

[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

AN ANNIVERSARY.

I.

There's a day of life that I love best—
Early May with a touch of June.
Blue sky spreading east and west.
And a river humming a rugged tune:

II.

The fresh breeze bears the breath of the blossoms
Over the way in the woods all wet.
The birds with song are swelling their bosoms—
'Tis a year since last they met.

III.

And 'twas just a year since I met my queen—
April then with a touch of May—
And lost my heart to her hair's bright sheen.
Her virginal eyes, and her queenly way.

IV.

I had marked the dew drops on the leaves
Shaken from two to one with a sigh.
So quickly closing one scarce perceives
How the one drop grows or the two drops die:

V.

And was it a wind, or was it a sigh,
Or a tender tone that touched us so?
Our hour of parting was drawing nigh.
And two hearts breaking that one must go—

VI.

Well, how it happened I cannot tell,
But our hearts like dew-drops clasped and closed
On the leaf of life we love so well.
And one heart henceforth, safe reposed.

VII.

O day of life that I love best—
Early May with a touch of June.
Blue sky arching east and west.
And the river humming a hurried tune.

VIII.

Will you ever again, as you come in May,
Bring us a blossom more all-complete
Than you brought to us that perfect day
When two full hearts rushed out to meet.

IX.

And loving arms were intertwined
And kisses lavished on brow and lip.
And tender voices whispered kind.
And life was a joy for each to sip?

X.

O heart, O love, do you love that day?
Early May with a touch of June.
Blue sky vaulting the broadening bay.
And the river humming a happy tune.

MARTIN J. GRIFFIN.

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HUGH DAMER'S LAST LEGER.

BY MISS M. E. BRADGON.

CHAPTER I.

"Track! he hath had in him which gentlemen have."

I don't suppose there are many people now-a-days who remember Hugh Damer. Not that I would imply that he existed at a period beyond the memory of middle-aged mankind. The time that I am writing of is barely fifteen years old. But the memories of men are short, and every decade sees the rise and fall of new heroes. The career of a man of the world is not much longer than the reign of those later Caesars who were polished off so quickly in the days when Rome was going down hill and the Roman Empire a nice little lot to be put up to auction. Picture to yourself, says De Quincey, any man going home to dinner with that little lot in his pocket!

So I say, advisedly, that perhaps there are few now-a-days who care to remember the brief summer time of Hugh Damer's life; and yet he was a great man in his time—that is to say, great in certain circles—and made his mark after a certain fashion.

We were contemporaries at Oxford, but not of the same college. I was a Balliol man, Damer was at Christchurch; but we were fast friends notwithstanding. I think Hugh indulged freely in every kind of dissipation fashionable at that period; but he never got into any vulgar scrapes—no painting chapel doors a bright scarlet, or nailing up an obnoxious don's oaks, or anything of that kind; and in spite of wine parties without number, hunting all through the season, not a little high play late of nights "under the rose," and various other amusements of a somewhat uproarious order, Hugh contrived to distinguish himself in athletics, and to take his degree in a very creditable manner. When or how he read no one could ever discover, but it was said that he could do without sleep for a fortnight at a time, and that very often after shutting his door upon his friends at two a.m., he would tie a wet towel round his head and go in for divinity till early chapel, where he made his appearance fresh as a rose after his matutinal shower-bath.

He was blessed with a superb constitution, and a marvellous capacity for work or pleasure. He was, indeed, a man who could scarcely help living hard and fast—a man to whom any monotonous or sluggish form of existence would have been simply unendurable. In appearance he was a splendid fellow—tall, broad-shouldered, blue-eyed, and chestnut-haired, with a sunny look in his face that was, for most people, irresistible. He had the air of a man who must needs command fortune—win the race of life in a canter—indeed, it was

almost impossible to associate the idea of trouble or sorrow of any kind with Hugh Damer.

After leaving Oxford I lost sight of my friend for some years. I went to the bar, and my own life was a great deal too busy for the perpetual frivolities of the fashionable world. I saw nothing of Hugh, but I heard of him—heard of him as one of the most distinguished among the gilded youth of that day. He was of a good old Yorkshire family, and had a large fortune, which, according to the report of his friends, had come to him unfettered at his majority. People told me that he was spending this royally, and, at the rate he was living, could not be expected to hold out long.

"He's a fine, capital fellow—a first-rate fellow," one of these prudent observers said to me, "but there never was much stay in him. He does everything too fast—runs away with the race for the first half mile, and comes in nowhere at the finish. People are afraid of him, somehow. He might have doubled his fortune by a brilliant marriage more than once; but he lost his chance, dished himself by some mad folly that no man but he would have dreamt of. He's a dangerous fellow, and women feel it, and can't bring themselves to trust him."

Thus argued our common friend, with a serious countenance, and a deprecatory elevation of the shoulders. I was sorry to hear such an opinion of Damer, for I liked him with all my heart, and had hoped in a brilliant future for him.

It was not very long after this, just at the close of the London season, when I came across my old friend quite unexpectedly at a West-end club of which I was a member, but whose gorgeous saloons my shadow rarely darkened. I was a busy man and prosperous withal, my prosperity entirely dependent upon unremitting industry.

A late August twilight was closing in, and the lamps were glimmering here and there in the shadowy streets. The fashionable quarter of the town had a dreary look, the great rooms of the club a palpable air of desolation.

I went into the reading-room; there was only one man there, and he rose from one of the luxurious armchairs and threw down a periodical with an audible groan as I entered. Suddenly he started, stared at me with all his might, and came striding across the room to me, and in the next moment both my hands were in the muscular grip of Hugh Damer.

"My dear Norris, my dear old friend," he cried, in his loud, hearty way, "I am so rejoiced to see you—so glad, upon my soul, now—I can't tell you how glad. I have been wishing to come across you for the last half-dozen years."

"And yet you knew where to find me all the time, Hugh; and the Temple, if remote from the civilised regions of the West, is not a pilgrimage utterly beyond the capacity of friendship."

"Hit away, old chap. I deserve the reproach. But, you see, I knew you were always busy—heard of you from every one as devoted to your profession, a perfect slave to it in fact, and I am such an idle beggar, what could I do but bore you if I came? And then one's life goes so fast somehow. I declare to you, Fred, I have seldom had an hour that I could call my own since I left Oxford. I seem to have existed in a whirlpool, an actual maelstrom spinning me round and round and sucking me down in spite of myself. And now, tell me all your news, dear boy; what you have been doing, and what you are going to do, and all the rest of it."

We sat down opposite each other at a little table in one of the windows, and by the faint grey light of the fading day I saw that my friend was not looking by any means as well as I should have wished to see him look. The handsome face was wan and haggard, and there were lines about the eyes and mouth that should scarcely have appeared in so young a countenance.

"I'm afraid you've been ill, Hugh," I said to him by and by. "You seem to have lost that perennial bloom for which you were renowned at Oxford."

"Ill! Oh no," he answered, carelessly. "I've not been ill—worried a little occasionally, that's all. But, now listen to me, Fred, old fellow, and if you wish to preserve my regard you must fall into my way of thinking; and I assure you that regard of mine is a very deep feeling, though it's rather backward in showing itself. Now, you own to having a clear fortnight before you after the last of this month, in which you may kick up your heels and dispose of yourself as it seems fit to you, without let or hindrance to your prospects of wearing silk by-and-by. And you talk of devoting your leisure to certain nameless cads of your acquaintance—of the genus swell, I suppose—who have got a moor down somewhere in the north, and want you to go and assist them in the murder of innocent grouse. Throw over the unknown cads, dear old boy, and come down to me. September is a great time for us Yorkshiremen. I can give you no end of partridges, and my place is only fifteen miles from Doncaster. Come to Churleigh Wood, Fred, and spend your holiday with an old friend. I shall consider it an especial favour if you say 'Yes'—

and—and it may be the last time I shall be able to ask you."

"What do you mean by that, Hugh?" I demanded, alarmed by the sudden gravity of his tone.

"Never mind what I mean, Fred. Life is full of changes. The present is all a man can call his own, and so on, *Carpe diem*. Come, dear boy; is it to be yes or no?"

"I should be a churl if I said 'No,' when you flatter me by seeming really anxious to have me," I answered; "so the gentlemen unknown, who are really very good fellows in their way, shall go overboard, and I'll inflict my society upon you for the first fortnight in September. Shall you be alone at Churleigh?"

"Alone!" He laughed aloud at the absurdity of the notion, and I was very glad to hear the old frank laugh again. "Alone, Fred! why I have never been alone in my own house since I became master of it. We're sure of a houseful; some nice people, of course, and perhaps a few nasty ones—but you'll put up with the bores for the sake of friendship."

"I am not afraid of meeting bores at Churleigh," I answered. "There is not much affinity between you and that species, I think, Damer."

"There is one of my guests I fancy you will like," he said musingly, and with a tender smile lighting up his haggard face.

"A lady, Hugh? Your face tells me that!"

"Yes, a lady; but I will say no more till you have seen her."

We parted soon after this, I promising to be with my friend on the 1st. He had occasion to go down to the old place some days earlier, in order to be ready for possible arrivals.

(To be continued.)

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TALES OF THE LINKS OF LOVE.

BY ALEXANDER SOMERVILLE.

LILLYMERE.

CHAPTER XXIII.

OUT OF THE WHIRLPOOL, AGAIN IN THE TORRENT—
IN PERIL NIGHTS AND DAYS—UP THE FACE OF
THE CRAIG, A HUNDRED FEET VERTICAL, THEY
HOIST THE SENATOR'S DAUGHTER.—THE DUKE
AND PINKERTON FOLLOW.—THE BRAVE OLD
BOY WHO DELIVERS THEM, WHERE IS HE? WHO
IS HE?

Long before nightfall the helpless three in the boat had redressed their disturbed senses sufficiently to comprehend positions, interchange signals with people on shore, and observe that the central vortex, around which the boat circumscribed, was nearer and farther away by turns; changing about every forty minutes. It opened a cavernous gullet drinking down floods in which a boat, if near, would go as a straw; then it filled to a level, having a brief term of repose, seven minutes the lady calculated by her watch. Then it bulged up discharging its subterranean gorge for a space of thirty minutes, during which the circles of the boat's track widened.

Guided by observation Pinkerton headed out when the vortex drank in; and headed in when the flood discharged.

Conrad, having his pocket telescope, gave it to the lady, who descried one of a group of people in a gulch of the cliff to be her mother. Then she told her own name, Sylvia Pensylidine. The Duke, in exchange, gave his name, but only as plain Conrad Mortimer.

Pinkerton remained silent about names. He despised the young woman for sailing the air in crinoline and causing this dire misadventure. And the desertion of Clyne; his leaping overboard to swim ashore, enraged him at Canadian people; as did the broken car at the country which grew the wood. He did not yet know Clyne was drowned; nor the supposed treachery of a man, not Canadian born, who designed the oars to be traps of death. Canada the country, its timber, and boat builders, Pinkerton consigned figuratively to the diabolical abyss which seemed to have a mouth disagreeably near; and proposed they should now hazard another run in the rapids. "Not on my own responsibility," said he, "but in the lady and you desire it, Conrad, I'll head out of this, and chance whatever lies before us."

The lady expressed belief that help would come; founding that assurance, probably, on sight of her mother, friends, and so many people. Conrad Mortimer's judgment inclined to Pinkerton's suggestion; but he preferred to trust the instincts of this child of fate, faith, hope, rather than the impetuous courage of one who cursed on the very threshold of the gates of doom.

They were thus two to one; a decisive majority which Pinkerton obeyed.

A man came down the gulch to near the shore, speaking through a sea trumpet:

"Helm a-hoy! Keep in the circle she rides in now. Headed out, you go away in the torrent. Headed in, you get in Hurly Hole. Cheery, my heartiest! Help soon. Helm a port a point and half; steady at that; cheery, my heartiest!"

This was Captain Clapper Hayvern, an old sailor met lately, who this season ran a steam yacht on the lakes, and had, two hours before, come up the river as far as Swush Whirl. The yacht could not pass higher.

After Clapper's arrival at the pool, he attempted to connect with the boat from shore. Lines were thrown, but they fell short. Cork floats were launched, but eddies repelled them. Kites soared and fell, alighting where not desired.

As news of people alive in the whirlpool spread towards evening, crowds of tourists, residents of the townships and villages; squires, farmers, field-workers, all who could leave home, and had feet to run, horses to ride, wheels to drive, came running, riding, driving on hurricanes of wheels, in tornadoes of dust, through the devious rural ways; on Canada side, on York State side. Gathered on the cliffs, all kinds of telescopes, and thousands of eyes were directed on the boat and vortex of doom.

"Who are they? What are they? How came they into the torrent?"

Such the questions to which but few could reply by saying who they were. The earliest to be recognized and publicly named was the lady, her friends having hurried from the Falls in carriages.

"Blown over the cliff, you say; rising as a balloon, descending as a parachute! Who is she?"

"Sylvia Pensylidine; daughter of the Hon. Stephen Pensylidine, United States Senator."

"And the fellows, who are they?"

"Don't know. Strangers, I guess."

On the following morning came a recognition. Appalling sight to see! A dead body, face up, floated in wake of the boat which still retained its place in the circle with the living freight; the body of Rasper Clyne.

With the first clear daylight, they in the Lundy craft discovered a solitary horseman standing on point of a projecting rock, nearer the surging water than any other person had approached. Two large dogs stood, or crouched on the very brink in advance of the horse's feet. He was to windward and up stream about fifty yards, so that calling, when he saw the dead body floating, they heard his words: "Rasper Clyne, dead? When did he quit the boat?"

From which they inferred that if any one knew, everybody did not, that Clyne leapt into the river to swim and save himself.

Pinkerton, at the stern, saw what the two sitting forward did not, that the dead man followed close in the boat's wake. Wherefore, he again submitted the proposal to head out, and hazard another run in the torrent. Did not like that dead man so near.

Conrad deterred to the young lady, who, still seeing her mother and friends, expected rescue. And Pinkerton being but one deferred to the two. He now despised Sylvia less for sailing in air on crinoline and descending as destiny to men, in shape of a parachute. He began to respect her for courage, or, for a voice, which through all the gloomy night sounded cheerfully. Said he to himself:

"Suppose she had whined and cried, howled and been hideous, I'd have thought of steering the boat right down the hole. But Sylvia Pensylidine seems a girl with life in her, and with some to spare."

He therefore yielded, this day as the day before, to the opinion of two against one, and continued to steer in the circle of volition. All three very hungry.

Presently the lone horseman shouted. Looking in his direction they saw his outstretched arm pointing to the vortex. Turning eyes there the body of Rasper Clyne was seen approaching the gullet nearer and nearer at every whirling circuit. Then it tilted, head down, feet projecting in the air an instant, and disappeared.

At which the horseman yelled, and yelled, the dogs barking; his horse pawing the rock and prancing.

Still the man yelled; spurring and whipping the steel; urging to a leap. The dogs furious, as if restraining horse and rider from plunging in the fearful flood.

The man dismounted. He passed his hands over the horse's eyes. He smoothed hair and skin; and breathed in the nostrils. He took the dogs one by one, handled them, fondled them, passed hands on their heads mesmerically, as on the horse. Breathed in their nostrils; and they were quiet. Horse and dogs alike docile. Then he muttered:

"So she mesmerized noble Dunderdyker, and the dogs, True and Trust. And has been talking with them, in mesmeric witchery, all the way from above Chippewa, a good twenty miles from here. But I've now got to the power of warlock as she to the craft of witch."

He mounted. Spoke to the dogs, each singly, bidding it look at, and swim for, the boat;