Just Impediment!

By Richard Pryce,

AUTHOR OF "AN EVIL SPIRIT," "THE UGLY STORY OF MISS WETHERBY," ETC.

CHAPTER XVI.

LOVE AND DEATH.

A couple of days later there came for Esther a note from Later Heron, asking her to go round to the white house to tea. "Tell Mrs. Wilton that if she will trust you to me I will send the carriage for you at about four. Bring plenty of music. If you have an engagement fix another day for yourself." But Esther had no engagement that could not be postponed; accordingly, when Lady Heron's brougham arrived it found her ready.

Esther dressed well. She took a pride in the perfect simplicity of what she wore. Her tailor's and her milliner's bills would have shown what the plain smartness of her clothes meant—but the effect was always simple. Her theories justified her extravagance. On this particular afternoon she dressed with more than usual care.

Lady Heron, as she greeted her, told her that she had the gift of knowing what to wear. "And you of pretty speeches," said Esther.

"You have brought plenty of songs, I hope," said Lady Heron, "and you won't mind an audience of one! I did not want to be disturbed, so I am at home to no one but you."

Esther made some answer. She was conscious of a feeling of great disappointment.

"Except my nephew," Lady Heron added. "It is just possible that he may come in, if my card has reached him in time."

Esther hoped that her face did not betray the joy in her heart. She felt Lady Heron's eyes on her, and she took up a book off the table and looked at it. She put it down and allowed her eyes to meet those of Lady Heron. She was sure of herself then.

"Lord Rutherford?" she asked quietly.

"Yes."

"I hope he will come," said Esther lightly.

Lady Heron went over to the piano and opened it. The instrument stood alone, as a grand piano should stand. It was not banked round by palms, nor shut in by tables or pictures on easel, nor were lengths of drapery thrown over it, deadening the sound. In the music-room at the white house voice and piano had their full chance. The room had been designed with a view to this, and it was so built that the walls ran up high into the body of the house, and were roofed by a small dome. The drawing-rooms opened off the room on either side.

Esther could never keep away from a piano for long. Her fingers always chafed to try its tone, and there was not the dingiest old yellow keyboard that she would not have welcomed as a friend. She had a sort of personal affection for all musical instruments. She had amused her mother when as a child she had once come across a hoarse little second-hand schoolroom piano in a music shop, whither it had just come back from hire—foggy of tone, creaking, and with stained notes that stuck, and were here and there dumb. She had stroked it caressingly, and Mrs. Wilton and the shopman had heard her whisper, "Poor little thing, how badly you have been treated!" And, now that Esther was grown up, her affection remained just as personal. She followed Lady Heron across the slippery floor. She was listening for a sound on the stairs. Would he come? Had Lady Heron told him that she, Esther, was to be there? And if he did not come need she rush to the unhappy conclusion that he did not care to see her?

She sat down and ran her fingers lightly over the keys, and gradually she drifted into Rubinstein's "Good-night." It was only now as she sang that she remembered how his eyes had rested upon her. How odd that there should ever have been a day when he was nothing to her. It was only now as she sang that she remembered that Rutherford had been sitting over by the window. Then he had been nothing to her. It seemed passing strange.

Was that the sound of a bell? Her heart was beating wildly, and it was only with effort that she steadied her voice as she sang. There was a sound on the stairs. The song died away in a long "good-night," and Esther let her hands fall from the keyboard into her lap. The door opened and the footman Brown with a letter for his mistress. Esther began to play once more. She felt that at that moment she hated Lady Heron's butler.

"This is an invitation to the Hurlingham's ball," said Lady Heron. "You will probably find one for yourself when you go back."

Esther stopped playing.

"The Hurlingham's ball?" she said.

"Yes, dear; I know you are to get a card, for Agnes told me so yesterday. Dear me, how you will put all their noses out of joint! I think I must go myself to see you. I very seldom go to balls now, but I will go to this one. Miss Wilton, what a pity it is that you have not been to a drawing-room! It would have been so much better for you to have been presented before you began to go out, and the last drawing-room of the season is on Wednesday week. Why should not you go to it? You could easily be ready, and if you and Mrs. Wilton liked I would present you."

"I should be only too glad," cried Esther, her eyes sparkling. "How kind you are! I know my mother would be delighted. I will go to Antoinette in the morning and order my dress. Antoinette is reliable, isn't she?"

"I have always heard so," said Lady Heron. "Who made the frock you have on to-day?"

"She did; but then a drawing-room dress is very important," said Esther with conviction, and Lady Heron laughed.

A discussion on millinery ensued. Esther left the piano. In her excitement at the prospect before her she forgot for the time her disappointment that the ring and the sound on the stairs should not have heralded the approach of Rutherford. Her first thought on hearing that she was to be asked to Lady Hurlingham's ball had been that there she would meet him, would dance with him, would talk to him and hear his voice. Then with Lady Heron's proposal anent the ensuing drawing-room her elatement banished for the moment all else from her mind.

Quite suddenly she saw him in the doorway. He had come up unannounced, and he had been standing there for several seconds before Esther's eyes fell upon him. She felt that her cheeks were burning as she drew Lady Heron's attention to his presence.

"My dear boy, is that you?" said his aunt. "We did not hear you."

"No, forsooth!" said Rutherford, laughing as he advanced. "And so Miss Wilton is to wear white at Lady Hurlingham's dance?"

"You should have coughed," said Esther.

"My lungs are sound, Miss Wilton."

"Then you should have spoken."

"I came in without stealth," said Rutherford; "but you were both so engrossed——"

"Our conversation was not for male ears," said Lady Heron. "We were up to our own in millinery—or shall I say our shoulders, as we were talking of a drawing-room? I am going to present Miss Wilton, and these matters take a certain amount of talking over. Think yourself lucky that we got through this before your arrival. Here comes some tea. You got my card?"

"Twenty minutes ago."

"Dear me," said Lady Heron; "since when have you become so energetic?"

Esther went out and stood on the white balcony, just as Rutherford had seen her stand upon his own balcony overlooking the park.

Lady Heron told Brown to put the teatable in the window. Rutherford handed Esther her cup, and followed with his own.

"Admire my view," said Lady Heron.

But there was no need to be told to admire it. Esther found it difficult to realize that she was in the same London which she had once described as terrible. Of late it had seemed to her to be losing its horrible side. She had seen dreadful things those first few days. Where had she seen them? Did they still exist, those ghastly women who had surged round her, with painted faces and blackened eyes that appalled her, and suggested some hideous lower life of which she had never dreamt? Was it in London that she had seen two of these creatures fighting, that she had heard from their lips oaths that filled her with dread, and filth that she did not understand? What was this dim memory that, like that other memory which had assailed her at her mother's bedside, was striking fear into her soul?

Rutherford saw her shudder.

"Are you cold, Miss Wilton?"

His words dispelled whatever it was that had been troubling her.

"I? No. Why?"

"I thought you shivered as if you were."

"No," said Esther. "One could not be cold to-day."

The leaves of the plane-trees rustled softly. The river ran like quicksilver in the sunlight, and the tide was very high. Steamers passed often, crossing from pier to pier, and sometimes a great barge moved slowly by with its brown sail spread. Over the water Battersea Park looked like a wood. Now with jerky sound of steam there went by a tug towing three great coal boats, each double its own size. Then came some boys in a boat which danced about in the wash, while the sculls were used singly and plied in flapping circles that reminded Esther of the sails of a mill. A few men were lounging against the stone of the embankment wall, and smoking their pipes.

(To be Continued.)

FUN, FACTS AND FICTION.

Lord Granville, speaking of Wilkes, said that on the occasion of an election his humor was unrivaled. "Once he asked an elector to vote for him. 'No,' replied the man, warmly, 'I'd rather vote for devil.' 'Yes,' responded Wilks, 'but in case your friend doesn't stand?'"

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WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET.*

BY LYMAN ABBOTT.

There are two antagonistic methods of interpreting the laws of Christ in the New Testament, either of which affords a consistent and harmonious system and consistent and harmonious results. We may regard them as commands or statutes, issued by a law-giver who had full knowledge of all future conceptions, who issued the edicts with full comprehension of their future applicability to the varying conceptions and civilizations of life, whose authority is unquestioned, and whom we have simply to obey, leaving the responsibility for results wholly with him; or we may regard them as general principles enunciated by a religious teacher. Laws in this sense were delivered on principles which govern in the moral and spiritual realm. After so enunciated, the teacher leaves his pupils to apply them to the varying conceptions of life as occasion may require. So regarded, they will resemble rather the laws of mechanics taught by a professor in the school-room than the edicts of an emperor promulgated by heralds charged with that duty.

Christ gathered his disciples about a supper table, broke bread, poured out wine, passed the bread and wine to his disciples, and then, at the close of the supper, said, "Do this in remembrance of me," and the church, with the solitary exception of the Quakers, regards this as a statute requiring a similar supper to be provided and participated in by the disciples of Christ in their church organizations throughout all time. But just a little before this supper he laid aside his upper garment, girded himself with a towel, took a basin of water, washed his disciples' feet, and wiped them with the towel wherewith he was girded, and when he was through said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you; if ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." And the entire Christian Church, with the exception of one or two minor sects, chiefly confined to Pennsylvania, wholly disregard the command to feet-washing, treating it as an obsolete illustration of a general principle. I am not able to understand on what ground it is asserted that the direction, "Do this in remembrance of me," is a properly perpetual command, and the direction, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet," is a temporary or obsolete one.

The Lord's Supper is an expression of the spiritual truth that the soul's life is dependent upon a living communion with a living God; that truth never varies throughout the ages. But it is within the discretion of the church to modify the expression of that truth whenever modifying conceptions require; to substitute unfermented wine for wine, or water for either, or discontinue the cup altogether; to commune with one kind, or both kinds, or even, with the Quaker, to substitute a silent and unsymbolical expression of communion, if these really serve better to feed the spiritual nature.

Feet-washing is an expression of the law of service; that the greater must serve the less. The law is eternal, universal, absolute, never to be departed from. But its form of expression is temporal and local. Whether we have a Pope to wash the feet of paupers once a year in Rome, or whether, with the Drunkards of Pennsylvania, we wash one another's feet on certain set occasions, or whether, with most Christians, we dispense with feet-washing altogether as an Oriental custom unfitted to Occidental life, is matter wholly immaterial. We follow Christ's example, not when we wash one another's feet, but when by love we serve one another; as we "do this in remembrance of Christ," not when we kneel at an altar or sit in a pew and take consecrated elements from a priest or a deacon, but when, in the words of the Episcopal liturgy, we "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving." We are truly baptized, not when we are immersed, submersed, or sprinkled, but when we are buried with Christ and rise with him into newness of eternal life.

Christ had asked his disciples to take the Passover supper with him, and had provided a place for the purpose. The simple repast was ready, but no servant was present, and the disciples got into a controversy with one another as to who should sit at the head of the table. One can imagine how Christ, pacing the room, seemingly absorbed in his own thoughts, was really attentive to all that was going on, until the wordy battle was ended, and the disciples had somehow adjusted themselves to their places. But there was not one of them who was willing to act the servant's part, and they sat down to the table with the dust of the road upon their naked feet. Christ sat down, too, waiting to see if any one would suggest the readiness to perform the seemly act for his fellow-disciples, or even for his Lord. But no one moved. Then he arose from the table, laid aside his upper garment, girded himself as a servant, took the basin of water, knelt at the feet of one after another, washed them, wiped them. No one dared remonstrate, except Peter; he always dared to do anything. Then to the disciples, awed and abashed by this strong reproof, he said:

"Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am.

"If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

"For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him."

The highest ideal of human character is an ideal mother; the lowliest and least type of human character is a babe; and in the household the highest service is the lowliest; and who is happier than a fond, proud, loving, serving mother? Christianity has made some progress in the world since the Spartan parents exposed their babes to the cruel law of the survival of the fittest. In Christendom the home, at least, is theoretically, and in no small measure practically, constructed upon Christ's principle that the greater should serve the least. We have wrought this principle also into our church life. The minister is by his very name the servant of his church and congregation; his very title incorporates the saying of Christ: "The Son of man comes not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

That the church is fully possessed of the spirit of feet-washing no one will allege; that it is a good way from the spirit of feet-washing so long as so large a proportion of the so-called working classes remain without its walls and its fellowship cannot be denied; but it at least recognizes, if it does not always possess, the spirit of Christian humility; it is founded on the theory, though it often falls away from its creed, that it is the business of the pulpit to serve the pew; that within church walls culture and learning and wealth are the servitors of ignorance and poverty.

Chistendom is a long time learning Christ's lesson. Still, we have learned something. We have begun to believe that "he that is greatest among you shall be your servant," and we are moving along the line thus indicated by Christ even in our social and industrial organizations. The rich and the strong are doing much more to serve the poor and the weak than perhaps most men imagine. The revolution has not yet ended, but it is begun. The man who shuts himself off from the pleasures of social life to live among his workingmen, who uses his rare executive powers as well as his money to organize and carry on a great industry which feeds many mouths and shelters many heads, is doing more to imitate the example which Christ set his followers than the Pope when formally washing the feet of thirteen beggars on Maunday Thursday.

Perhaps it would have been well, perhaps not, to have preserved in the Christian Church the rite of feet-washing. Perhaps it would have kept alive in our thoughts how central a truth is that of Christian humility; but perhaps, instead we should have thought our formal observance fulfilled the divine law. I am not a Friend, but I cannot conceal from myself, if I would, that there has been no small influence in the religious history of the world from the Friends, who regard all symbolic rites as tending to divert the thought of the church from the inward and invisible truth to the outward and tangible symbol.

*International Sunday School Lesson for October 18, 1891.—John xiii., 1—17.

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RAILWAY TIME TABLES

CORRECTED TO JAN. 1, 1891.

MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILWAY.

LONDON TIME.

Canada Southern Division—Going East.

	Leave London	Leave St. Thomas
North Shore Limited (daily)	8:30 p.m.	11:00 p.m
N. Y. Express (daily).....	8:30 p.m.	3:05 a.m
American Express (except Monday).....	9:50 a.m.	11:15 a.m
Atlantic Express (daily)...	9:50 a.m.	1:50 p.m
Mail (except Sundays).....	2:25 p.m.	3:15 p.m
Limited Express (daily)...	8:30 p.m.	2:05 a.m
N. Y. and Boston Express (daily).....	7:25 p.m.	8:05 p.m
Accom'd'n (except Sunday)	8:50 p.m.	7:00 a.m

Canada Southern Division—Going West.

North Shore Limited (daily)	8:30 p.m.	7:23 a.m
Chicago Express (daily)....	8:30 p.m.	8:05 a.m
Chicago L't'd Exp. (daily).	9:50 a.m.	10:55 a.m
American Express (except Mondays).....	9:50 a.m.	1:35 p.m
Mail (except Sundays).....	2:25 p.m.	3:10 p.m
Pacific Express (daily).....	2:25 p.m.	5:45 p.m
Accom d'n (except Sunday)	8:30 p.m.	7:40 a.m

Trains arrive in London at 8:25 a.m., 12 m and 6:40 p.m.

[NOTE.—No trains to or from London on Sundays.]

JOHN PAUL, City Ticket and Passenger Agent, 395 Richmond street.

GRAND TRUNK—Southern Division

CORRECTED MAY 11, 1891.

MAIN LINE—Going East

	ARRIVE.	DEPART
Limited Express (a).....	3:35 a.m.	3:55 a.m
Mail.....	.....	6:00 a.m
Atlantic Express (d).....	12:05 p.m.	12:10 p.m
Day Express.....	10:50 a.m.	2:20 p.m
St. Louis Express (a) (b)...	4:20 p.m.	4:25 p.m
Mixed—No. 28 Freight (c)...	6:45 p.m.	6:50 p.m
Erie Limited.....	11:20 p.m.	11:40 p.m

MAIN LINE—Going West.

	ARRIVE.	DEPART.
Chicago Express (a).....	5:10 a.m.	5:20 a.m
West End Mixed.....	.....	6:45 a.m
Erie Limited.....	11:00 a.m.	.....
St. Louis Express (a).....	11:20 a.m.	11:30 a.m
Accommodation.....	12:40 p.m.	2:15 p.m
Pacific Express (a).....	6:50 p.m.	7:10 p.m
Mail.....	9:55 p.m.	.....
Accommodation.....	.....	7:20 p.m

Sarnia Branch.

	ARRIVE.	DEPART.
Limited Express (b).....	3:50 a.m.	.....
Atlantic Express (b).....	11:45 a.m.	.....
Accommodation.....	2:15 p.m.	.....
Accommodation.....	8:45 p.m.	.....
Erie Limited (b).....	11:35 p.m.	.....

Sarnia Branch.

	ARRIVE.	DEPART.
Chicago Express (b).....	.....	5:20 a.m
Accommodation.....	.....	7:35 a.m
Erie Limited (b).....	.....	11:05 a.m
Accommodation.....	.....	2:30 p.m
Pacific Express (b).....	.....	7:00 p.m

London, Huron and Bruce.

	ARRIVE.	DEPART.
Express.....	10:15 a.m.	8:05 a.m
Mail.....	6:45 p.m.	4:25 p.m

London and Port Stanley.

	ARRIVE.	DEPART.
Mail.....	.....	6:40 a.m
Accommodation.....	7:20 a.m.	9:30 a.m
Mail.....	2:10 p.m.	4:05 p.m
Accommodation.....	5:35 p.m.	7:00 p.m
Mixed.....	6:40 p.m.	.....
Mail.....	11:15 p.m.	.....

St. Marys and Stratford Branch.

	ARRIVE.	DEPART.
Mixed—Mail.....	10:55 a.m.	7:35 a.m
Express.....	3:40 p.m.	2:15 p.m
Express—Mixed.....	9:30 p.m.	6:00 p.m

Toronto Branch.

Hamilton—Depart—							
a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m
*7:00	9:15	10:50	12:25	4:10	5:40	†*7:00	9:25

Hamilton—Arrive—							
a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m
†12:30	*8:50	10:00	†*1:10	4:00	6:25	8:15	

* These trains for Montreal.
† These trains from Montreal.
(a) Runs daily, Sundays included.
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(d) This train connects at Toronto for all points in Manitoba, the Northwest and British Columbia via North Bay and Winnipeg.

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Going East.

DEPART—			
London.....	4:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	5:35 p.m
Woodstock.....	4:46 a.m.	8:50 a.m.	6:33 p.m
Galt.....	5:40 a.m.	9:50 a.m.	7:30 p.m
Guelph.....	6:20 a.m.	11:05 a.m.	8:40 p.m
Toronto.....	8:15 a.m.	12:00 noon	9:55 p.m
Peterboro.....	11:45 a.m.	.....	12:15 a.m
Kingston.....	4:00 p.m.	.....	3:40 p.m
Ottawa.....	5:45 p.m.	.....	6:00 a.m
Montreal.....	7:55 p.m.	.....	8:15 a.m
Quebec.....	6:30 a.m.	.....	3:00 p.m
Portland, Me.....	8:30 a.m.	.....	8:25 p.m
Boston.....	6:00 a.m.	.....	8:50 p.m
Halifax, N. S.....	12:10 p.m.	.....	.....

Trains arrive from the east at 11:25 a.m., 7:00 p.m., 10:00 p.m.

Going West.

DEPART—			
London.....	7:00 a.m.	11:35 a.m.	7:05 p.m
ARRIVE—			
Chatham.....	10:00 a.m.	7:05 p.m.	8:52 p.m
Detroit.....	.....	2:45 p.m.	10:40 p.m
Chicago.....	.....	10:15 p.m.	7:20 a.m
St. Louis.....	.....	7:45 a.m.	6:15 p.m
Kansas City.....	.....	6:10 p.m.	9:20 a.m

Trains arrive from the west at 3:55 a.m., 12:15 noon, 5:25 p.m.

THOS. R. PARKER, City Ticket and Passenger Agent, No. 1 Masonic Temple.

ERIE & HURON RAILWAY.

Trains South.

Stations.		Exp	Exp	Mix	Mix
		A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
Sarnia (G. T. R.).....		.....	5:10	7:40	.....
Courtright.....		.....	5:40	8:20	.....
M. C. R. Junction.....		.....	5:45	8:22	.....
Chatham (C. P. R.).....	arr	7:45	.....	10:35	3:30
	dep	7:45	.....	10:40	4:40
Fargo (M. C. R.).....		8:15	.....	9:55	5:10
Blenheim.....	arr	8:25	.....	11:20	5:35

Trains North.

Stations.		Exp	Exp	Mix
		A.M.	P.M.	P.M.
Blenheim.....	dep	8:30	2:55	5:45
Fargo (M. C. R.).....		8:43	3:10	6:00
Chatham (C. P. R.).....	arr	9:08	3:40	6:20
	dep	9:13	3:57	.....
M. C. R. Junction.....		11:20	.....	.....
Courtright.....		11:25	3:35	.....
Sarnia (G. T. R.).....	arr	12:00	6:25	.....

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