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London, Ont., Can.

**GRAPES AND THORNS.**

By M. A. T., AUTHOR OF "THE HOUSE OF YORK," "A WINGED WORD," ETC.

CHAPTER I. (Continued.)

Down in the black heart of the town, among the offices, was a certain back room where the windows were not so closely curtained but those who watched outside could see a thread of light burning all night long. To this room men went sometimes in the hope of mending their fortunes, or, after the demon of gambling had caught them fast, to taste of that fiery excitement which had now become to them a necessity. Honora more than suspected that Lawrence Gerald's steps had sometimes turned in there. A year or two before, in one of his good moods, he had confessed it to her, with an almost boyish contrition, and had promised never to go again. It was his last confession of the sort, but she feared, not his last sin. Of what worth were the promises of a weak, tempted man who never sought earnestly the help of God to strengthen his resolution? Of no more value than an anchor without a cable. Lawrence needed to be watched and cared for; so she went on with them. "I am so sorry to trouble you both," Miss Ferrier exclaimed, in a voice trembling with anger and disappointment. "I could have had John come for me, if I had thought." She snatched her hand from the arm of her escort, and pulled her shawl about her with nervous twitches. "It would have been better to have had John," Honora said; "for he could have gone home with me. I am the troublesome third, as it is. But then," speaking lightly, "if I am the last, Lawrence will be obliged to go in early."

With another twitch of her shawl, Annette took her escort's arm again as abruptly as she had left it, and held it closely. Careless as the last words had sounded, she knew their meaning, for there had been something said in this subject before. She chose to take it as a warning, and it comforted her to do so. Others might blame and doubt him, but she would not. He seemed nearer to her in the light of her superior devotedness than to any one else. She would never fail him; and by-and-by he would know her worth. The glow of this fervent hope warmed the girl's childish heart, and gave her a sort of happiness. And so they reached the house, and, after a quiet good night, separated.

The walk back was passed in silence; and Miss Pembroke did not choose to lean on her companion's arm; she wished to hold her dress out of the dust. The street they went through was one of those delightful old ones which a city sometimes leaves untouched for a long time. Over-arching elms grew thick on either side, and the houses were all detached.

Midway up this street stood the cottages of the Gerald's, with a garden in front and at the back, and a narrow gable at right and left. Three long windows in front, lighting the parlor, reached almost to the ground. The steep roof slanted to a veranda at each side, leaving but one upper window over the three—a wide window with casements swinging back from the middle. The cottage was in the shape of a cross, and at one arm of it a lighted window shone out on the veranda.

At sound of the gate-latch, the curtain was drawn aside a little, and a woman looked out an instant, then hastened to open the door.

"Are we late, Mrs. Gerald?" Honora asked, and stepped forward into the sitting-room.

"Oh! no, dear; I did not expect you any sooner."

Mrs. Gerald lingered in the doorway, looking back at her son as he stopped to leave his hat and overcoat in the entry, and only entered the sitting-room when she had caught a glimpse of his face as he came toward her. He was looking pleasant, she saw, and was contented with that.

"Well, mother!" he said, and sank indolently into the arm-chair she pushed before the open fire for him. It was the only arm-chair in the room.

She drew another chair forward, and seated herself beside him. Honora, sitting on a low stool in the corner, with the firelight shining over her, told what they had been doing that afternoon and evening. The son listened, his eyes fixed on the fire; the mother listened, her eyes fixed on her son.

Mrs. Gerald was an Irish lady of good descent, well educated, and well mannered, and had seen better days. We do not call them better days because in her girlhood and early married life this lady had been wealthy, but because she had been the happy daughter of excellent parents, and the happy wife of a good man. All were gone now but this son; the husband dead for many a year, the daughters married and far away, the wealth melted from her like sunset gold from a cloud; but Lawrence was left, and he filled her heart.

One could read this in her face as she watched him. It revealed the pride of the mother in that beautiful manhood which she had given to the world, and which was hers by an inalienable right that no one could usurp; and it revealed, too, the entire self-forgetfulness of the woman who lives only in the life so dear to her. The face showed more yet; for, hovering over this love and devotion as the mist of the coming storm surrounded the full moon, and rings its softened brightness with a tremulous halo, one

could detect even in the mother's smile the mist of a foreboding sadness.

How ineffable and without hope is that sadness which is ever the companion of a too exclusive affection!

Honora Pembroke looked at the two, and pain and indignation, and the necessity for restraining any expression of either, swelled in her heart, painted her cheeks a deep red, and lifted her lids with a fuller and more scornful gaze than those soft eyes were wont to give. Where was the courtesy which any man, not rudely insensible, should show to a lady? Where the grateful tenderness that any child, not cruelly ungrateful, pays to a mother? This man could be gallant when he wished to make a favorable impression; and she had heard him make very pretty, if very senseless, speeches about chivalry and ideal characters, as if he knew what they were. He had even, in the early days of their acquaintance, maintained for a long time an irreproachable demeanor in her presence. She was learning a doubt and distrust of men, judging them by this one, of whom she knew most. Were they often as selfish and insensible as he was? Were they incapable of being affected by any enchantment except that which is lent by a delusive distance?

Here beside him was an ideal affection! and he accepted it as he accepted air and sunshine—it was a matter of course. The mother was in person one who might satisfy even such a fastidious taste as his; for though the face was thin and faded, and the hands marred by household labor, there were still the remains of what had once been a striking beauty. Mrs. Gerald carried her tall form with undiminished stateliness, her coal-black hair had not a single thread of white among its thick tresses, and her deep-blue eyes had gained in tenderness what they had lost in fire. To use one of Miss Pembroke's favorite expressions, it was not fitting that the son, after having passed a day without fatigue, should lounge at ease among cushions while the mother, to whom every evening brought weariness, should sit beside him in a chair of penitential hardness.

But even while she criticised him, he looked up from the fire, his face brightening with a sudden pleasant recollection. "O mother! I had almost forgotten," he said, and began searching in his pockets for something. "Neither you nor Honora mentioned it; but I keep count, and I know that to-day your ladyship is five times ten years old."

He smiled with a boyish pleasure more beautiful than his beauty, and the little touch of self-satisfaction he betrayed was as far as possible from being disagreeable. He could not help knowing that he was about to get a gift, and cover himself with honor in the eyes of these two women. "Now, mother," opening a tiny novercase, "this is the first ring I ever gave any woman. The one I gave Annette was only a diamond of yours reset, and so no gift of mine. But this your good-for-nothing son actually earned, and had made up purpose for you."

He drew from the case a broad gold ring that sparkled in the fire-light as if set with diamonds, and taking the trembling hand his mother had extended caressingly at his first words, slipped the circlet on to her finger. "I had no stone put in it, because I want you to wear it all the time," he said. "Doesn't it fit nicely?"

"My dear boy!" Mrs. Gerald exclaimed, and could say no more; for tears that she wished to restrain were choking her. A fiftieth birthday is not a joyful anniversary when there is no one but one's self to remember that it has come. Just as the mother had given up hope, and was making to herself excuses for his not remembering it, her son showed that it had been long in his thought. The joy was as unexpected as it was sweet.

When she said her prayers that night, Mrs. Gerald's clasped hands pressed the dear gift close to her cheek; and no maiden saying her first prayer over her betrothal-ring ever felt a tenderer happiness or more impassioned gratitude. "Dear Lawrence! it was so nice of you!" whispered Honora, and gave him her hand as she wished him good-night.

He threw himself back in the arm-chair again when he was left alone, and for a few minutes had a very pleasant sense of being happy and the cause of happiness. "Who would think that so much fun could be got out of a quiet evening spent in tying May-flowers round a pole, and giving a gold bird-day ring to one's mother?" he mused. "After all, the good people have the best of it, and we escape graces as the ones to be pitied. If I were rich, I should be all right. If I had even half a chance, I would ask no more. But the poverty!" He glanced about the room, then looked gloomily into the fire again.

Yes; poverty was there—that depressing poverty which speaks of decayed fortunes. The carpet, from which the brilliant violet pile was worn nearly off, the faded and mended covers of the carved chair-frames, the few old-fashioned ornaments which had been retained when all that would sell well had gone to the auction-room, each showed by the scrupulous care with which it had been preserved, a poverty that clung to the rags of prosperity in the past because it saw no hope of prosperity in the future. Miles of unbroken forest could be seen from the cupolas of Crichton; yet in this room the very stick of wood that burned slowly on the andirons was an extravagance

which Mrs. Gerald would not have allowed herself.

"Yes; the good ones have the best of it," the young man repeated, rousing himself.

He drew the andirons out, and let the unconsumed stick down into the ashes, lighted a candle, and turned the gas off. Then, candle in hand, he stood musing a moment longer, the clear light shining over his face, and showing an almost childlike smile coming sweetly to his lips. "After all," he said softly, "I haven't been a bad fellow to-night," and with that pleased smile still lingering on his face, went slowly out of the room.

And so the stillness of night descended, and deep sleep brooded over the town as the lights went out. Crichton was a well-governed city; no rude broils disturbed its hours of darkness. Decency was in power there, and made itself obeyed. You might see a doctor's buggy whirl by, like a ghost of a carriage, its light wheels faintly crunching the gravel; for only the business streets were paved. Now and then, on still nights, might be heard the grating of ropes, as some vessel sailed up to the wharf after a long ocean voyage. Perhaps a woman in one of the houses on the hill above would hear that sound through her dream, and start up to listen, fancying that, in the word of command the soft breeze bore to her casement, she could detect a familiar voice long unheard and anxiously waited for. Perhaps the sailor, whose swift keel had shot like an arrow past the heavy junk of Chinese waters, and scattered, as it approached the shore, clear reflections of tufted palms and dusky natives—perhaps he looked eagerly up the hill to that spot which his eyes could find without aid of chart or compass, and saw suddenly twinkle out the lamp in the window of his home.

But except for such soft sounds and shadowy idyls, Crichton was at night as still as sleep itself. The Crichtonians had a pleasant saying that their city was built by a woman, and the best compliment we can pay them is that they made this saying proudly, and kept in honored remembrance the hand of the gentle architect. But not so much in brick and stone was it acknowledged, though they owed to her their first ideas of correct and symmetrical building; in their society, high and low, in many of their pretty customs, in their tastes, in their freedom from bigotry of opinions, even in their government, they felt her influence.

While the city lies sleeping under the stars, strong, adult, and beautiful, full of ambitious dreams, full, too, of kind and generous feeling, let us go back to the time when, an infant town, it began to use its powers, and stammer brokenly the alphabet of civilization. Hush, fair city, all thy many thousands, while the angels watch above thee! and, sweeter marvel yet! while the dear Lord waits unsleeping in thy midst, where that solitary taper burns. Sleep in peace, "poor exiled children of Eve," and be grateful at least in dreams.

Not very long ago, this place was a wild forest, with a rude little settlement hewn out of it on the river's banks. It was shut in from the world, though the world was not far distant. But the river was broad and deep, the ocean only ten miles away, and within a few miles were large and growing cities. Soon the sound of the axe and the saw were heard, and little craft, sloops and schooners, floated down the Saranac laden with lumber till the water rippled close to the rails. The story of her growth in this regard is the story of a thousand other towns. The vessels grew larger, their voyages longer, more houses were built, some men became comparatively wealthy, and gave employment to others, while the majority kept the level of the employed. Social distinctions began to show themselves, detestable ones for the most part, since there was no social cultivation. Indeed, this poor settlement was in a fair way to become the most odious of towns. The two meeting-houses began to be called churches by the aspiring; the leading woman of the town ventured to call her help a servant (on which the indignant "help" immediately deserted her); and the first piano appeared. But let us mention this piano with respect, for it was the pioneer of harmony.

When Crichton had about fifteen hundred inhabitants, a stranger came there one day, as a passenger on board a barque returning from a distant city. This barque was the chief vessel of Crichton. It had gone away laden with laths, and it brought back tea, coffee, sugar, and other foreign groceries; and, more than all, it brought Mr. Seth Carpenter. He was not, apparently, a very remarkable man in any way, except as all strangers were remarkable in this young town. He was plain-looking, rather freckled, and had a pair of small and very bright eyes which he almost closed, in a near-sighted way, when he wished to see well. Behind those eyes was a good deal of will and wit, and the will to put the wit into immediate practice. Moreover, he knew how to hold his tongue very cleverly, and baffle the curious without offending them. Nothing but his name transpired. He might be a mountebank, a detective, a king's son—how were these people to know?

In fact, he was nothing more mysterious than a respectable young man twenty-five years of age, who, having his fortune to make, had thought best to leave his prim, sober, native town, where nothing was being done, and where the people were mummies, and seek what, in modern parlance, is

called a "live" place. In his pockets he had nothing but his hands; in his valise was a single change of linen.

The very morning of his arrival at Crichton, Mr. Carpenter went to the highest hill-top, and from it viewed the town, the river, and the receding forests. He then strolled down to the river, and looked through the mills, and from there sauntered to the ship yard, where he found a ship on the stocks, almost ready to be launched. He walked round the yard, whistling softly, with an air of critical indifference. He paused near two other men who were viewing the ship, and, since their conference was not private, listened to it.

One of these men, a sailor, rather thought he might make up his mind to buy that ship. Did his companion know what was likely to be asked for it? The other reckoned, and calculated, and guessed, and expected, and finally owned that he did not know.

Mr. Carpenter, his eyes winking fast with the sparks that came into them, and his fingers working nervously, walked out of the yard, and found the owner of the ship, and still with nothing in his pockets but his hands, made his bargain with all the coolness of a millionaire. Before sunset, the ship was nominally his; and, before sunrise, it had changed owners again, and the young adventurer had made five hundred dollars by the bargain.

"I will yet rule the town!" he said exultingly, when he found himself alone; and he kept his word. Everything prospered with him, and in a short time even rivalry ceased. Men who had been proud to add dollar to dollar shrank and bowed before this man who added thousand to unit. Half the men in town, after ten years, were in his employment, and business prospered as he prospered. In another ten years, Crichton was a city, with all barriers down between her and the great world; but a raw, unkempt city; jealous, superficially educated, quarrelsome, pretentious, and rapidly crystallizing into that mould. Only a person of supreme position and character could now change it. Mr. Carpenter held the position, but not the character. He thought only of money-making, and of the excitement of enterprise and power; the rest he viewed with a pleasant indifference not without contempt. At forty-five he was still a bachelor.

We have mentioned the first piano with respect, because others followed in its train, rendering a music-teacher necessary; so that, after a succession of tyros, Miss Agnes Weston came, bringing the very spirit of harmony with her into the town she was to conquer. She did not come as a conqueror, however; nor probably did she anticipate the part she was to play any more than the Crichtonians did. She came to earn her bread, and, while doing so, was anything but popular. Nothing but her brilliant musical abilities, and the fact that she had been educated at Leipzig, saved her from utter failure. People did not fancy this self-possessed, unpretending young person, who could sometimes show such a haughty front to the presuming, and who was, moreover, so frightfully dark and sallow. They did not understand her, and preferred to leave her very much to herself.

One person only found her not a puzzle. To Mr. Carpenter she was simply a refined woman among unconventional associates; becoming discontented and unhappy there, too, before many months had passed. He did not choose that she should go away. He had become pleasantly accustomed to seeing her, had sometimes met her on her long walks out to town; and once, when he had politely offered to drive her home—an offer which any other lady in Crichton would have accepted beamingly, without the preliminary of an introduction—had been refreshed by receiving a cold refusal, and a surprised stare from a pair of large black eyes. The great man, surfeited with smiles and flatteries, was immensely pleased by this superciliousness.

But though strangely disturbed at the prospect of Miss Weston's leaving, he hesitated to speak the word which might detain her. A bachelor of forty-five does not readily determine on making a sensible marriage; it usually needs some great folly to spur him on to a change so long deferred. He had, moreover, two other reasons for delaying: he wanted a charming wife, and was in doubt whether even his power could transform this lady into his ideal; the other reason had blue eyes, and a dimple in his chin, and was a very silly reason.

But no one who knew this gentleman would expect him to remain long in doubt on any subject. Within a month from the day he first entertained the thought of running such a risk, Crichton was electrified by the announcement that Mr. Carpenter was soon to be married to Miss Weston; and, before they had recovered from their first astonishment, the marriage had taken place, and the quiet, dark-faced music teacher was established as mistress of an imposing mansion on North Avenue.

It was now Mr. Carpenter's turn to be astonished, and he was enchanted as well. Never had he pictured to himself a woman so charming as this grub, now become a butterfly, proved itself; and never had he imagined that even his wife could obtain so beautiful a supremacy as she gradually established and never lost. She was born to rule, and seldom had such power been placed in any woman's hands. Mr. Carpenter was the first of her vassals. With a refined and noble arrogance, she esteemed him as the first man in the world, because he had

been the first to appreciate and exalt her. For this she gave him a faithful, if condescending affection, and quoted his wishes and opinions so constantly that one might have thought they were her only guides. So though she was tact and her courtesy toward her husband he scarcely guessed his own inferiority, and never dreamed that she was aware of it.

She grew beautiful, too, as well as amiable. Now that the drudgery of toil was taken from her, and her cramped talents had room for full and exhilarating play, the swarthy skin cleared, showing a peach-like bloom, the fine teeth lit a frequent smile, and the deep voice lost its dull cadence, and took a musical, ringing sound.

Mrs. Carpenter used her power well. Crichton was as clay in her hands, and she moulded it after a noble model. What arrogance could never have done was accomplished by tact and sweetness. Her forming touch was strong and steady, but it was smooth, and nothing escaped it. Thoroughly womanly, speaking by her husband's mouth when she deemed it not fitting that her proper voice should be heard, she could influence in matters where women do not usually care to interfere. She thought nothing out of her province which concerned the prosperity of the town she honored with her presence, and she inspired others with her own enthusiasm. That street should be wide and well kept, that public buildings should be architecturally symmetrical, that neat cottages for the poor, replacing their miserable huts, should start up as sudden as daisies along some quiet road—these objects all interested her, though she worked for them indirectly.

But in social life she ruled openly; and there her good sense and good heart, her gentle gaiety and entire uprightness, became the mould of form. The ill-nature went of fashion, and in the absence of charity, self-control became a necessity. When people of opposite creeds met at her house, their feuds had to be laid aside for the time; and, once two foes have smiled in each other's faces, the frown is not so easy to recall.

Gradually the change which had been imposed outwardly became a real one; and, when Mrs. Carpenter died, full of years and of honors, her spirit continued to animate the place, in its opinions and actions, at least, if some fairer grace of heart and principle were wanting. She died as she had lived, out of the Church; thought the Church had ever found her a friend, bountiful and tenderly protecting. Of its doctrines and authority she seemed never to have thought; but the copy of the Sixtine Madonna in her drawing-room had always a vase of fresh flowers before it.

She left no children. A niece whom she had adopted married in Crichton, and had one descendant, a grand-daughter, living there. This grand-daughter was Honora Pembroke. Wake again, Crichton, for morning is come. Long rays of golden light are shooting out of the east; and down the hillside, in the church of St. John, Father Chevreuse is saying, *Sorsum Corda!*

TO BE CONTINUED.

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**Minnard's Liniment for Rheumatism.**

It was a humane lunatic cry. It was Bowman crying a newness. It was his gong for human sympathy. He exulted in his trail of every man used to him, and sin and are followed find us out, and the cowl and shawl head." And though that "more terror" because more physical knowledge ever less human enemy. Yet his sin-beclouded throbbing heart of a man's face and hand, even though charged with the armed with the lion. He knew. Thought had come in a little while convict had taken horse and had raised man took in as. Thought as his w hold.

"German Syrup"  
Here is something from Mr Frank A. Hale, proprietor of the De Witt House, Lewiston, and the Tontine Hotel, Brunswick, Me. Hotel men meet the world as it comes and goes, and are not slow in sizing people and things up for what they are worth. He says that he has lost a father and several brothers and sisters from Pulmonary Consumption, and is himself frequently troubled with colds, and he Hereditary often coughs enough to make him sick at Consumption his stomach. Whenever he has taken a cold of this kind he uses Boschee's German Syrup, and it cures him every time. Here is a man who knows the full danger of lung troubles, and would therefore be most particular as to the medicine he used. What is his opinion? Listen! "I use nothing but Boschee's German Syrup, and have advised I presume, more than a hundred different persons to take it. They agree with me that it is the best cough syrup in the market."

Moodyne: A World. By John B.

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