

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE CHILD.

I passed and saw in a sunlit room
A butterfly flutter its golden plume,
While a baby vainly strove to clasp
Its silken wing in its tiny grasp.

I passed again, and the sunlit room
Was shrouded in darkness, and saddened in gloom,
And the voice of the baby was silent and hushed,
And beside him the wings of the butterfly
Crushed;

For cold and still on the snowy bed,
Like a snow-drop, pale, lay the baby dead;
And the tangled maze of his sunny hair
Seemed bright with the light that the angels
Wear.

Once more I passed, and methought on high
A song broke forth from the distant sky,
And I felt as the cadence swept along
'Twas the silver sound of that baby's song—

"Ever my father's face I see,
Ever, for ever, it smiles on me,
And never again shall my voice be hushed
Or the prize, I am grasping be withered and
Crushed."

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PUBLICANS and SINNERS

A LIFE PICTURE.

BY MISS M. E. BRADDON,

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Butter End," "The Outcasts," &c., &c.

BOOK THE LAST.

CHAPTER VI.

LUCIUS IN QUEST OF JUSTICE.

Lucius went to Messrs. Pullman and Everill's office the day after Ferdinand Sivewright's death. Mr. Pullman, an active-looking elderly man, received him with that stock-in-trade kind of politeness which thriving solicitors keep for unknown clients, heard his story, smiled somewhat incredulously at some of its details, but reserved his opinion until he should have mastered the case.

"Isn't it rather strange that we should never have heard of this youthful marriage of Mr. Henry Glenlyne's," he said, with his sceptical smile, when the story was finished, "if there had been such a marriage?"

"Not more strange than that other clandestine marriages should be kept secret," said Lucius.

"Ah, but they so seldom are kept secret for more than a year or two; they always transpire somehow. Facts are like water, Mr. Davoren, and have an odd way of leaking out. This supposed marriage, according to your showing, is an event of twenty years ago."

"There is really no room for speculation upon the subject," said Lucius coolly. "You can easily verify my statement by a reference to the registries of St. James's, Piccadilly, where Félicie Dumarques' marriage is no doubt recorded."

This was unanswerable. Mr. Pullman looked meditative, but said nothing.

"And what is your motive in coming to me?" he asked at last.

"I came here presuming that you, as Mr. Henry Glenlyne's solicitor, would be naturally desirous to see his daughter righted."

"But suppose I should be disinclined to believe in the parentage of this young lady, your protégée?"

"My future wife, Mr. Pullman."

"Ah, I understand," returned the lawyer quickly, as much as to say, "We are getting to the motive of your conduct, my young gentleman."

"I have been engaged to Miss Glenlyne for nearly a year," said Lucius, as if answering Mr. Pullman's degrading supposition, "but it is only within the last week that I have discovered the secret of her parentage."

"Indeed; then whatever hope you may entertain of future profit from this discovery is a recent hope, and has had no influence in the matter of your regard for this young lady?"

"None whatever. I do not pretend to be superior to human nature in general, but I think I may safely say that there are few men who set less value on money, in the abstract, than I do. But whatever portion my wife may be entitled to receive I am ready to fight for, and to fight still more resolutely for the name which she is entitled to bear."

"But granted that the marriage which I hear of for the first time to-day did actually take place, what is to prove to any legal mind that this young lady whom you put forward is the issue of that marriage?"

Yes, as Ferdinand Sivewright had said, here was the weakness of the case. Lucius now for the first time perceived that he ought to have secured the dying man's deposition of the facts

concerning Lucille. But, standing by that bed of pain, he had hardly been in a condition to consider the case from the lawyer's standpoint. He had forgotten that Sivewright's statement was but fleeting breath, and that this single witness of the truth was swiftly passing beyond the jurisdiction of earthly tribunals.

"For that we must rely on circumstantial evidence," he said after a longish pause. "The woman who nursed Lucille Glenlyne may be still alive."

"How old was the child when this nurse left her?"

"About four, I believe."

"You believe!" echoed Mr. Pullman contemptuously. "Before you approached me upon such a subject as this, Mr. Davoren, you might at least have taken the trouble to be certain about your facts. You believe that the child was about four years old when her nurse left her, and you rely upon this nurse, who may or may not be living, to identify the four-year-old child she nursed in the young lady of nineteen whom you put forward."

"You are somewhat hard upon me, Mr. Pullman."

"Sir," said the lawyer, with a Johnsonian air, "I abhor chimeras."

"I do not, however, despair of making Miss Glenlyne's identity clear even to your legal mind. As I have told you, Mr. and Mrs. Glenlyne occupied a cottage near Sidmouth for the few years of their wedded life. The little girl was born there, nursed there, and conveyed straight from that cottage to the house in Bond-street, where she was brought up in the care of old Mr. Sivewright. Now the date of her removal from Sidmouth will fit into the date of her arrival in Bond-street, to which Mr. Sivewright can testify; and it will go hard if we cannot find people in Sidmouth—servants, tradesmen, the landlord of the cottage—who will remember the child's abrupt removal and be able to swear to the date."

"Able to swear," exclaimed Mr. Pullman, again contemptuously. "What fact is there so incredible that legions of unimpeachable witnesses will not sustain it by their testimony? You mentioned the name of Sivewright just now. Is the person you spoke of one Ferdinand Sivewright?"

"No; the person in question is Ferdinand Sivewright's father."

"A pretty disreputable set, those Sivewrights, I should think," said Mr. Pullman, "so far as I can judge from the transactions between Ferdinand Sivewright and my late client, Mr. Henry Glenlyne, which were chiefly of the bill-discounting order."

"I have nothing to say in favor of Ferdinand Sivewright, who died yesterday at the London Hospital," answered Lucius; "but his father is an honest man, and it was his father who brought up Lucille, knowing nothing more of her parentage than the vague idea which he gathered from certain letters written by Mr. Glenlyne."

"O, Ferdinand Sivewright is dead, is he?" retorted Mr. Pullman, with a suspicious look; "and it is only after his death that this claim arises."

There was such an insolent doubt implied by the lawyer's words and manner that Lucius rose with an offended look, and was about to leave Mr. Pullman's office.

"You have chosen to discredit my statements," he said; "I can go to some other lawyer who will be more civil and less suspicious."

"Stop, sir," cried Mr. Pullman, wheeling round in his revolving chair as Lucius approached the door. "I don't say I won't help you; I don't say your case is not a sound one; nor do I doubt your good faith. Sit down again, and let us discuss the matter quietly."

"I have endeavored to do that, Mr. Pullman, but you have chosen to adopt an offensive tone, and the discussion is ended."

"Come, Mr. Davoren, why be so thin-skinned? You come to me with a story which at the first glance seems altogether incredible, and before I have had time to weigh the facts or to recover my breath after the surprise occasioned by your startling disclosure, you take offence and wish me good-morning. Go to another lawyer if you please; but if your case is a sound one, there is no one who can help you so well as I."

"You are perhaps solicitor to some other branch of the family—to people whose interests would be injuriously affected by the assertion of Lucille Glenlyne's claims."

"No, Mr. Davoren. When Mr. Spalding Glenlyne came into his cousin's property, he chose to employ another solicitor. My connection with the Glenlyne family then terminated, except as concerns Miss Glenlyne."

"Miss Glenlyne—who is that?"

"Henry Glenlyne's aunt. The sister of Mr. Reginald Glenlyne, who left him his fortune."

"Is it possible that Miss Glenlyne is still living?" exclaimed Lucius, remembering Monsieur Dolfe's description of the little elderly lady, thin, pale, and an invalid. And this description had applied to her twenty-two years ago. Miss Glenlyne must surely belong to the Rosicrucians, or to the house of Methuselah.

"Yes," replied Mr. Pullman, "Miss Glenlyne is a very old lady; between seventy and eighty, I daresay."

"But Miss Glenlyne was an invalid two-and-twenty years ago."

"She was; and she has gone on being an invalid ever since; no more healthy mode of life. She lives on mutton cutlets and sago puddings, dry toast and weak tea, and if she indulges in a second glass of dry sherry thinks it a debauch. She believes in the homeopaths, and experi-

mentalises upon her system with minute doses, which, if they do her no good, can hardly do her much harm. She spends her winters at Nice or Dawlish, knows not the meaning of emotion, and at the rate she lives—expenditure of vital force reduced to the lowest figure—she may go on living twenty-two years longer."

"If you have no relations with Mr. Spalding Glenlyne, there is no reason why you should not undertake to protect the interests of your late client's daughter," said Lucius. "I am quite ready to believe that your knowledge of the family may render your services better worth having than anybody else's. I came to you in perfect good faith, and in ignorance of everything except the fact of Mr. Glenlyne's marriage, and the melancholy fate of his wife, who died away from her husband and her child, as I have already told you."

"A sad case for the lady," said the lawyer. "I should like to see those letters, by the way, of which you spoke a little while ago."

"I have brought them with me," answered Lucius, producing the precious packet and the miniature.

"What a picture?" cried Mr. Pullman. "Yes, that is my client's portrait, undoubtedly, and a good likeness. A very handsome young man, Henry Glenlyne, but a weak one. Humph! These are the letters, are they?"

The lawyer read them carefully, and from time to time shook his head over them, with a slow and meditative shake, as who should say, "These are poor stuff."

"There is very little to help your case here," he said, when he had finished this deliberate perusal. "The child is spoken of as your little girl, or the little girl, throughout. The most rational conclusion would be that the child was Sivewright's child."

"Yet in that case why should Mr. Glenlyne, a young man about town, be interested in the child? Why should he give money? Why should he supplicate for secrecy?"

"Matter for philosophical speculation, but hardly a question to submit to a jury, or put in an affidavit," replied Mr. Pullman coolly.

"If there is nothing in those letters to help me, I will find the evidence I want elsewhere," said Lucius, inwardly fuming at this graybeard's impenetrability. "I will go down myself to Sidmouth—hunt out the landlord of that cottage."

"Of whose very name you are ignorant," interposed the man of business.

"Find the servant; advertise for the nurse; discover the doctor who attended Mrs. Glenlyne when that child was born; and link by link forge the chain of evidence which shall re-instate Lucille Glenlyne in the name her cowardly father stole from her."

"De mortuis," said the lawyer. "I admit that if your idea—mind, I fully believe in your own good faith, but you may be mistaken for all that—if your idea is correct, I repeat this girl has been badly treated. But my client is in his grave; let us make what excuses we can for conduct that at first sight appears unmanly."

"I can make no excuse for a man who repudiated his child; who suffered his wife to die broken-hearted, lest by a manly avowal of his marriage he should hazard the loss of fortune."

"Recollect that Henry Glenlyne was brought up and educated in the expectation of his uncle's fortune, that he was deeply in debt for some years before his uncle died, and that the forfeiture of that fortune would have been absolute ruin."

"It was a large fortune, I suppose?"

"It was a fortune that would have been counted large when I was a youngster, but which now might be called mediocre. It was under rather than over a hundred thousand pounds, and chiefly invested in land. Reginald Glenlyne had been in the Indian Civil Service when the pagoda-tree was better worth shaking than it is nowadays, and in a lengthened career had contrived to do pretty well for himself. He belonged to an old family, and a rich one, and had started in life with a competence."

"Henry Glenlyne did inherit this fortune, I conclude?"

"Yes, though the Spalding Glenlynes ran him hard for it."

"How long did he survive his uncle?"

"Nearly ten years. He married a year after the old man's death—married a fashionable woman, handsome, extravagant, and it was whispered a bit of a tartar. She brought him two sons and a daughter, who all died—a taint of consumption in the blood, people said; and the lady herself died of rapid consumption two years before her husband. The loss of wife and children broke him up altogether; and Joseph Spalding Glenlyne, who had watched, the estate like a harpy ever since he left Cambridge, had the satisfaction of coming into possession of it after all."

"Did Henry Glenlyne make a will?"

"No; he died suddenly, though his constitution had been broken for some time before the end. Joseph Glenlyne inherited under the uncle's will."

"And that left the estate—"

"To Henry Glenlyne, and his children after him. Falling such issue, to Joseph Spalding Glenlyne, and his children after him. Mr. Spalding Glenlyne has plenty of children—raw-boned boys, who prowl about Westminster between school-hours with their luncheons in blue bags. A saving man, Mr. Glenlyne. I have seen his boys in the abbey itself munching surreptitious sandwiches."

"Then this estate now held by Mr. Spalding Glenlyne actually belongs of right to Lucille."

"If you can prove her to be the legitimate

daughter of Henry Glenlyne, she is most decidedly entitled so claim it."

"If I cannot prove that, I must be unworthy of success in any walk of life," said Lucius.

"Leave the case in my hands, Mr. Davoren, and leave me those letters. My clerk shall make copies of them if you like, and return you the original documents. I'll think the matter over, and, if I find it ripe enough, take counsel's opinion."

"I should like to see Miss Glenlyne—the lady in whose service Lucille's mother came to England," said Lucius. "Would there be any harm in my endeavoring to obtain an interview with her?"

"I think not. Old Miss Glenlyne hates the Spalding Glenlynes worse than she hates allopathy. They contrived to offend her in some unpardonable manner while they were courting her brother. She is at Brighton just now. If you would really like to call upon her, I shouldn't mind giving you a letter of introduction. She and I were always good friends."

"I'll go down to Brighton to-morrow, and take Lucille with me. She is wonderfully like that portrait of Félicie Dumarques, and it will be strange if Miss Glenlyne fails to see the likeness, unless age has darkened those that look out of the windows."

"Miss Glenlyne is as sharp as a needle—a wonderful old lady."

Mr. Pullman, who had now, as it were, taken Lucius under his wing, wrote a letter of introduction, stating Mr. Davoren's motive for seeking an interview, addressed his note to Miss Glenlyne, Selbrook-place, and handed it to his new client. And thus they parted, on excellent terms with each other, the lawyer promising to send a clerk to inspect the St. James's registries that afternoon, in quest of that particular entry which was in a manner the keystone of Lucille's case.

"Upon my word, I don't know why I should be fool enough to take up such a chimerical business," Mr. Pullman said to himself, half reproachfully, as he stood upon his hearth-rug, and enjoyed the genial warmth of his seacoal fire, after Lucius had left him.

But in his heart of hearts Mr. Pullman was pretty well aware that he took up Lucius and Lucille's case because he detested Joseph Spalding Glenlyne.

Lord Lytton has written an admirable chapter upon the value of Hate as a motive power, and it was assuredly Hate that prompted Mr. Pullman to undertake the championship of Lucille. Mr. Spalding Glenlyne had removed the Glenlyne estate from Mr. Pullman's office. The poetry of retribution would be achieved by the return of the estate to the office without the encumbrance of Spalding Glenlyne.

Mr. Pullman polished his spectacles with his oriental handkerchief, and sighed gently to himself as he thought what a nice thing that would be.

CHAPTER VII.

THE END OF ALL DELUSIONS.

Mr. Sivewright received the news of his son's death like a Roman; yet Lucius felt that beneath this semblance of stoicism there lurked keenest pain. With weak human nature's inconsistency the old man's memory now slid back to days long gone, before his son had become a scorpion—when the clever bright-faced child had seemed the one star of hope upon a joyless horizon.

"He was such a promising child," Homer Sivewright said to himself, as he sat by the hearth in the panelled parlor, absorbed in gloomy meditation, "and I hoped so much from him. How was it that he went astray? Was it innate wickedness, or his mother's evil teaching?"

One pang was spared him. He did not know that the son he had once so fondly loved had tried to sap the last dregs of his falling life by slow poison. He knew that Ferdinand was a baffled murderer, for he had seen the knife pointed at his own breast by that relentless hand. But he might extenuate even this deadly assault by supposing it to be unpremeditated—a sudden access of ungovernable rage. So he sat by his hearth, and brooded upon days so long vanished that it seemed almost as if they belonged to another life; as if the chief figure in those departed scenes—himself—had been a different person, and had died long ago, so utterly had he outgrown and passed away from the Homer Sivewright of that time. He thought with a new and keen regret of a period that had been sorely troubled, yet not without hope. His busy brain had been full of schemes of self-aggrandisement, the dullness of the present brightened by one perpetual day-dream, the vision of accumulated wealth, which he and his only son were to share. The boy's good looks and talent had promised success. He seemed born to conquer—to trample on the necks of less-gifted mankind. Delusive dreams—baseless calculations! Between that time and this lay the dark world of memory, peopled with the phantoms of dead hopes.

The old man sighed at the thought that he had outlived the possibility of hope. He was too old to look forward, except beyond the grave; and his eyes, so keen for the business of this world, were yet too dull to pierce the mists that veil Death's fatal river, and reach the shore that lies upon the other side. What hold had he now upon the things of this earth—toll and profit, and the strong wine of success? He, who had once been whole owner of the good ship *Life*, was now reduced to a sixty-fourth share in that gallant vessel. What recked it to him