

The Face Behind the Mask

A Romance.

"Fairly rejected," said the count, with a passing shade of mortification on his brow; "and my words, I am sure, were not meant to offend you. But, Leoline, you have yet to learn whom you have discarded."

Clinging to her lover's arm, the girl grew white with undefined apprehension. Leoline, the count removed his face, and she saw, with a gasp, and a face well known to Leoline, from pictures and description, turned full upon her.

"Sir!" she cried in terror, falling on her knees with clasped hands.

"Nay, rise, fair Leoline," said the king, holding out his hand to assist her. "It is my place to kneel to one so lovely, instead of having her kneel to me. Think again. Will you reject the king as you did the count?"

"Pardon, your majesty!" said Leoline, scarcely daring to look up; "but I must!"

"So be it! You are a perfect miracle of truth and constancy, and I think I can afford to be generous for once. In fifteen minutes we start for Oxford, and you must accompany us as Lady Kingsley. A tiring woman will wait upon you to robe you for your bridal. We will leave you now, and let me enjoy my expedition."

And while she stood still too much astonished by the sudden proposal to answer, both were gone, and in their place stood a smiling lady in white, a cloud of gossamer veil in her arms.

"Are those for me?" inquired Leoline, looking at them and trying to comprehend that it was all real.

"They are for you," said the mistress Stuart, herself. "Please sit down, and all will be ready in a trice."

And in a trice all was ready. The shining, jetty curls were smoothed, and fell in a glossy shower, and Leoline, with jewels, the pearls Leoline herself still wore. The rose sash was discarded for another of bridal white, perfect of fit and splendour of texture, and the gossamer veil fell like a cloud of silver mist over all, from head to foot; and Leoline was shown herself in a mirror, and in the sudden transformation could have exclaimed, and not in vain, "tune lady of Mother Goose, shorn of her tresses while in balmy slumber."

"As sure as I'm a living woman, this is no more of it!" But she was never, however, who stood listening like one in a trance to the enthusiastic praises of her waiting maid.

Again there was a tap at the door. This time the attendant opened it, and George reappeared. Even for a moment looking at the silver shining vision, and so lost in admiration that he almost forgot his message. But when Leoline turned the light of her beautiful eyes fell on him, and he managed to remember it, and announced that he had been sent by the king to usher her to the royal presence.

With a fast-throbbing heart, flushed cheeks and brilliant eyes, the dazzling bride followed him, unconscious that she had never looked so incomparable before in her life. It was but a few hours since she had dressed for another bridal; and what wonderful things had occurred since then—her whole destiny had changed in a night. Not quite sure yet but that she was still dreaming, she followed on—saw George throw open the great doors of the audience chamber, and found her self suddenly in what seemed to her a vast concourse of people. At the upper end of the apartment was a brilliant group of ladies, with the king's beautiful favorite in their midst, gossiping with knots of gentlemen. The king himself stood in the recess of a window, with his brother, the Duke of York, the Earl of Rochester, and Sir Norman Kingsley, and was laughing and relating animatedly to the two peers the whole story. Leoline noticed this, and noticed, too, that all were traveling dresses—most of the ladies, indeed, being attired in riding habits.

The king himself advanced to her rescue, and, drawing her arm within his, he led her up and presented her to the fair mistress Stuart, who received her with smiling graciousness; though Leoline, all unused to court ways, and aware of the lovely lady's questionable position, returned it with almost cold hauteur. Charles being in an unusually gracious mood, only smiled as he noticed it, and introduced her next to his brother of York, and her former short acquaintance, Earl Rochester.

"There's no need, I presume, to make you acquainted with this other gentleman," said Charles, with a laughing glance at Sir Norman, "Kingsley, stand forward and receive your bride. My lord of Canterbury, we await your good offices."

The bland bishop, in surprise and state, and took in a hasty step from a distant group and advanced. Sir Norman, with a flush on his cheek, and an exultant light in his eyes, took the hand of his beautiful bride, who stood lovely and blushing and downcast, the envy and admiration of all. And

"Before the bishop now they stand, The bridegroom and the bride, And who shall paint what lovers feel In this, their hour of pride?"

Who, indeed? Like many other pleasant things in this world, it requires to be felt to be appreciated; and for that reason is a subject on

which the unworthy chronicler is altogether incompetent to speak. The first words of the ceremony dropped from the prelate's urbane lips, and Sir Norman's heart danced a tarantella within him. "Wilt thou?" inquired the bishop, blandly, and slipped a plain gold ring on one pretty finger of Leoline's hand, and all heard the old, old formula: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." And the whole mystic rite was over. Leoline gave one earnest glance at the ring on her finger. Long ago slaves wore rings as a sign of their bondage—is it for the same reason married women wear them now? While she yet looked half doubtingly at it, she was surrounded, congratulated and studded with a sudden clamor of voices; and then, through it all, she heard the well-remembered voice of Count L'Estrange saying:

"My lords and ladies, time is on the wing, and the sun is already half an hour high. Off with you all to the courtyard, and the mounted and dismounted Kingsley changes her wedding-gear for robes more befitting travel, and joins us there."

With a low obeisance to the king, the lovely bride hastened away after one of the favorite's attendants, to do as he directed, and don a riding-suit. In ten minutes after, when the royal cavalcade started, she turned full upon the post-stricken city, too—and fairest where all was fair, by Sir Norman's side rode Leoline.

Sitting one winter night by a glorious fire, while the snow and hail lashed the windows, and the wind without roared like Bottom, the weaver, a pleasant voice whispered the foregoing tale. Here, as it passed abruptly, and seemed to have been done with one thing, it naturally began to ask questions. What happened to the dwarf and his companions? What became of Hubert? Did Sir Norman and Lady Kingsley go to Devonshire and did either of them die of the plague? I felt, myself, when I said it, that the last suggestion was beneath contempt, and so a withering look from the king, at being mounted on a white charger, was graciously pleased to acknowledge them; and Hubert became the Marquis de Montmorency, and in the fullness of time took unto himself a wife, even of the daughters of the land, and lived happily for ever after.

And Sir Norman and Lady Kingsley did go to the old manor in Devonshire, where, with tradition and no information, there is to be seen to this day an old family picture, painted some twelve years after, representing the knight and his lady sitting serenely in their "angle nook," with their family around them. Sir Norman, a little portlier, a little graver, in the serious dignity of pater familias; and Leoline, with the dark, beautiful eyes, the falling, shining hair, the sweet smiling lips, and lovely, placid face of old. Between them, on three hassocks, sat three little boys; while the fourth, and youngest, a miniature Sir Norman, leans against his mother's shoulder, and looks thoughtfully in her sweet, calm face. Of the fate of those four, the same ancient lore affirms: "That the eldest afterwards bore the title of Earl of Kingsley; that the second became a lord high admiral, or chancellor, or something equally hifalutin; and that the third became an archbishop. But the highest honor of all was reserved for the fourth and youngest," continued the narrating voice, "who, after many days, sailed for America, and in the course of time became president of the United States."

Determined to be fully satisfied on this point, at least, the author investigated all her spare change in a catalogue of the said president, from George Washington to Chester A. Arthur, and after a diligent and absorbing perusal of that piece of literature, could find no name named as Kingsley whatever; and has been forced to come to the conclusion that he must have applied to congress to change his name on arriving in the New World, or else that the informant was laboring under a falsehood when she told her so. As for the rest,

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Township Councils.

WEST NISSOURI.

West Nissouri Municipal Council met Feb. 24. The auditors presented their report of the treasurer's accounts for the past year, which, being finally audited by the council, was received and adopted. An order was issued for their fees, \$11 each. Mr. Thomas Howay complained about the west town line being fenced in by Samuel Stevenson, thereby preventing his cattle from getting to the river for water. He referred to Mr. Harris and the council on motion of Mr. Elgie, seconded by Mr. Morrison, Mr. Patterson was paid \$167.37 for concrete tile for public use; J. H. Foreman, \$2.63 for tile. On motion of Mr. Strittit, seconded by Mr. Morrison, W. C. Bryan was paid \$34.40, being part of gravel contract. Mr. Strittit moved, seconded by Mr. Morrison, that \$300 be appropriated to each ward for the improvements of the roads, the money to be expended in grading, graveling, ditching, and for the erection and repair of culverts, not more than 20 feet in length. Carried. Bylaw No. 113, in conformity with this resolution, passed. Mr. Strittit moved, seconded by Mr. Harris, that this council pay 40 cents per cord for gravel during the present year, and that in the event of this price not being accepted, the matter be settled by arbitration, as authorized by statute. Carried. Bylaw No. 114, appointing path masters, pound keepers, fence viewers and other officers was drafted, duly read and passed. Adjourned till second Wednesday in March. W. Lee, clerk.

EAST WILLIAMS.

The above council met at Nairn on Feb. 12. The following accounts were paid: Meredith & Fisher, account in English cash, \$64.29; fees for advice re C. T. R. Block drain, \$2; R. Haskett, repairing culvert, \$50; James McLean, plank, \$2.65; Donald Morrison, two-thirds value of 8 sheep killed by dogs and 19 worth, \$55.16; Archibald McLeish, two-thirds value of 1 sheep killed by dogs, \$5.32; G. McGugan, gravel, \$47.94; J. A. Smith, two-thirds value of 2 sheep worried by dogs, \$10; Mrs. Ben Lumby, two-thirds value of 1 sheep killed by dogs, \$5.32; Alex. Johnston, repairing culvert, \$50; George Rivera, tile, \$20; E. Leslie, D. R. O. \$4; Angus McKay, poll booth for election, \$4; D. A. Stewart, registering births, marriages and deaths, \$1.00; postage, stationery, etc., \$3.35; J. Milliken, overcharge of taxes, \$1.90; John Heard & Co., tile, \$27.54; Gazette-Review, printing, \$8.75.

The report of the auditors was adopted. Mr. Tweedle was asked to examine Mr. McDonald's sheep worried by dogs and report at next meeting. The auditors were instructed to examine the collector's roll and report at next meeting. Tenders for printing will be received next meeting. The clerk was instructed to procure four copies of the minutes, and to make use of the councilors, and two copies of the Municipal World for the use of the reeve and clerk. The next meeting takes place on the second Monday in March at 10 a.m. Changes will be made in the road lists. Interested parties should be present.

D. A. STEWART, Clerk.

ABBOTT ON MOODY

His Answer to the Question, "What Is the Secret of Mr. Moody's Extraordinary Power?"

The question which the Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott endeavors to answer in his article in the February number of the North American Review is, What is the secret of Mr. Moody's extraordinary power? This question is much asked by the intellectual discernment, the warm sympathy with religious aspiration and the lucid style which characterize his best work. He discovers the answer to his question in the spiritual hunger of the human soul for forgiveness of the errors of the past and for the opportunity for highest achievement to the future. And in the authority with which Mr. Moody ministered to those overmastering desires. Dr. Abbott represents the attraction exercised by the church as a marvelous phenomenon. He says:

"The question is much discussed in the press. Are the churches losing their power? More fundamental is the question. What is the secret of such power as they possess? The question is much discussed in ministerial circles. Why do not more people go to church? More fundamental is the question. What is the secret of the attraction which draws to the churches, with such regularity, so many men and women, of different stations and of varying degrees of moral and intellectual culture? From the point of view of a pure secularist, the phenomenon is an extraordinary if not an insoluble one. To the markets the people go to procure the food required to support physical life; to the goods stores for clothing necessary for comfort or contributing to luxury; to the theaters, wearied with their work, they go to forget their toil in an hour of amusement; to the art galleries and the concert rooms, attracted by esthetic desires to the schools, that in their youth they may obtain the results of the experience of the past, and so may live more intelligently, avoiding the blunders of their fathers. But why do they go to church?"

THE CENTURY MAGAZINE.

Mr. Ernest Seton-Thompson, the author of "Wild Animals," "Hans Knauss," and whose "Biography of a Grizzly" will soon be published by the Century Company, has written for The Century Magazine several articles on

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"I know not how the truth may be; I say it as 'twas said to me."

[The End.]

Light and Shade.

A man is happiest when he is giving a woman advice on a subject of which he knows nothing.

"What made you suppose that old Crossgrain had dyspepsia?"

"Why, I like to take a charitable view of everybody, and dyspepsia is the best excuse I could think of for his disposition."

Edith—When I get engaged, I don't intend to have any mystery about it. Ethel—I don't see how you can help it, dear. Everyone will regard it