

[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

POOR ISABEL.



Under the shining moon, like some fair spirit sleeping,
Upon a bed of moss her nightly watches keeping.

Sat Isabel:
The night dew gleamed upon the flowers
That sleeping waited sunny hours,
Which soon should chase their griefs away,
And cheer them with the welcome ray
They love so well.

Under the shining moon, her own sad griefs bewailing,
Sighing her heart away in sorrow unavailing.

Sat Isabel:
Like glittering pearls her teardrops fell
Upon her snowy breast, whose swell
Revealed a grief she dared not name:
A grief—the secret of her shame.
Oh! sad to tell.

Under the shining moon, alone and melancholy,
Bathed in a flood of light, so mild, so calm and holy.

Sat Isabel:
Her long bright hair neglected lay
Toss'd by the breeze like golden spray
Playing around a marble shore,
Whence sound of life comes never more.
Save sorrow's knell.

Under the shining moon, where once her arms entwined
The neck of him she loved, who proved, alas! unkind.

Sat Isabel:
On him her whole existence hung,
For him she wept, for him she sung:
Her virgin heart so pure and sweet,
She laid at her betrayer's feet.
She loved and fell.

Under the shining moon, where nightly sits the raven,
Perched on a rough-hewn stone, where some hand has graven
—Poor Isabel—
No more I see that fair form sleeping,
Her self and secret safe in keeping,
Are waiting 'neath that mossy cover,
All vain regrets and heartaches over.
Sweet maid, farewell.

Montreal.

JOHN HARTLEY.

KITES AND PIGEONS.

Part II.

(From London Society.)

CHAPTER VI.

BETWEEN THE ACTS.

TINSELL CASTLE had dined. The ladies were in the drawing-room; the gentlemen were discussing politics over old port and new filberts. Colonel Tippetts had made several efforts to throw off a score or two of his choicest platitudes; but he had found Mr. Thornton a stiff and uncompromising opponent.

The dining-room opened conveniently upon a conservatory; and old Pigeon was the first to avail himself of the Colonel's permission to go outside and have a cigar prior to joining the ladies in the drawing-room.

Old Pigeon was heartily tired of Society. The Colonel might have heard him saying so as he tried to light a cigar in a shady corner of the lawn. It was a fine, clear moonlight night, the weather almost as warm as July.

"I'm blown if I ain't precious sick of this," grumbled old Pigeon. "What with Colonel's speeches and Tommy a-losing that bet of a cool two hundred, as the Colonel called it—well, I says, says I, 'Let us go outside and smoke a quiet cigar.' Says Mr. Thornton, 'We must join the ladies.' 'By all means,' I says, and I slips out; and I only wish I was in the train a-going back to London."

"Hullo, governor! you've come out for a breather, eh?" said Tom Pigeon, with a half-burnt cigar in his mouth, and the ashes of it on his waistcoat. "Well, how do you like being in Society and in a castle?"

"Well, Tommy," said old Pigeon, "if I may be allowed to give my opinion, I'd sooner be at the Elephant and Castle, having a quiet pipe."

"Ah, governor," said Tom. "You are too old to get out of vulgar habits; you'll never alter."

"I don't want to," said the old man.

"I feel a bit of a squeamishness here," said Tom, laying his hand on his heart, "a sort of a no-howish feeling. Thornton says it is a regular out-and-out society pain—a sort of a fashionable pain—a twinge of the blazzy, Kite calls it."

"I don't like that Kite, Tommy," said the old man. "He ain't no good."

"Oh, he is not a bad sort," said Tom.

"He knows you was a-going to lose that bet," said the old man, pushing his penknife through the end of his cigar, and wishing he had a pipe.

"Never mind the bet, father," said Tom. "It will come right if you will only be a little careful; but what with your

talking of giving an inch and taking an ell, your Tooiey Street joke, and the Paris fashions, you do make it hard for a fellow to keep his equilibrium."

"What's that, Tommy?"

"Never mind what it is, dear old boy. It is not much I ask—sink the shop, and consider our new positions."

"Why, Tommy, there's a petticoat! It's that pretty little girl, the companion," said old Pigeon.

Tom intercepted the young lady.

She had a basket of flowers in her hand.

"Why, Jessie," he said, familiarly and heartlessly, "I thought you were inside yonder."

"Sir," said Jessie, "allow me to pass."

"How distant we are," said Tom. "Where have you been?"

"To say good-bye to my father, you mean, unkind thing," said Jessie.

"Gone on a journey, has he?" Tom asked, trying to maintain an air of nonchalant indifference.

"Yes. Allow me to pass, sir."

"Those are pretty flowers. Are they out of the Colonel's garden?"

"They are the last flowers from the farm which my father is leaving for ever. There! Now I hope you are satisfied," said Jessie, beginning to cry.

"Tom, you are a brute!" the old man exclaimed.

"Don't be angry, Jessie," said Tom.

"Angry? Pooh!" said Jessie, between crying and sobbing.

"I would scorn to be angry with such a person as you."

"Person!" said Tom. "Ain't I as good as anybody else?"

"Write to me and say you are coming to see me, and then never to come near me; and when you see me accidentally dare not speak to me because Colonel Tippetts says it is contrary to the rules of society to pay attention to a companion. Tom Pigeon, you are a donkey and a cruel man."

Tom put out his hand to take Jessie's arm.

"If you touch me I'll scream," said Jessie. "I have said what I wished to say, and now I am going inside there, as you call it."

Jessie swept by Tom and his father, as she spoke.

"Very well," said Tom, sticking his glass in his eye. "Depart, Miss Miller, depart!"

"Oh, you silly, stupid, stuck-up, ungrateful thing!" she said, scornfully turning round to fire off this last volley as she entered the castle.

"That's one for you, Tommy," said old Pigeon.

"Yes, yes," said Tom, staring at the door, which Jessie had closed behind her, "yes, that's my secret, governor, that pert party in petticoats. I said I would show you my secret. Before destiny called us to fame; before we vowed to go into Society, I loved that young woman. Yes, governor, your son was in love, and coming down here to pay a clandestine visit to his sweetheart, when you asked me to accompany you in the same direction."

"Lor!" said the old man. "What a curious thing!"

"The Colonel says," continued Tom, "if a young gent of fashion was to marry a companion, it would be death to him."

"You don't say so, Tommy!" exclaimed old Pigeon.

"Death," said Tom, solemnly. "But say no more about it; here comes Mr. Thornton, who is a real swell, bred and born."

"I am sent to bring in the Pigeons," said Mr. Thornton. "Messieurs the Pigeons, come in and be plucked. We are going to play loo."

"Now, none of your larks, Thornton," said Tom. "Larks, d'y'see?—play upon the word."

"Never mind playing upon the word, sir," said Thornton. "Come and be played upon."

"Mr. Thornton, let me ask you a question—won't detain you a moment. Have you a peculiar pain here?" (pointing to the region of the heart)—"a sort of a dull kind of a pain?"

"No; can't say that I have," Mr. Thornton replied.

"How long have you been in Society?" asked Tom, pathetically.

"Well, I hardly know—always," said Mr. Thornton, ejaculating, inwardly, "Poor, miserable Pigeon!"

"Ah, then you have got used to it—most extraordinary thing!" said Tom.

"You will get used to it also," said Thornton. "Eels get used to skinning, pigeons to plucking."

"Now look here," exclaimed Tom, letting his eye-glass fall, and throwing aside a fresh-lighted cigar, "I don't like that sort of remark. You know the rules of Society better than I do, and perhaps you are within those rules now, otherwise, Mr. Thornton, I would punch your head—I would, 'pon my soul! so there!"

"Bravo, Pigeon!" said Thornton, coolly patting the little fellow's back. "Give me your hand, Pigeon. I had no idea you were so plucky; we will be staunch friends."

Thornton took Tom's hand in his big, manly palm, and shook old Pigeon's son and heir until his teeth chattered.

"That's right," said the old man, "that's right. I hate quarrelling."

"And I hate humbug," said Tom. "Onward and above-board, is my sentiment; and a man with a hundred thousand at his banker's is not going to stand anybody's humbug—that's the way to say it."

"Quite right," said Mr. Thornton, planting himself between the two Pigeons, and taking an arm of each, "quite right. You are in the way to get a splendid lesson on humbug. Come along, gentlemen, come along."

CHAPTER VII.

A STORM IN SOCIETY.

If this were a drama instead of a mere story the last chapter would have been called, in the technical language of the practical dramatist, a carpenter's scene. It would have given reasonable time for the next act, a return to the drawing-room—an interior with which the reader is already acquainted.

Let the faithful historian present the scene as though the equally faithful reader sat by his side in the first row of the stalls and saw it.

Miss Tippetts sits at the piano, with her foot on the soft pedal, playing a new set of waltzes *pianissimo*, that no one may be disturbed by the music, and, also, that her mistakes may be less noticeable than they would be under the influence of the *forte* pedal. She is bending her head sentimentally to

the music, as if her soul were communing with the spirit of the sublime composer (a bandmaster in one of the line regiments), or the less ethereal part of her nature were threading the figures of the dreamy waltz in the arms of Mr. Tom Pigeon, Mr. Thornton, or whosoever else may be destined to call her his own.

At a card table, placed in the furthest corner of the room, sit Kite and the Rector of Fullpark, playing a harmless game of cribbage. Down near the footlights are Miss Austin, the Colonel, and several guests seated upon ottomans, and loolling in easy chairs, talking in a miscellaneous fashion upon a variety of questions, the whole of which the Colonel vainly endeavours to turn to political account, being invariably interrupted just as he is about to rehearse his hustings speech.

Presently there enter from the carpenter's scene—or, rather, speaking as historian, not as dramatist—from the garden, where that interesting incident of the last chapter has just taken place—presently, I say, there enter Mr. Thornton, Mr. Pigeon senior, and Mr. Pigeon junior. As they appear, it suddenly occurs to the Colonel to ask Miss Tippetts to sing "that little song."

"Do, my dear Clementina, sing that little song," says the Colonel.

"Papa, dear, don't ask me," says Miss Tippetts.

"Yes; do sing," say several voices all at once.

"Do oblige us," says Mr. Tom Pigeon.

"Then Jessie must accompany me," says Miss Tippetts, taking up a bundle of music, and beginning to search for "that little song."

"Where is Jessie Miller?" says the Colonel, looking round the room, and searching every corner through his eye-glass.

No one answers the question; but Jessie glides out of some unsuspected corner, and takes her seat at the piano to play the accompaniment to the song which Miss Clementina Tippetts was practising when this story opened.

"Generous creature to allow little Miller to accompany her—to share the honours of the evening—eh?" says the Colonel, in a low voice, to Tom.

"Yes, yes," Tom replies.

While the song is being sung and the accompaniment is being played, the Colonel, listening attentively to both all the time, motions Tom Pigeon to a card table, at which both seat themselves, opposite Kite and a solicitor of Inglenook, who has taken the rector's place.

Everybody applauds the song, and the card players cut for deal.

Old Pigeon thereupon remarks that his son Tom sings a good song.

"Mr. Pigeon junior is engaged," says the Colonel.

"But you have not commenced the game," says Thornton; "let us have Mr. Pigeon's song first."

"O yes, certainly," say several voices.

"Yes," says Tom, "anything to oblige, as Mr. Ketch said."

"You must not tell us what Mr. Ketch said," remarks Thornton, with his thoughts in the famous Pickwickian scene. Two persons, who had recently been to a London theatre, laugh very much at Thornton's mild joke.

"Is it the wish of the company that I should sing?" asks Tom.

"Vulgar person," says the Rector, aside to his neighbour.

"Certainly," says Mr. Thornton; "we are waiting."

"And so are we," says Kite, with the faintest indication of a wink at the Inglenook lawyer, who is shuffling a pack of cards, and mentally calculating the amount that may be dragged out of a young, vulgar, wealthy cockney in two hours.

"Perhaps it would not be out of the rules of Society if the companion," says old Pigeon, "was just to—(imitates, in dumb show, the act of playing an accompaniment on the piano)."

"Look after the governor," says Tom to Mr. Thornton; "I'm afraid the wine is getting into his head."

"Certainly," says the Colonel. "Miss Jessie Miller, will you kindly accompany Mr. Pigeon's song?"

Jessie says nothing, but sits down, determined to accompany him in half a dozen keys.

"Miss Jessie Miller will oblige," says old Pigeon, in a maudlin way, half aloud; "number ninety in the books."

"Governor, governor," remonstrates young Pigeon in an aside whisper, "will you or won't you?"

"What do you wish me to play?" asks Jessie, when Tom walks up to the piano.

"Don't be so hard on me," Tom says, quietly.

"I don't know it," says Jessie.

"This is the tune," says Tom, in desperation, humming a few bars of an impossible melody.

Jessie follows him on the instrument, and then asks if he is ready.

"Yes," he says he is; and in evidence thereof he breaks out into the following new and original ballad:—

"A toast! To our darlings at home—
Our wives and children dear;
Here's a health to those that we love,
Let us drink the toast with a cheer!"

"If I might be allowed," says Tom, "I would ask ladies and gentlemen to join in the chorus."

"Very good," says the Colonel, smiling; "charming—so very natural."

"We will take the lead from you, Mr. Pigeon," says Thornton; whereupon Tom repeats the last verse as a chorus, and the Colonel's guests think it a very humorous thing to "join in," which they do quite pleasantly.

Tom continues the song with renewed vigour, his father nodding and beating time to the tune.

"When the world is frowning and dark,
And friends grow fickle and cold;
Her fond smile shall brighten the clouds,
And tinge them with colours of gold."

"Admirable sentiment, charming moral," says the Colonel, inviting old Pigeon, by an easy gesture, to join the card table, to which Mr. Pigeon senior responds.

Everybody intimates that the song has charmed them very much. Mr. Tippetts takes Tom's arm, compliments him upon his vocal powers, and conducts him to the card tables, where cutting in and cutting out goes on at once to the evident satisfaction of all the parties concerned.

"Happy pair the Pigeons," says Mr. Thornton to Miss