W. C. MACRADY.

BORN 1793. DIED AT CHELTENHAM, APRIL 27, 1873.

(From Punch.)

Is this the Actor? Yes, when the curtain drops
Slinks the last spark of a slow-sinking light,
Only the bedside watchers see the spark
That quivered tremulously on the night.

The Actor's death is when he quits the Stage,
Whence he controlled the hearts of many hearts,
Feeling and making feel mere love and rage
Then falls to those who fill more work-day parts.

Short life, perhaps, and shadowy—but sublime,
In those rare moments; when, for joy or pain,
Actors and audiences have been kept time
To music from some mighty master's brain.

A phantom being; but who dare to say
Our substance than their shadows is more true,
Their limpidness night less bright than common day,
Who live, exhale, the life that Shakspeare drew.

MACRADY died! Twill point a paragraph,
Insure a column—leave some setting lights;
But not an instant checks the light world's laugh,
As when an Actor from our stage departs.

He left Ali, weary and many a year gone by
And I wheeled round, sick, with backward thought,
Up to my pulses, for the bright memory
Of all MACRADY acted, was, and taught.

He lived the life 'tis fitting they should live
Who commune with ideal thoughts and things.
To all he wrought, his best heats loved to give,
Was cold to Fashion's smiles, stout 'gainst her stings.

Of high aim in his art, whose dared reach
High art was fully, but would hardly call
Still in his craft dared wider range and reach,
Until he stood it chief—confessed by all.

He was content to shine, and store the gain,
With which success tempts men on downward ways,
But never would he stoop, or bow his knee
For noble art, s'en in ignoble days.

We were boys then, and, with youngest hearts aglow,
Followed his body, that brought him last home;
Through Prospero's glamour, Lear's colossal woe,
Hamlet's brain-sickness, and Othello's wrong.

Answered like English, English HAZAR's call
Once more to Heber's walls; and for the store
Of battle mustered round him one and all,
(In the unequal field of answer.

Ah, those were brave times, when each season brought
Its stately tribute of good work, well done;
And kindred spirits at his bidding wrought,
To help the preacher he had well begun.

And most of good our Stage can boast to-day
Came from his school, who is now at rest.

Hail and Farewell—thou last of a great line,
Who in ideal art ever sought to shine;
Because ye breed at a now simply shrine,
Was your faith false? Lo, the hallowed

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A SIMPLETON;

A Story of the Day.

BY CHARLES READE.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Heaven forbid!" said Phœbe. "No, my dear, no more diamonds for us. We never had the one, and it brought us trouble."

"Nonsense, Phœbe," replied Falcon; "it was not the diamond's fault. You know I have often wanted to go there; but you objected. You said you were afraid some evil would befall me. But now Solomon himself is going to the mines, let us have no more of that nonsense. We will take our rifles and our pistols."

"These—these—rifles and pistols," cried Phœbe; "that shows."

"And we will be there in a week; stay a month, and home with our pockets full of diamonds."

"And find me dead of a broken heart."

"Broken fiddlestick! We have been parted longer than that, and yet here we are all right!"

"Ay, but the pitcher that goes too often to the well gets broke at last. No, Reginald; now I have tasted three years' happiness and peace of mind, I can't do without it. Why, I should end in England. Oh, dear! to have you the heart to part man and wife, that have never been a day from each other all these years!"

"Mrs. Falcon, I would not do it for all the diamonds in the world. Mr. Falcon, I need hardly say how charmed I should be to have your company; but that is a pleasure I shall certainly deny myself, after what your good wife has said. I owe her too much, to cause her a single pang."

"Doctor," said the charming Reginald, "you are a gentleman, and also wise, a thing not very right. It adds to my esteem, if possible. Make your mind easy; I will go alone. I am not a farmer, and I tire of this monotonous life; and, since I am compelled to speak, my mind, as being ashamed, as a gentleman, of living on my wife and her brother, and doing nothing for myself. So I shall go to the Vaal river, and see a little life; here there's nothing but vegetation—and not much of that. Not a word more, Phœbe, if you please. I am good, easy, affectionate husband, but I am a man, and not a child to be tied in a woman's apron-strings, however much I may love and respect her."

Dick put in his word. "Since you are so independent, you can call to the Vaal river. I can't spare a couple of horses."

"This hits the Sybarite Reginald, and he cast a bitter glance of hatred at his brother-in-law; which fell into a smooth silence.

But, when he got Phœbe to himself, he descanted on her selfishness. Dick's cattle mess, and his unwonted dignity, till he made her quite anxious he should have his own way. She came to Steinet, with red eyes, and said, "Tell me, doctor, will there be any women up there—to take care of you?"

"Not a petticoat in the place, I believe. It is a very rough life; and how Phœbe could think of leaving you and sweet little Tommy, and this life of health, and peace, and comfort."

"Yet you do leave us, sir."

"I am the most unfortunate man upon the earth; Falcon is one of the happiest. Would I leave wife and child to go there? Ah, me! I am dead to those I love. This is my one chance of seeing my darling again for many a long year perhaps. Oh, dear, not speak of it, poor woman! Well, good kind friend, I'll tell you what to do. When we are all at supper, take a horse to your door, and left in the yard for me. I'll bid you all good night, and I'll put fifty miles between me before morning. Even then I do need not be bold I am gone; he will not follow me."

"You are very good, sir," said Phœbe; "but no. Too much has been said. I can't have him humbled by my brother, no any one. He says I am selfish. Perhaps I am; though I never was called so. I can't bear he should think me selfish. He will go with us lest we have no blood about it. Sixteen miles, or so, of course I'll pack lemonade. It is Sunday, but I think God Almighty will pardon it, if we are there are no women up there—to take care of—you—you—poor man."

The farm house was twenty miles apart, and nine out of ten were new ones built by the Boers, since they retreated into white savages; mere huts with domed roofs of clay drying on the rafters, stinking, skins in a corner, and a Kaffir woman, of sorts blackening the floor, and particularly small, biting, and odoriferous fortress, compared with which the insect a London warehouse brings into your house in her basket, is a stroke with a feather—and all this without the excuse of poverty; for some of these were shepherd kings, sheared four thousand fleeces a year, and owned a hundred cattle.

These Boers are compelled, by unwritten law, to receive travelled and water their cattle; but our travellers, after one or two experiences, ceased to trouble them; for, added to the dirt, the men were sullen, the women moody, silent, brainless; the whole reception churlish. Staines detected in them no amiable consciousness that they had descended, in more ways than one, from a civilized race; and the superior bearing of an European seemed to remind them what they had been, and might have been, if they were not; so, after an attempt or two, our adventurers avoided the Boers, and hailed the Kaffirs. They found the savages socially superior, though their moral character does not rank high.

The Kaffir cabins they entered were cave, lighted only by the door, but delicately cool, and quite clean; the floors of puddled clay or ants' nests, and very clean. On entering these and retreats, the flies, that had tormented them, shrinked the cool grot, and buzzed off to the nearest farm to batten on congenial foulness. On the fat, round, glossy babies not a speck of dirt, whereas the little Boers were oakes thereof. The Kaffir would meet them at the door, his clean black face all smiles and welcome. The women and grown girls would fling a fresh linen handkerchief over their shoulders in a moment, and display their pretty faces, unaffected joy, at the sight of an Englishman.

At one of these huts, one evening, they met with something St. Paul ranks above cleanliness even, viz., Christianity. Independently him had just come and instituted *école de mieux*; and these good Kaffirs wanted the Europeans not to go on at night and be eaten for dessert. But they could not speak a word of English, and pantomime expressed nothing in theory alone. In vain the women held our travellers by the coat tails, and pointed to a distant wood, and cried, "Kaffir, Kaffir!" and growled sore. But at last a savage youth ran to the Kraal, and brought back a young Kaffir, and came back with a brand, and sketched, on the wall of the hut, a lion with a mane, down to his knees, and a sweet eye, not loving. The creature's paw rested on a hut and a human being was crushed under his Bulgarian. The poor man fore-shortened, on the ground.

The picture completed, the females looked, approved, and raised a dismal howl.

"A lion on the road," said Christopher, gravely.

Then the undaunted Falcon seized the charcoal, and drew an Englishman in a theatrical attitude, left foot well forward, firing a gun, and a lion falling head over heels like a hook rabbit, and blood squirting out of a hole in his perforated carcass.

The savages raved, and smelled. They were so off their guard as to confound representation with fact; they danced round the white warrior, and clamored him to victory.

"Ah!" said Falcon, "I took the shine out of their lion, didn't I?"

"You did; and one thing more was a sculptor who showed him his marble group, a man trampling a lion, extracting his tongue, and a boy, but report says, *Il dit ce connaît the lion.*"

"Why, no; a lion is not an ass. But, for your comfort, there are no lions in this part of the world. They are myths. There were lions in Africa. But now they are all at the Zoo. And I wish I was there too."

"Why, my dear?"

"Because I am a lion, and a contented animal—with every blessing! They would not take you in; too common in England. Hello! (third time) Christopher new. What lots of bushes! We should not have much chance with a lion here."

"There are no lions; it is not the Zoo," said Falcon; but he spurred on faster.

The country, however, did not change its feature; bushes and little acacias prevailed, and presently dark forms began to glide across the carriage.

The travellers held their breath, and pulled in; but a black horse flashed by, and so they thought it best to stop and light a fire and stand upon their guard.

They did so; and Falcon sat with his rifle cocked, while Staines boiled coffee, and they ate and drank, and after two hours' silence; and at last the bushes got more scattered, and they were on the dreary plain again. Nothing these and retreats, the flies, that had tormented them, shrinked the cool grot, and buzzed off to the nearest farm to batten on congenial foulness. On the fat, round, glossy babies not a speck of dirt, whereas the little Boers were oakes thereof. The Kaffir would meet them at the door, his clean black face all smiles and welcome. The women and grown girls would fling a fresh linen handkerchief over their shoulders in a moment, and display their pretty faces, unaffected joy, at the sight of an Englishman.

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