances spoke impulsively.

'How sly you are over it, Caroline! Now, don't go to deny it, or you'll put me in a temper. We know all about it, just as much as yourself. If you chose to keep it from others, you might have told Ellen and me.'

'How could I tell you what I did not know myself?'

'Nay, Caroline, you must have known it,' interposed the sweet, gentle voice of Ellen Leicester.

'I did not know I was going to be married. You might have seen there was'—she hesitated and blushed—'an attachment between myself and Mr. Castonel, if your eyes had been open.'

'I declare I never saw any thing that could cause me to think he was attached to you,' abruptly uttered Miss Chavasse, looking at her.

'Nor I,' repeated Ellen Leicester. And the young ladies spoke truly.

'I may have seen you talking together in evening society, perhaps even gone the length of a little dash of flirtation,' said Miss Chavasse. 'But what has that to do with marriage? Everybody flirts. I shall have a dozen flirtations before I settle down to marry.'

'That all depends upon the disposition,' returned Miss Hall. 'You may, but Ellen Leicester never will.'

'Ellen dare not,' laughed Frances. 'She would draw down the old walls of the parsonage about her ears if she committed so heinous a sin. But I must return to what I said, Caroline Hall, that it was unfriendly not to let us know it.'

'The puzzle is, how you know it now,' observed Caroline. 'The interview, when Mr. Castonel asked my uncle for me, only took place last night, and I have not spoken of it to any one.'

'Oh, news travels fast enough in Ebury,' answered Frances, carelessly. 'If I were to cut my finger now, every house would know it before to-night. Mr. Winninton may have mentioned it.'

'I am quite sure that it has not passed his lips.'

'Then the report must have come from Mr. Castonel?' exclaimed Frances. 'How very strange!'

'My uncle is not well to-day,' added Miss Hall, 'and has seen no one. He has got a great fire made up in the drawing-room, and is stewing himself close to it. The room's as hot as an oven.'

'A fire, this weather?' repeated Frances. 'What is the matter with him?'

'Nothing particular that I know of. He sits and sighs, and never speaks. He only spoke once between breakfast and dinner: and that was to ask me if I felt Mr. Castonel was a man calculated to make me happy. Of course he is.'

'Caroline,' whispered Miss Leicester, 'do you not fear it is your marriage that is preying on his spirits?'

'I know it is. He would not consent for a long while. The interview was anything but agreeable. He and Mr. Castonel were together at first, and then I was called in. At last he gave it. But he does not like Mr. Castonel. I suppose from his having taken his practice from him.'

'A very good reason too,' said Miss Chavasse, bluntly.

'Oh, I don't know,' carelessly returned Caroline. 'It is all luck in this world. If people persist in sending for Gervase, he can't refuse to go. My uncle is old now.'

Ellen Leicester looked up, reproach seated in her deep blue eyes. But Caroline Hall resumed:

'It is more than dislike that he has taken to Mr. Castonel; it is prejudice. He cried like a child after Gervase was gone, saying he would rather I had chosen any one else in the world; he had rather I had kept single for life, than marry Mr. Castonel. And Muff says she heard him sobbing and growling on his pillow all night long.'

'And oh, Caroline,' exclaimed Ellen Leicester, in a shocked, hushed tone, 'can you think of marrying him now?'

'My uncle has consented,' said Caroline, evasively.

'Yes; but in what way? If you have any spark of dutiful feeling, you will now prove your gratitude to your uncle for all his love and care of you.'

'Prove it, how?'

'By giving up Mr. Castonel.'

Caroline Hall turned and looked at her, then spoke impressively, 'It is easy to talk, Ellen Leicester, but when the time comes for you to love, and should be unacceptable to your parents, you will then understand how impossible is what you ask of me. That calamity may come.'

'Never,' was the almost scornful reply of Miss Leicester. 'My father and mother's wishes will ever be first with me.'

'I tell you, you know nothing about it,' repeated Caroline. 'Remember my words hereafter.'

'Do not cavil about what you will never agree upon,' interrupted Miss Chavasse.—'When is the wedding to be, Caroline?'

'I suppose almost immediately. So Mr. Castonel wishes.'

'He is not so great a favorite in the place as he was when he first came. People also say that he is a general admirer. So take care Caroline.'

'I know few people with whom he is not a favorite,' retorted Caroline, warmly. 'My uncle is one; Mr. Leicester, I believe, is another. Are there any more?'

'You need not take me up so sharply,' laughed Frances. 'I only repeated what I have heard. Take your things off, Caroline and remain to tea.'

Caroline Hall hesitated. 'My uncle is so lonely.' Still, she added after a pause, 'I can do him no good, and as to trying to raise his spirits, it is a hopeless task. Yes, I will stay, Frances.'

She was glad to accept any excuse to get away from the home she had so little inclination for, utterly regardless of the lonely hours of the poor old man. Frances, careless and pleased, hastened to help off with her things. But Ellen Leicester, more considerate, painfully reproached her in her heart of hearts.

Mr. Castonel found his way that evening to the house of Mr. Chavasse. Soon after he came, Mrs. Chavasse, who was in her garden, saw the rector pass. She went to the gate, and leaned over it to shake hands with him.

'Have you heard the news?' she asked being one who was ever ready to retail gossip. 'Caroline Hall is going to be married.'

'Indeed!' he answered, in an accent of surprise. 'I have been much at Mr. Winninton's lately, and have heard nothing of it.'

'She marries Mr. Castonel.'