

RESURGAM.

Visit post funera virtus.

Why come not spirits from the realms of glory
To visit earth as in the days of old—
The times of ancient writ and ancient story;
Is heaven more distant, or has earth grown cold?

Oh have I gazed when sunset clouds receding,
Waved like rich banners of a host gone by,
To catch the gleam of some white pinion speeding
Along the confines of the glowing sky.

And oft, when midnight stars in distant chillness
Were calmly bright, I listened late and long;
But nature's pulse beat on in solemn stillness,
Bearing no echo of the seraph's song.

And are they all within the veil departed?
There gleams no wing along the empyrean now,
And many a tear from human eye has started
Since angel touch has calmed a mortal brow.

Yet earth has angels, though their forms are moulded
But of such clay as fashions all below;
Though harps are wanting and bright pinions folded,
We know them by the love-light on the brow.

Oh, many a spirit walks the world unmolested,
That, when its veil of sadness is laid down,
Shall soar aloft with pinions unimpeded,
And bear its glory like a starry crown.

J. HAROLD LYNCH.

Montreal, August 30th 1876.

ROSES AND THORNS.

I.

Lord Mortlake was fifty-three years of age. As the old Earl, his father, was still living, he was only what is called a "courtesy" lord; but, for all that, he was a man of no little consequence, and a member of Parliament of no little celebrity.

He had held a prominent position in two Tory Governments, and though the Whigs were then in power, everybody said that they would soon be turned out again; and then, as he was a thorough man of business and an excellent debater, he was very certain to be in office once more, and this time probably in the Cabinet.

He was, moreover, a shrewd man and a courteous man, and as he was the eldest son and heir of a very rich and very celebrated old legal family, and also bore a most exemplary character for both personal and political probity, he was well worth his salt; and he had his salt, and his bread, too, in the shape of an hereditary sinecure of two thousand a year.

He had two sons, John and Henry; and was now expecting a visit from his confidential friend, Mr. Harcourt, the family lawyer, whom he had commissioned to make private inquiries with regard to a certain entanglement of the younger, which would, if his suspicions were verified, place that young gentleman in a very uncomfortable predicament.

Lord Mortlake was by nature a cold-blooded, unsensitive man; but he was, notwithstanding, taking the matter much to heart, for if he now loved anything in the world besides money it was certainly his favourite son Harry, whose mother died in giving him birth, and in her last moments commended the boy to his father's special care. The old politician had never forgotten this; his really fond affection for his wife was beyond dispute.

"Confound the young fool," said he to himself, as he sat nervously fidgeting among the numerous papers which were scattered over his library table. "If I find he has seriously committed himself in that way, I'll cut him off with a shilling."

At this juncture a servant announced "Mr. Harcourt," and that gentleman entered the room.

"Ah, Harcourt! I'm very glad to see you! I've been expecting you for this last hour. Sit down. Well, what news?"

"Very little, my lord, and that very little is most unsatisfactory, I am sorry to say."

"Humph! Let me hear it, at all events."

"Your son Henry has certainly formed an exceedingly close connection with a young female."

"Of what sort? Who is she? What is her name?"

"I cannot discover either, my lord, though I have learnt he has taken a cottage for her."

"Has he, by Jove! The diabolical young spend-thrift! But I'll soon settle that!"

"May I inquire how, my lord?"

"I'll stop his allowance. I let him have five hundred a year; I'll cut him down to two. You have found out where the cottage is, of course?"

"Oh, yes; it is in Mortlake."

"Mortlake! The very place that I take my title from, the impudent young villain! I wonder he don't call it Mortlake Cottage!"

"It is so called, my lord."

"Well, I declare! That out-Herods Herod!"

"But I believe it was so named before he took it."

"Oh! that somewhat alters the case. Have you seen it?"

"I have."

"What sort of a place is it?"

"A very charming place indeed."

"Ah, the rascal always had good taste! How large is it?"

"I should say about eight rooms; but I have never been inside, of course. I gained my information from the landlord."

"Did you ascertain the rent?"

"Yes; forty pounds a year."

"Furnished?"

"No, my lord; unfurnished."

"He has furnished it himself?"

"I believe so."

"The extravagant young scamp! How many servants does he keep—half a dozen, I suppose?"

"Oh, no—only one."

"Ah, well; come, that isn't so bad, after all."

"And it has a most lovely flower-garden."

"No doubt. The young scapegrace was always fond of flowers! Stupid boy!—stupid boy! But he inherits that from his poor dear mother."

And the worldly middle-aged lord absolutely wiped away a tear at the recollection.

"And the landlord tells me that they don't employ any gardener; they attend to it all themselves."

"Ah, poor lad!—poor lad! I daresay he's very happy, dreaming his bright youth away. But it can't be allowed to go on, you know, Harcourt."

"I certainly think it should not, my lord."

"And yet—"

"My lord," interrupted Mr. Harcourt, with great seriousness, as he marked the half-reluctant tone in which these two words were spoken, "I have not yet told you all."

"Ah! What?" exclaimed Lord Mortlake.

"What do you mean? Speak—speak out!"

"The young girl, or young lady, or whatever we may call her, is remarkably beautiful."

"Well, what of that?"

"She is described as an exceedingly well-conducted, retiring young person, and the landlord and all the neighbours firmly believe—"

"Believe what? Speak out, man!"

"That they are man and wife."

"Man and wife?"

"Yes."

"Impossible! I cannot, I won't believe it! It is all nonsense; he would never be such an egregious ass."

"I am bound to say that I have caused strict search and enquiry to be made in every church for twenty miles round London, and there is no trace of such a marriage to be found."

"Of course not; it's all stuff and nonsense."

"Still, my lord, the name by which they are known there—"

"What is it?"

"His mother's—your dear wife's maiden name."

"Gardner?"

"Yes; they are called Mr. and Mrs. Gardner."

"Humph! Truly, it begins to look serious. He adores the memory of his mother. He never would desert it, I do believe, by bestowing it on an unworthy object."

"That is just my idea, my lord."

"Harcourt, I'll disinherit him. I'll never see him again—never! never! never!"

"Pardon me, my dear Lord Mortlake, but allow me to suggest what I think would be a far wiser course."

"Go on."

"In the first place we are as yet by no means certain that any marriage has really taken place at all. On the contrary, in the absence of proof, we are entitled to presume that it has not."

"A sound legal deduction; at all events, in this instance. Proceed."

"And we are the more entitled to entertain that presumption, because, as I mentioned to your lordship just now, I have caused a most strict search and inquiry to be made in every church record and registrar's office, far and near, around your son's legal domicile; and this search has extended over the whole time that has elapsed since his return from Oxford, twelve months ago."

"Good."

"And he is not yet of age?"

"By Jove! that's true! I never thought of that! You're a deuced clever fellow, Harcourt!"

"And even if he was of age, he must have been married under a false name."

"That would not invalidate the marriage, Harcourt; unless, indeed, the woman was privy to the concealment."

"Exactly so, my lord. Still, we don't know that she was a party to the deceit."

"What steps would you advise me to take under the circumstances?"

"I should strongly counsel your lordship to take no notice of this affair whatever."

"I don't understand you."

"I mean that you should still appear to remain in entire ignorance of the matter."

"To what end?"

"To put a stop to the connection, if possible."

"I can't, for the life of me, see how my affection of ignorance would terminate it!"

"Pardon me, my lord, but I do."

"Explain, Harcourt, explain; for this proposal fairly passes my comprehension!"

"I should recommend that your lordship, without mentioning one word to Mr. Harry on this subject, or giving him the slightest hint of what you suspect, should immediately obtain for him some not unimportant appointment abroad—the further off the better—say in China or in India, or in some distant place where his duties and his position would bring him into such continual contact with his official superiors, that it would be impossible for her to accompany him, unless as his wife."

"By Jove! I see!—Egad, Harcourt, Machiavelli was a fool to you! Ah! I have it—I have it! My old and personal friend, Lord Newbury, is going out to India as Viceroy—he sails next week—I'll explain the whole affair confidentially to him, and get him to take Master Harry as one of his private secretaries."

"I think that appointment involves your son's personal residence with his Excellency at the Government House at Calcutta and Simla, or wherever else the Viceroy may chance to be."

"It does. He can't be absent for a single day without special permission, and I will so explain the affair to my old friend, that that permission be not granted except on very sufficient cause being shown."

"Then that will do admirably."

"I'll go and see Newbury on the subject this very morning."

"I suppose he will make no difficulty about it."

"Impossible! We are bound to each other by a thousand mutual obligations, and the balance of the account lies in my favour, for I helped one of his prodigal youngsters out of a precious mess only twelve months ago."

"Then I have no doubt that I shall have the pleasure of congratulating your lordship on a satisfactory termination of this affair very shortly."

"No doubt—no doubt! And believe me, my dear Harcourt, I shall never forget how deeply I have been indebted to you personally for your admirable advice. When we come into power again—and that will be very shortly, I have no doubt—you shall find that I am not ungrateful."

"I am always too glad, my lord, to place my humble services at your disposal. But one word further. After having secured this appointment, I would not let a single hour pass without informing Mr. Henry, and making the necessary arrangements with him."

"Certainly not. He is in the house now, I believe. I'll write a line saying that I wish to see him this afternoon, and leave it in the hall for him as I go out. Dine with me this evening, and you shall hear the result."

"I shall have much pleasure, my lord."

And so saying, the astute old lawyer departed, to take part in other schemes and project further plans for his future personal aggrandizement.

II.

Lord Mortlake did not lose a moment in seeking an interview with his noble friend the Viceroy of India, and after a full and confidential explanation of all the circumstances of the case, he easily obtained the desired appointment.

On his return home he found that his son Henry had received his note, and had gone out, leaving a message that he should wait on Lord Mortlake in the library at the hour which he had named.

The young gentleman was punctual to his time, and, little dreaming of the abuse that was about to open beneath his feet, and engulf all his present happiness, walked cheerily into his father's presence with all the confidence of a favourite son, very few of whose wishes had been left ungratified.

But the thunderbolt was soon to fall, and he heard with unspeakable consternation that his father's old friend, Lord Newbury, the newly-appointed Viceroy of India, having most kindly expressed a wish to take his friend's younger son in his personal suite with him as one of his private secretaries, there was nothing left for it but to make instant preparation for his departure.

Of course the rejection of such an offer was quite out of the question. It was a most kind and generous proposal, and opened out to him not only a highly honourable, but also a very lucrative and brilliant career in the service of his country.

The poor, half-distracted young gentleman was compelled to swallow the bitter though gilded pill which his father forced upon him, and he did swallow it. Before he left the library he had given his consent, and thus sealed the parting between himself and his darling wife. For she was his wife, although all the careful searches and researches of the lynx-eyed old family lawyer had failed to find any proof of it.

Thus far the paternal counsels, and commands, and persuasions had prevailed, and the paternal schemes to separate two pure and loving hearts had fully succeeded.

All the necessary preparations for his outfit and departure were easily and expeditiously made, for money will accomplish anything; and when Lord Mortlake had obtained his son's promise and consent, he placed no bounds on his generosity as far as pounds, shillings and pence were concerned. He knew the noble nature of his boy, and that nothing would induce him to break his pledged word.

He made the young secretary an unusually liberal yearly allowance, and had the possession of wealth been the *sacramental benediction* of his desires, his wildest wishes must have been more than gratified.

During all their long conversation upon a word fell from either with relation to the little cottage at Mortlake, or its beautiful occupant.

The father took care to avoid all allusion to it; and his son, though for very different reasons, was more fearful than ever of bringing the matter to Lord Mortlake's notice.

He well knew that, under present circumstances especially, there was not the remotest hope for a recognition of his union; and he thought that the best, and, indeed, the only course left him, was to trust to time and to Providence to bring about the revelation of his marriage at some more favourable future period.

At the termination of the interview, his thought was with regard to the mode in which he could best secure the regular, but secret, remittance to his wife of an income which would enable her to live in comfort at the cottage during his enforced absence.

After much reflection, he determined to con-

tinue that task to a friend whom he had every reason to suppose would execute the trust faithfully.

He dared not send money openly through a banker, or even directly through the post; for such a step might be fatal to the preservation of their secret.

But he thought that, through his friend, not only the necessary remittances, but likewise his correspondence with his darling Rose, might pass with perfect safety.

And so he arranged it.

At last the day came for his embarkation. The parting between poor Harry and his lovely wife was, as may be conjectured, one of no common sadness. But she felt the necessity of controlling her grief, and bore up bravely.

After a favourable voyage, the Viceroy party reached Calcutta in safety, and the next day Henry wrote a long and affectionate letter to his "darling little wife," which he forwarded under cover to the friend—the false friend by whom he was soon to be treacherously betrayed. We now proceed to give a short sketch of the circumstances, under which Lord Mortlake's younger son first met and afterwards married Rose Lambert.

He was passionately fond of flowers, and of flower painting, and was no contemptible amateur artist. In pursuance of the advice of his drawing-master, he went one summer morning, as early as four o'clock, to Covent Garden Market to see the magnificent assemblage of flowers of all sorts which is there displayed in the wholesale departments, and stretches completely across the street under the clock, from Henrietta street at one end to Evans's Hotel at the other. And there he met his fate. For there he saw the loveliest flower he thought he had ever beheld, in the person of Rose Lambert.

Her father, old John Lambert, had for many years been one of the most celebrated and successful growers of all varieties of roses, and he attended Covent Garden regularly once a week, on Saturdays, to dispose of his stock, and his daughter regularly took her place beside him.

It would lengthen this story too greatly to recount at length the whole history of their wooing. Suffice it to say that he only made himself known to the father and daughter as a young flower-painter, who made a good living by the practice of his art, and that, with the old man's consent, they were married.

Soon after their union old John Lambert died, and then the business became vested in Rose, who was his only child. She did not dispose of it, but placed the management in the hands of a competent person; and it was now, at the time of her husband's departure for India, bringing her in a clear profit of about a hundred and fifty pounds a year.

After Henry left for the East she had, of course, a great deal of leisure time upon her hands, and partly occupied it by occasional short visits to the old homely cottage where she was born, and to some extent, again began to supervise the business arrangements personally.

But she never now visited the market, as she had so constantly done during her father's life.

It may also be mentioned that, in addition to the Covent Garden business, there was a profitable trade carried on in furnishing the town houses of several of the nobility during the season with floral beauty for their verandahs, and these were generally exchanged for others once a week or so.

For four years the days of Rose passed along without a single cloud to obscure the horizon, or a single wish ungratified except the desire for her dear husband's speedy return.

Shortly after his departure for India a daughter was born, and the fate of her was a constant and unending source of additional delight.

Her husband had hitherto written to her with unvarying constancy, but at the end of the fourth year his letters grew less frequent, and his remittances less regular; not that she required the money, for Rose was of a "frugal mind," and had always lived far within her means, but the apparent neglect in writing to her grieved the poor young wife greatly.

She had always answered all his letters most punctually, and, it need scarcely be said, most affectionately; but still his communications arrived by degrees less and less often, and at length both letters and remittances ceased altogether.

She knew not what to think. She wrote to him repeatedly, but received no reply, and at last conviction forced itself upon her mind that that she was forsaken.

Now, Rose had a strong mind, and a stern sense of right and wrong, and, moreover, not a little pride; and after a whole twelve months had passed without receiving a single line, she penned one most expostulatory letter, and when that was not answered she disposed of the furniture of Mortlake Cottage, gave up the key to the landlord, and removed to the old country cottage where she had been born, and resumed the active management of her business, without leaving a single trace behind her of her whereabouts.

"He is either dead, or he is dead to me," said she, "and that is sufficient."

And then seven long, dreary years slowly rolled by.

"The Earl of Birkenhead has arrived at his town house, in Belgrave Square, from India."

So ran a paragraph in the "fashionable intelligence" column of the *Morning Post* of the 20th of July, 184—.

And, of course, as his lordship had not been expected to arrive until the following month,