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TWICE WEDDED.

A True Story.

On the crowded soil of Europe, scarcely a tree or rock but has it story, and many a stream far too small for ordinary maps keeps in its liquid murmur an echo of joys more brilliant, and of sorrows more tragical, than ever were invented by the most sportive fancy. The rapid Mehaigne is one of these.—Taking its rise between Gembloux and Namur, it crosses a district called Hesbaye, and joins the Meuse above Huy, at the faubourg of Statte. Its scenery is delightful. Picturesque villages, waving forests, rich meadows, and the ruins of chateaux and castles, present a succession of pictures which linger long in the memory. Among the most interesting of the latter is that of Moha, a single dismantled tower, standing upon a hill which rises abruptly from the valley. Luxuriant ivy hangs about it in a heavy mass, binding together its tottering stones, defying the winds with which it plays, and crowning with its garlands the home of the youthful chatelaine, whose history is perhaps the most touching of all those which illustrate the course of this dashing river.

About the close of the twelfth and beginning of the century, Albert, Count of Moha, was the most powerful noble of the Hesbaye. His wife was Gertrude, daughter of the Count de Looz, and they had two sons, whom they trained to all that was chivalrous in body, mind, and heart. Unfortunately, the Count took them to a grand tournament at Andenne, given by Baldwin of Flanders before his departure for Palestine. There were gathered the knighthood of Flanders, Brabant, Hainault, and Liege, and the enthusiasm both of actors and spectators was raised to the highest pitch. Day and night the boys dwelt upon the scene, impatient to imitate deeds so highly applauded. They were admirable equestrians, but had never been permitted to handle any warlike weapons.—Now, however, they were determined to disobey, and forgetful of even the most ordinary precautions, tilted against each other without defensive armor, and with sharpened lances. Skillful in managing their magnificent steeds, the best in the stables, they met fairly in mid career, and buried their lances in each other's bosom.

The stricken parents gave themselves up for a time to devouring grief. They participated in no amusements, and all their occupations had reference to the calamity which had befallen them. The spot where the fatal encounter had taken place was the prettiest on their domains—an amphitheatre nearly surrounded by the Mehaigne, whose banks were covered with woods, here and there interrupted with some foliage. Here they erected two stone crosses with suitable inscriptions. These have crumbled away, but are replaced by a tree which still marks their site. They also built an abbey, enclosing a tomb to the memory of the adventurous youths.

Hopeless for an heir, the Count looked about for a successor to his estate, and notwithstanding the repulsive qualities of Henry, Duke of Brabant, his sister's son, he commenced a negotiation with him, which however failed. He then resolved to give his property to the Church, and agreed with the Prince Bishop of Liege to make the transfer provided he would pay the sum of fifty thousand marks, and promise that if a child should be born to him, it should inherit, but holding the province as a fief of the Church. This cession was made at the altar of St. Lambert at Liege, by offering a green turf and the bough of a tree.

But he regretted his haste shortly after, when an infant Gertrude came to brighten with her smiles the gloomy castle of Moha. Her mother died soon, and her father followed eight years after. Upon his deathbed he summoned Ferry, Duke of Lorraine, his kinsman and early friend, and Hugues de Pierrepoint, Prince Bishop of Liege; warned them against the arts of the cruel and avaricious Brabanter, solemnly commended his daughter to their care, and betrothed her to Theobald, the Duke's eldest son.

The duke immediately withdrew his ward from the doting domestics who had done their best to spoil her, and carried her to Metz, that curious old city, like some vast church, the asylum of the poor, the sorrowful and the proscribed. With its mingled German and French elements, its historical relics, its memories of Charlemagne and his son as they appeared at their grand autumnal hunts, its strangely diversified population, and its conflicting customs, its study would have been full of interest to the child had this been permitted; but nothing so vulgar was possible in the reigning abbey of Remiremont. To be Dame de Remiremont, the abbess must have been noble on both sides for two centuries; and when her little charge went abroad, it was amidst such waving of plumes, such fluttering of scarfs, and such glittering of jewels, as brightened into one undistinguishable flush of color the narrow dingy streets, and their ambitiously lofty houses. But every accomplishment demanded by the age, was imparted to her, and her lessons were seldom disturbed by anything but the recurrence of feasts and fasts, and some slight penance for a loud laugh, an ungraceful movement or an unpracticed song. Sometimes, a faithful vassal begged audience, a messenger arrived with complaints and petitions, and now and then the duchess Agnes visited her with a splendid train. Then, indeed, whispers of the world without agitated the not unpleasing monotony of the convent. Thus, she learned by snatches, the fearful history of the war of the succession of Moha. Her father was but too true a prophet, and her cousin Henry lost no time in demanding her patrimony as his right. The Bishop of Liege, who also claimed the county as a reversionary fief of the church, took up arms in its defence. At first, Henry was successful. At the head of twenty thousand men he ravaged the province of Liege, surprised the city on the 3d of May, 1212, and in four days made himself master of the place. It was pillaged, and would have been fired, but for the oath of fidelity taken by the clergy and people. From this the Pope released them, and on the 13th of October, 1213, the Liegois, fought the great battle of Warde des Steppes. The duke was utterly routed, and was obliged to subscribe the most humiliating conditions. He surrendered his sons as hostages, and walked uncovered and barefooted from the gate of St Walburge in Liege, to the Cathedral of St. Lambert opposite the Bishop's palace. These horrors spoiled Gertrude's pleasure for a time, and rendered her absent and thoughtful; but every means was tried to divert her, and she resumed her studies with her usual obedient care. At the age of fifteen, she appeared at Duke Ferry's court, where she shone the the loveliest and best of that brilliant band, which his duchess had drawn around her.

Among the knights who sought her favor by every possible exhibition of gallanty, was Thibaut the Fourth, Count of Champagne, called the "Song-maker," the most celebrated of *trouverres*. Educated at the Court of Philip Augustus, while his mother Blanche of Castille governed his hereditary dominions he had become skillful in every exercise suitable to his high birth, and the prospect of a throne, to which he was elevated upon the death of his maternal uncle, Sancho, King of Navarre. Handsome in person and gentle in manner, none suspected him to be governed by impulse rather than principle, or dreamed of the hollowness of the bosom, which seemed to throb alone to the finest sentiments. For a time, Gertrude was saved from his blighting selfishness. Amidst the delirium of a fast ripening love, she resolutely banished him from her thoughts, and received with a kindness which she strove to make real, the betrothed of her childhood, her cousin Theobald. He was in character all that Thibaut appeared. "One of the handsomest men of the time," and what was much better, brave, generous, humane and true, he loved her entirely; and she soon found in his unfeigned devotion a calm happiness, far superior to the wild tumult of feeling which had previously agitated her.

Scarcely were the wedding ceremonies concluded, when Duke Ferry died, and Theobald became sovereign of Lorraine. The young couple were looking forward to a tranquil reign over the smiling country which acknowledged their sway, and without proposing any overturning of existing laws, pleased themselves with laying many plans for ameliorating the condition of their people. But short and stormy was destined to be the life which promised so much. The Emperor Otho and John of England united ted for the destruction of Philip Augustus, and as a grand feudatory of the Empire, Theobald fought at the fatal battle of Bouvines, which resulted in the entire overthrow of the Imperialists. All that he could do was to secure a retreat, after the day was lost. Treachery had been busy during this disastrous struggle, and Frederick, King of the Romans, forgetful of every tie, seized Roscheim, which formed a part of Lorraine—Scarcely stopping to bid adieu to his wife, the Duke hastened toward the town; but Frederick suddenly appearing with his whole force of cavalry, compelled him to take refuge in Arance, which he besieged. He also called upon the Countess of Champagne to join him. Notwithstanding her relationship to Theobald, she did not scruple to aid his enemies, and with the Count of Bar took Nancy, pillaged and burned it. Surrounded and hard passed, the Duke was compelled to yield, purchasing his liberty by base concessions; but after obtaining all that he desired the faithless King carried him captive to Wurzburg, where he kept him prisoner.

During this time, Gertrude with her mother-in-law were shut up in Metz by German troops. There were tried skill and courage within the walls, but the garrison was insufficient, and no provision had been made for a siege. In this emergency the duchess applied to Conrad, Bishop of Metz, the fast friend of her husband. He was immensely rich, and finally agreed to pay to Frederick twelve hundred livres for the duke's ransom.

Once more a vision of home rose before the unfortunate prince. As he travelled blithely and rapidly along, he thought nature had never been so gay, life had never been so dear. There was no one to apprise him of the murderous hatred of Frederick, no one to warn him that his emissary followed his every movement, threading forests, crossing rivers, skulking in the darkness along the highway, ever watchful, ever seeking the moment for a certain blow. He passed the Rhine, and his vigilance and that of his attendants relaxed. Almost within the shadow of his own walls, what need was there for caution? Stopping for night at a hostelry, he was surprised by the appearance of a lady of rare beauty, riding a palfrey, and attended by a train of servants, which no less than her own carriage, bespoke her wealth and rank. She was apparently astonished to and guests at the inn, but the duke insisted upon her remaining, invited to his table, and served her with his accustomed gallantry.—Sparkling in conversation, accustomed to the world, full of anecdotes, she prolonged the conversation, and then pledged her entertainer, exchanging cups with him, and giving him one into which she had adroitly dropped a slow but sure poison. Stillness settled upon the place—soldier and officer slept.—An occasional snarling bark, or the pawing of an impatient war-horse alone broke the silence. No guards had been set, and the fascinating guest softly sped away, to tell the perfidious Frederick how well she had performed her task. Theobald pursued his journey tormented by an inward fire, his strength wasted, and he died soon after rejoining his idolized wife.

Rejecting the solicitations of her friends in Lorraine, Gertrude returned to Moha, where she sorrowed deeply for the affectionate and indulgent husband who had divined her very thoughts in the anxious wish to please her. Yet the diligent performance of her duties as chatelaine afforded her quiet and she began to find repose in the lovely valley, amidst her obedient and admiring vassals, when Thibaut again presented himself, this time as a declared lover. He sang the songs which he had inscribed on the walls of his palace, surrounded by eastern blossoms, symbolical of the tropical fervor of their amorous flow. He called out all the resources of his wit, told his gayest tales, described the courts he had visited, and the wise and great with whom he had been familiar.

As he sat by her side, too, he modulated his voice to the old familiar tones and let its accents speak for him of the years gone by. Gertrude was won, and departed with him to Provence, the land of music and poetry. Its capital, Aix, could boast little of its architectural splendor, but it was pleasantly situated in a sort of basin, enclosed by fertile hills, on which wheat fields alternated with luxuriant vineyards, and groves of almond and olive trees. Fete followed fete, banquet succeeded banquet. Every one was captivated by the lovely countess, and the whole kingdom summoned its chivalry to do her honor. Sometimes, indeed, she would gladly have retired from the magnificent etiquette of the court, and have made her life less a pageant and more an outgrowth of the affections. But her husband liked it, and she smilingly said, "By and by he will become more serene, and then we shall settle into a deeper happiness." Alas! that anticipated "by and by" never came to Gertrude. Thibaut, selfish and inconstant, wearied of his bride. His love was a thing to be worn upon his helmet, to be embroidered upon his scarf, to be put into set phrase and sung to his lyre, not to be cherished sacredly as the best gift of heaven. He repudiated her upon the plea of consanguinity, and broken, hearted, she sought once more the haunts of her childhood, and the castle of Moha. Vain to her were the gentle influences shed kindly upon her from the external world—vain were the kind attentions offered her by nobles of the Hesbaye—vain was the tender thoughtfulness of her vassals, who, delighted at her return, strove by every art to win her from her corroding grief—vain was the possession of a name venerated by four provinces and a conscience full of peace. The star of her life had set in the clouds of cruelty and deceit, and she sank into the tomb in the very flush of her youth and beauty, being only twenty-one years of age.

Pat Doolan, at Inkerman, bowed his head to a cannon-ball which whizzed past about six inches above his bear-skin. "Faith," says Pat, "one never loses anything by politeness."

People may talk and write of progress and reform, but unless actions sanction the talk, they may as well remain silent.

The Eruption of Vesuvius.

The terrible eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which commenced on the 26th of May, was still active at the latest advices. The following extracts from the correspondence of the London Times show the character and progress of the eruption:—

NAPLES, May 31.

Since Saturday, the eruption has proceeded with constantly increasing violence, and has presented at night a more and more magnificent spectacle. In my last letter I mentioned that there issued from the great basis of fire in the Atrio a single stream of lava, which, after a tortuous course, was descending the declivity of the mountain. This stream has continued its course, varying in breadth according to the accidents of the ground, and seems now to direct itself to a point between Portici and Torre del Grece, but much nearer the latter than the former. It approaches close to the scattered farmhouses which lie above the towns at the foot of the mountain, many of which it can scarcely fail to destroy.

In the afternoons of Saturday and Sunday two other streams of lava broke out of the great basin, and are descending the mountains towards the neighborhood of Portici. These streams seem to follow the directions of ravines, which run nearly parallel to the ridge on which the Observatory and the Hermitage stand. These buildings have been hitherto saved from submersion by the lava by their great elevation, the fluid naturally following the direction of the lower ground at either side of them.

Last night the spectacle was peculiarly grand imposing. The lava was poured in increasing quantity along each of the streams already established, and being in a high state of ignition scence presented a peculiarly splendid appearance.

The Hermitage, which is close to the great basin of craters and rivers of lava, is approached by a tolerably good carriage road, and as may be supposed, hundreds of vehicles of every description, from the calecha of the millionaire to the humble coricole, are collected towards midnight. Donkey parties abound, of which ladies do not fear to form a part.

June 1.—The state of the mountain last night was nearly the same on the night preceding the eruption, perhaps, being a little less violent. The great streams of lava already described, continue to flow slowly in the same direction. Part of the extraordinary splendor of the spectacle on Sunday night was due to the burning of a forest, over which the lava passed. The Neapolitans congratulate themselves on the circumstance of the lava having been directed into so many different streams; for if, as in former eruptions, it had all been thrown into one channel, the destruction which must have ensued would have been tremendous.

The lava begins where it did in 1855.—At the end of one of the streams of lava, that on the Castellamare side of the Hermitage, there has been a ceremony, I suppose to stop the lava. There were a saint and some priests in attendance.

European Intelligence.

GREAT BRITAIN.

On the 17th, in the House of Lords, the Bishop of Oxford presented a petition from Jamaica touching the Spanish slave trade, and called the attention of the House generally to the question. He contended that the present threatening aspect of affairs in the West was occasioned by having so long permitted Spain to break her treaty engagements, and continue Cuba as a provocative of dangerous extremities. If Spain would at once give up the slave trade and convert Cuba into a colony employing free African labor, the desire which many persons in the United States expressed to annex that island would be entirely removed. Lord Brougham supported the petition and strongly condemned the policy of Spain.

Earl Malmesbury deeply regretted that the efforts of the English to suppress the slave trade hadn't been seconded by other nations. With regard to the differences, he had admitted to the American Government—as a question of international law—that England was not entitled to insist upon the right of search; but he had also put it strongly to the American Government whether they would continue to permit their flag to be prostituted to the worst purposes. He had urged the necessity of an ocean police and that some understanding should be come to between the different maritime nations which would enable nationality of a vessel to be clearly verified without any breach of international law. He had every reason to believe from a conversation with the American Minister that some such arrangement might be come to. With regard to Spain, it was notorious that hitherto the moral support which she had received from England had materially aided her resisting the wishes of the United States to annex Cuba; but if she still persisted in supporting the slave trade it was highly probable the present amity of Britian would be exchanged for indifference.

Earl Grey was sorry there should be any attempt to renew the slave trade, and thought the United States and France solely responsible for its renewal. With regard to the question of international law, so far as he understood it, an American vessel filled with slaves might leave Africa without England being able to interfere with her notwithstanding a perfect knowledge of her character.

Earl Aberdeen said this definition of international law was quite correct. Others spoke on the subject, when the petition was ordered to lie on the table.

In the Commons, a farther debate took place on the India resolutions, when it was agreed that Government should withdraw the remaining resolutions and introduce a regular India bill, which was forthwith done and the debate was fixed for the following week.

Mr. Berkeley asked whether, seeing that the marines and small-armed men of the American navy are armed with breach-loading rifles, by which each man can fire three times for one from an opponent armed with the old weapon, any steps had taken to place the naval forces of Britian upon an equality.

Sir J. Pakington said that trials were going on, and when the result was ascertained measures would be adopted in accordance with them.

On the 18th, in the House of Lords, the proceedings were unimportant.

In the Commons, Mr. Fitzgerald, in reply to the inquiry whether the Plenipotentiaries to China had been restricted in their powers, said there was no truth in the state to that effect. The Plenipotentiaries had full discretionary powers to negotiate at Canton or Pekin, or proceed north as they thought fit.

A debate then took place on the American embroglio.

Mr. Fitzgerald, in reply to Mr. Brighton, said the Government had received no further information in reference to the alleged outrages. It was quite possible the commanders of some vessels had exceeded their duties, and if they had, Government would be ready to make ample and frank acknowledgement. It was obvious that cases which had been published were grossly exaggerated. In proof of this, he read several cases; and added that the American flag had been abused by those who were not Americans for the vilest purposes. He had entire confidence that when those circumstances were known, and when the disposition of this country was known, all difficulties would be amicably arranged.

The Government acting under the advices of the Crown lawyers, had given up the right of search and of visit in time of peace, but the Government had invited America to join in maintaining an Ocean Police. It was under consideration whether the squadron should not be withdrawn from the Cuban waters and replaced on the coast of Africa, and stringent instructions had been sent to commanders of cruisers enjoining the strictest prudence and caution.

Mr. Roebuck thought the statement of Mr. Fitzgerald was most conciliatory and satisfactory, but this disposition had not been intimated by America, and the language used in the American Congresss was unworthy of a great country. They had always assumed that England wished to insult them, but he hoped they would now learn she had no such design. Lies had been told in American papers for the purpose of pandering to bad habits, and he would not believe that the commanders had done anything to call for the censure of our own government.

Lord John Russell said that had the Government conducted the affair in the temperate sprit manifested by the Under Secretary, there could be no doubt that the House of Commons would not hesitate to give them support.

Lord Palmerston said that cruisers had been sent into the Cuban waters in consequence of the wishes of Parliament, deputations to the Government; and also in compliance with the wish of the American government themselves. He hoped her Majesty's Government would urge the American government send out cruisers to prevent that abuse of the flag of the United States which had been the cause of the difficulty.

Mr Disraeli said the best despatch that could be sent to America was the claim and dispassionate spirit in which the House of Commons was discussing the question.—He added that the American government had been invited to engage in measures to protect each country against the abuse of its flag. He had great confidence that the existing misconceptions would speedily disappear.

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