

Literature.

LADY OF ABERNETHY HALL OR THE MILLINER'S FORTUNE

CHAPTER VI.

THE WORLD'S HONORS AND A SEASON'S MYSTERIES.

Tidings are long deferred, and anxiously expected, came at last. T. P. political canvasser for a senator to Congress, from the district in which Mr. Wintrop resided, had been a close and laborious one, but it was over at length, and Milford Wintrop was the successful candidate.

His name was enrolled among the honorables of his country; there was a seat in the senate hall, at Washington, waiting for his occupancy.

He was very proud of the result, won by his money more than by his worth, and he entered his wife's room with an elastic step. He was the bearer of important tidings, and he came to her with an air of extreme satisfaction.

"Mrs. Wintrop, you are a senator's wife." She bowed her head over her child, and simply said, in reply.

"Very well, Mr. Wintrop." Three months spent in preparation, and then the newly elected senator and his wife set out for Washington. Wintrop had hoped to be left at home, but Mr. Wintrop was proud of her regal beauty, and this beauty could only be gratified by the display of his treasure. He was not content with admiring her himself; he wanted others to see and appreciate the jewel he had in his possession, and no consideration for his lady's wishes would have induced him to forego the gratification of it.

So to the gay capital went Mrs. Wintrop and her child. An elegant mansion, on Madison Square received them, in whose spacious drawing rooms Mrs. Wintrop held receptions unequalled in brilliancy even by those of the President himself.

Her resplendent beauty and queenly bearing were the constant theme of Washington society. The je ne sais quoi of her grace, and the very delicate repose of her perfect features filled beholders with admiration. Her dresses were copied, her sayings quoted, and she became the model for all the ladies in the fashion-hunted capital.

Once, and only once, during the season, had the long-suffering child of her own breast in the bosom of the fair Mrs. Wintrop.

A party of inspection were dispatched to New York, by the Administration, to examine some water-works there which had been complained of as defective.

Some of the gentlemen on the committee took their wives with them to the pleasure of the trip, and by invitation Wintrop accompanied Senator Gordon and his lady.

It was a beautiful day in early summer—calm, cool and cloudless, and Wintrop wandered off a little way from her party, and directly found herself standing on the bay, from whence a European steamer was about to sail. She glanced hurriedly over the passengers, and was about turning away, when an unaccountable thrill shot through her being. She could neither explain nor analyze it; feeling it was a return of old memories and emotions which she had believed long since in ashes. Some person brushed hastily past her—so near that his arm grazed the folds of her shawl. She lifted her eyes and gazed after him. His firm step sounded on the connecting plank; his dark hair was tossed and threaded by the fresh ocean breeze; and for one little moment in a form of classical Midwestern daguer-typing itself against the sky.

Then the bell sounded, the moorings cast off, and the gallant boat steamed rapidly down the river. Wintrop entered the office and looked over the list of passengers. The very first line was filled with what she was looking for:—"Grand Middleton from Boston bound to Haere via Liverpool."

The August heats were approaching, but Congress had not yet concluded its session. An unusual press of business still detained the august body at the metropolis, but most of the members' families had left town for some rural place of resort.

Wintrop began to languish for cool air of the country; and Mr. Wintrop proposed that she should spend a few weeks at Newport or to Virginia Springs. To this she objected; she wanted rest and quiet rather than a mere change of excitement; some retired place in the country would answer every purpose.

She had heard much of the fine natural scenery of Rappahannock county, and she desired to pass the remainder of the summer in some little village of that mountainous region.

At the mention of Rappahannock county Mr. Wintrop became more strangely agitated.

would comprise the kitchen household, and she might take with her as many attendants as she chose. Wintrop immediately commenced her preparations for leaving Washington. Two days afterward she set forth, Mr. Wintrop accompanying her as an escort; and Rosy her own maid, to attend to the personal wants of her mistress.

"After seeing his wife safely installed at Belmonte, Mr. Wintrop bade her farewell and returned to Washington. Belmonte was a wildly beautiful spot, in the near vicinity of the lofty hills known as the Blue Ridge. It was thickly wooded with trees of a stunted growth, and half the plantation was covered with huge boulders, which the spring floods from time to time had rolled down from the mountains.

The old mansion itself was dreary and wretched enough for any tale of darkness which might be related of it. It was a house where men had lived and died; and one of our noblest poets say that such are haunted houses.

The rooms were low and dark from the creeping vines that covered the windows; the wainscots were black with age, and worn eaten in many places. The carpets were old and faded with tapestry, once wrought in beautiful patterns of gorgeous colors, by fair fingers now moldering per chance like their work; and the furniture—all of dark oak, must have belonged to another generation.

A large portion of the house was uninhabited, but in the north wing facing the mountains, three apartments, on the first floor, had been fitted up, not only comfortably, but luxuriously.

The sleeping-room of Wintrop only regretted that the basement was at this point so very high as to preclude all ideas of getting to the ground from the spacious balcony. She thought she would have liked to go out for her walks, from this room, rather than be obliged to traverse the whole length of a gloomy corridor, amid the ruins, to reach the hall door.

Belmonte was the property of a family by the name of Brandon, the only remaining member of which was far away. And this was all the information that Wintrop could obtain by questioning Aunt Phillis, the colored housekeeper, who was remarkably taciturn for one of her class.

One apartment of the old house, reserved from the general decay by recent repairs, was the very beautiful chamber of horror to the fancy of Wintrop. It was much like the other rooms in its vicinity, save that across the windows were strong iron bars; and the doors were secured with treble bolts upon the outside.

There was no fire-place or other ventilation for warmth, and the walls were covered with thick green moss.

"Phillis," said Mrs. Wintrop, seeking the old woman in the kitchen, "there is a room in close vicinity to mine that has aroused curiosity."

"Deed, missus, dat's mighty curious," replied Phillis, giving the sauce-pan with her black hand.

"Can you tell me what it was used for? The room with the loft on the outside of the door, and the walls covered with green flannel, I mean."

"Like enough it was the parlor," replied the old woman, "and the windows and the back of the fire place, and the green cloth" continued Wintrop interrogatively.

"The days passed pleasantly enough at Belmonte, save that the mistress had too much time for thought. She was alone once more; free to enjoy undisturbed the society of her darling child; now a beautiful boy of four years; but in spite of the sweet satisfaction, she found her thoughts constantly recurring to the peasant evenings spent in the parlor at Abernethy Hall with Gerard Middleton.

And, try as she would, those old memories could not be stifled; and when the anguish they caused became too great to bear, she would like little Willie in her arms and set out on a long ramble over the hills.

One August night, Mrs. Wintrop sat in her chamber trying to read; Willie slumbered in his crib by her side; Rosy was in bed in the adjoining room, and everything around the house was hushed to the profoundest quiet.

It had been one of those sultry days peculiar to ripe summer, and the dull, torpid atmosphere was prolific to repose. Her book was uninteresting; the lamp burned dimly; a house fly dropped lazily on the window; and Wintrop, acted upon by surrounding influence, sank back in her chair and fell asleep.

She was awakened suddenly by some strange noise. The lamp had gone out, but the starlight streamed fairly into the room. Plainly discernible in the gloom of the place was a tall, gaunt figure standing erect between the starlight and the window, from which the curtain was looped back. A human figure, with eyes like stars, and long hair white as snow, streaming around it like a shroud!

August was drawing to a close. The middle of September Mrs. Wintrop was to leave Belmonte, and return to Maplewood, where she would remain until the winter session of Congress should usher in the gay season at Washington.

It was a bright summer day, and the unusual coolness of the air had invited to out of door exercise. Wintrop had indulged herself in a very long walk, and being quite weary, she went to her bed earlier than was her custom. Willie had coaxed mamma to lie down beside him and tell him a story; she lifted the simple tale, and the mother and child were fast asleep in slumber.

Willie's head was nestled close to his mother's bosom, her bright, soft curls mingling with the brown rings that clustered around his fall white forehead.

Wintrop slept peacefully—a vague sense of insecurity had oppressed her all the day, and her slumber was troubled with wild dreams and distorted visions.

The touch of some cold substance upon her face awoke her. She knew not at this substance was, but it struck an icy chill to her heart, she lifted her head to push it away, and that wretched, unearthly 'Ha! ha! ha!' heard once before, burst on her.

With a terrified cry Wintrop sprang from the couch and peered into the gloom. The same demon face, with horrible blood red eyes and snow-white hair, hovered above her. The spectral figure, with the lips drawn tightly away from them, glittered before her!

Wintrop bounded forward, and seizing the heavy bronze candlestick, hurled it at the intruder. The light was extinguished by the missile fell; there was a dull, dead sound as if of the closing of a great door some immeasurable distance—and then the silence of death fell upon the chamber.

Willie slept quietly in his bed, and Wintrop stood alone in the centre of the floor.

CHAPTER VII. THROUGH THE MADOW OF DEATH.

It was a terrible mystery! Wintrop longed yet trembled, to fathom it. She hoped not to be obliged to ask for aid, she would rather encounter all the danger, if danger there was, and run all the risks.

Night followed night, and during the dark hours that determined sorrow never closed her eyes. What little rest she had was taken by day, when the household were asleep, and Rosy awoke to take charge of the child.

Wintrop's father had but one brother, named George; and this George Atherton was one of the bravest and most daring men in the country. He had lately earned the title of colonel, and though now an old man, he had always taken a great delight in teaching his niece the use of warlike weapons. To please the old colonel, the girl had taken lessons in fencing, and was quite an adept in the use of fire arms.

In a sportive moment her father had presented her with a case of pistols, and these little desperate weapons had been years in the false bottom of her trunk.

Now she took them out, loaded the barrels carefully, and placed them on the stand by her bedside, resolved that if she should be again favored with the visit of the mysterious fiend that had twice appeared to her, to try the effect of cold lead upon it.

But it did not seem likely that her courage would be tested. Time passed on monotonously, without variation, and but two nights more remained to Wintrop at Belmonte.

The intervening day must be spent in packing and making other needful arrangements for traveling; and wearied and drowsy, Wintrop threw herself upon the lounge, without undressing, to catch a few moments' repose before the depth of the night should come. She knew that if her strength would be required for her labors of to-morrow.

She gave Rosy imperative orders to remain awake until she called her; and the girl, seated before the little fire, which the dampness of the night had made agreeable, with an entertaining novel in her hand, readily promised obedience.

Wintrop soon fell asleep, for she was very weary, and she knew nothing more till she heard the loud clock striking one. She started up and put out her arm to clasp her child, but he was not by her side! His place was empty—he was gone!

A wild shriek rose to her lips, but she stifled it instantly. Rosy must have taken him up, she flew to herself, by the way of assurance. She flew to the side of the girl—Rosy was sound asleep.

"Willie! where is Willie? demand the distracted mother, in a frenzy of suspense.

Rosy rubbed her eyes, and stared around her with a blank face.

"I have not seen him, madam," she said, "since I laid him down on the bed with you. As I hope for heaven, mistress, I have not!"

Oh! but those who called Mrs. Wintrop cold and passionless should have seen her then.

She roused the whole household in a study, and searched the mansion in haste. She went herself into the deepest recesses of the mouldy, tomb-like ceiling and through the heavily-framed arches which supported the massive weight of the buildings.

Flanibars were lighted, and the terrified negroes, led on by that resolute woman, searched every dell and dingy and ransacked every hovel in the vicinity. Slaves from the nearest plantations turned out and joined them, their quick sympathies awakened by the cry:

"The child of the Lady of Belmonte has been stolen!"

All day the search went on; Wintrop, pale, but firm, leading the van, and returning at nightfall only to see if her husband had arrived.

Mr. Wintrop had flown to the spot at the first alarm of the telegraph. A more wildly despairing man he never soon. His face was shrouded in a deadly pallor, his thin lips were rigid as those of a corpse, and his eyes seemed ready to start from their sockets. A couple of miles behind his horse had fallen dead under him unable to endure the pace at which he was ridden; and the "Grand animal that had been procured at Warrenton, was lashed in front.

Mr. Wintrop grasped his wife's hand by the arm, and demanded the particulars of his son's loss. Coldly and briefly she related all to him—keeping nothing back.

He struck his forehead with his clenched hand.

"Great God! he said, "I am as lost as thought. Oh, fool—fool that I am to consent to have my innocent child brought to the place where she drew breath!"

"This," said an agricultural implement dealer to an old farmer, expressing to the merits of a new machine, "this is a patent corn planter, and in putting it down he planted it on the old man's corn and raised an ache on the spot."

A gentleman named Brown, who had been in the habit of toasting a certain lady on festive occasions, having ceased to do so, was asked the reason. "Because," said he, "I have toasted her for years without making her Brown, and so I've refused to toast her no more."

A woman takes a special delight in teasing a woman.

EXHIBITION. A PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION WILL BE HELD IN FREDERICTON ON THE 5th, 9th, 10th and 11th October next.

ABOUT \$5,000 IN PRIZES.

Prizes will be made for the 25th September, and the public generally that he has received THREE LEADERS UNDER THE OLD BRANDY.

JULIUS L. INCHES, Secretary for Agriculture.

NEW BRUNSWICK RAILWAY. SUMMER ARRANGEMENT.

Close connection is made at Woodstock by Express Trains with Trains to and from St. Stephen, Andrews, Bangor, Pictou, and Boston, and at Fredericton with Trains to and from St. John.

ON and after MONDAY, May 6th, 1878, Trains will run as follows:—

Express Trains Leave GIBSON, 2.30 P. M. for Woodstock, Fairfield, Carleton and Grand Falls.

WOODSTOCK, 5.10 P. M. for Gibson and Grand Falls.

CARLETON, 4.10 A. M. for Woodstock and Gibson.

GRAND FALLS, 4.00 A. M. for Woodstock and Gibson.

WOODSTOCK, 2.30 P. M. for Fairfield, Carleton and Grand Falls.

WOODSTOCK, 11. A. M. for Gibson, Fairfield, Carleton and Grand Falls.

CARLETON, 5.45 A. M. for Gibson, Woodstock and Grand Falls.

Express and Mixed Trains connect at Gibson with Night Boat to and from St. John.

T. HOGAN, Superintendent, Gibson, May 11, 1878.

T. W. SMITH, FISHER'S BUILDING, Queen Street, Fredericton, N. B.

WILLIAMS leave to inform his numerous friends and customers, and the public in general, that he has received from

EUROPE CANADA, and the UNITED STATES One of the best and cheapest stock of

COTHS, CLOTHING, HATS, CAPS, AND Gents' Furnishing Goods

Notice of Removal. C. T. WHELPLEY

THE HIGHEST PRICES IN CASH PAID FOR HIDES & BEEF TALLOW, BY FTON LEATHER CO., KING STREET, FREDERICTON.

KEEP COOL. ICE. ICE. ICE.

CASH FOR HIDES FOR THE GIBSON TANNERY.

SALT AND MOLASSES. R. CHESTNUT & SONS.

PER SCHOONER MAUD'S DESIRE.

AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS.

BEVERLY'S Bookstore and Bindery HAS REMOVED TO THE CORNER OF QUEEN AND CARLETON STS.

HARDWARE.

CUT NAILS.

Mowing Machines.

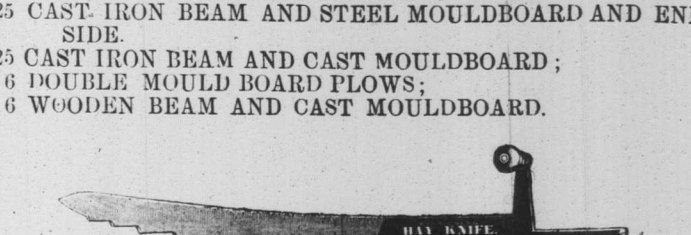
BECKWITH & SEELY, Attorneys-at-Law, Notaries Public, etc.

WAVELEY HOUSE, FREDERICTON.

PLOWS. PLOWS.



50 WROUGHT IRON BEAM AND STEEL MOULDBOARDS.



25 HAY KNIVES R. CHESTNUT & SONS.

Opened to-day, 2 Cases of CHEAP DRESS GOODS.

Dever Bros. FTON, June 15.

A BACK SEAT. 50 BARRELS.

Brushes. Brushes.

H. RUTTER, SADDLER AND HARNESS MAKER.

YORK COUNTY DEBENTURES FOR SALE.

EDGECOMB'S BLOCK, York Street.

WHITTIER & HOOPER, American and CANADIAN FLOUR.

LUMBER FOR SALE.

FARMERS' PLASTER.

WHITTIER & HOOPER.

TO PAINTERS AND OTHERS. SOMETHING NEW.

EMIGRANT Tickets via the International Railway to the Great North West Territory at lower rates than ever before offered.

4 CASES READY MIXED PAINTS, from 1 to 10 Gallons.

50 Bales of GREY COTTONS.

REFRIGERATORS.

H. RUTTER, SADDLER AND HARNESS MAKER.

YORK COUNTY DEBENTURES FOR SALE.

EDGECOMB'S BLOCK, York Street.

WHITTIER & HOOPER, American and CANADIAN FLOUR.

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TO PAINTERS AND OTHERS. SOMETHING NEW.

TO LOAN.

\$1000 TO LOAN ON Best Estate.

JOHN RICHARDS, Ticket Agent.

TO LOAN.

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