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LITERATURE.

THE HAUNTED HOTEL.

Wilkie Collins's New Story.

A Tale by the first living English Novelist, from the N. Y. World.

CONTINUED.

CHAPTER IV.—PART SECOND.

After only one week of travelling in Scotland, my lord and my lady returned unexpectedly to London. Introduced to the mountains and lakes of the highlands, her ladyship positively declined to improve her acquaintance with them. When she was asked for her reason, she said with a Roman brevity, "I have seen Switzerland."

For a week more the newly-married couple remained in London in the strictest retirement. On one day in that week the nurse returned in a state of most uncustomary excitment from an errand on which Agnes had sent her. Passing the door of a fashionable dentist, she had met Lord Montbarry himself, just leaving the house. The good woman's report described him, with malicious pleasure, as looking wretchedly ill. "His cheeks are growing hollow, my dear, and his beard is turning gray. I hope the dentist hurt him!"

Knowing how heartily her faithful old servant hated the man who had deserted her, Agnes made allowance for a large infusion of exaggeration in the picture presented to her. The main impression produced on her mind was an impression of uneasiness. If she trusted herself in the streets by daylight while Montbarry remained in London, how could she be sure that his next chance meeting might not be a meeting with herself? She waited at home, ashamed of her own superstitious fears, for the next two days. On the third day the fashionable intelligence of the papers announced the departure of Lord and Lady Montbarry for Paris, on their way to Italy.

Mrs. Ferrari, calling on the same evening, informed Agnes that her husband had left her with every expression of conjugal kindness; his temper being improved by the prospect of going abroad. But one other servant accompanied the travellers—Lady Montbarry's maid, rather of a silent, unsociable disposition, so far as Emily had heard. Her ladyship's brother, Baron Rivar, was already on the Continent. It had been arranged that he was to meet his sister and her husband at Rome.

One by one the dull weeks went by in the life of Agnes. She faced her position with an admirable courage, seeing her friends, keeping herself occupied in her leisure hours with reading and drawing, leaving no means untried of diverting her mind from the melancholy remembrance of the past. But she had loved too well and been wounded too deeply to feel in any adequate degree the influence of the moral remedies she employed. Persons who met her in the ordinary relations of life, deceived by her outward serenity of manner, agreed that "Miss Lockwood seemed to be getting over her disappointment." But an old friend and school companion, who happened to see her during a brief visit to London, was inexpressibly distressed by the great change she detected in Agnes. This lady's name was Mrs. Westwick, the wife of that brother of Lord Montbarry who came next to him in age, and who was described in the "Peerage" as presumptive heir to the title. He was then away looking after his interests in some mining property which he possessed in America. Mrs. Westwick insisted on taking Agnes back with her to her home in Ireland. "Come and keep me company while my husband is away. My three little girls will make you their playfellow, and the only stranger you will meet is the governess, whom I answer for your liking beforehand. Pack up your things and I will call for you on my way to the train to-morrow." In those hearty terms the invitation was given. Agnes thankfully accepted it. For three happy months did she live under the roof of her friend. The girls hung round her in tears at her departure; the youngest of them wanted to go back to London with Agnes. Half in jest, half in earnest, she said to her old friend at parting, "If your governess leaves you, keep the place open for me." Her friend laughed. The wiser children took it more seriously and promised to let Agnes know.

On the very day Miss Lockwood returned to London she was recalled to those associatons with the past which she was most anxious to forget. After the first kissings and greetings were over, the old nurse (who had been left in charge of the lodgings) had some startling information to communicate, derived from the wife of the courier.

"Here has been little Mrs. Ferrari, my dear, in a dreadful agitation and enquiring when you would be back. Her husband has left Lord Montbarry without a word of warning, and no one knows what has become of him."

Agnes looked at her in astonishment. "Are you sure of what you are saying?" she asked.

The nurse was quite sure. "The news comes from the courier's office in Golden square—from the secretary himself, Miss Agnes." Hearing this, Agnes began to feel alarmed as well as surprised. It was still early in the evening. She at once sent a message to Mrs. Ferrari, to say that she had returned.

In an hour more the courier's wife appeared in a state of agitation which it was not easy to control. Her narrative, when at last she was able to speak connectedly, confirmed the nurse's report of it.

After hearing from her husband with tolerable regularity from Paris, Rome and Venice, Emily had twice written to him afterwards, but had received no reply. Feeling uneasy, she had gone to the office in Golden square to inquire if he had been heard of there. The post of the morning had brought a letter to the secretary from a courier at Venice. It contained some startling news of Ferrari. His wife had been allowed to take a copy of it, which she now handed to Agnes to read,

The writer stated that he had just arrived in Venice. He had previously heard that Ferrari was with Lord and Lady Montbarry at one of the old Venitian palaces, which they had hired for a term. Being a friend of Ferrari, he had gone to pay him a visit. Ringing at the door opening on the Grand Canal, and failing to make himself heard, he had gone round to a side entrance opening on one of the narrow lanes of Venice. Here, standing at the door as if she was waiting for some one—perhaps for the courier himself—he found a pale woman with magnificent dark eyes, who proved to be no other than Lady Montbarry herself.

She asked, in Italian, what he wanted. He wanted to see Ferrari, if it was quite convenient. She at once informed him that Ferrari had left the palace without assigning any reason, and without even leaving an address at which his monthly salary (then due him) could be paid. The courier inquired if any person had offended Ferrari or quarrelled with him. The lady answered, "To my knowledge, certainly not. I am the Lady Montbarry, and can positively assure you that Ferrari was treated with the greatest kindness. We are as much astonished as you are at his extraordinary disappearance. If you should hear of him pray let us know so that we may at least pay him the money which is due."

After one or two more questions (quite readily answered) relating to the date and the time of day at which Ferrari had left the palace, the courier took his leave.

He at once entered on the necessary investigations, without the slightest result so far as Ferrari was concerned. Nobody had seen him, nobody knew anything (that is to say, anything of the slightest importance) even about persons so distinguished as Lord and Lady Montbarry. It was reported that her ladyship's English maid had left her, before the disappearance of Ferrari, to return to her relatives in her own country, and that no steps had been taken to supply her place. His lordship was described as being in delicate health. He lived in the strictest retirement—nobody was admitted to him, not even his own countrymen. A stupid old woman was discovered who did the house work at the palace, arriving in the morning and going away again at night. She had never seen the lost courier—she had never seen Lord Montbarry, who was then confined to his room. Her ladyship, "a most gracious and adorable mistress," was in constant attendance on her noble husband. There was no other servant in the house (so far as the old woman knew) but herself. The meals were sent in from a restaurant. My lord, it was said, disliked strangers. My lord's brother-in-law, the Baron, was generally shut up in a remote part of the palace, occupied (the mistress said) with experiments in chemistry. The experiments sometimes made a nasty smell. A doctor had lately been called in to see his lordship—an Italian doctor long resident in Venice. Inquiries being addressed to this gentleman (a physician of undoubted capacity and respectability) it turned out also that he had never seen the missing courier, having been called to the palace (as his memorandum book showed) at a date subsequent to the disappearance of Ferrari. The doctor described Lord Montbarry's malady as bronchitis. So far there was no reason to feel any anxiety, though the attack was a sharp one. If alarming symtoms should appear he had arranged with her ladyship to call in another physician. For the rest it was impossible to speak too highly of my lady: night and day she was at her lord's bedside.

With these particulars began and ended the discoveries made by the missing courier's friend. The police were on the lookout for the lost man—and that was the only hope which could be held forth, for the present, to Ferrari's wife.

"What do you think of it, miss?" the poor woman asked eagerly, "and what would you advise me to do?"

Agnes was at a loss how to reply. It was an effort even to listen to what Emily was saying. The reference in the courier's letter to Montbarry—the report of his illness and the melancholy picture of his secluded life—had reopened the old wound. She was not even thinking of the lost Ferrari; her mind was at Venice, by the sick man's bedside.

"I hardly know what to say," she answered. "I have had no experience in serious matters of this kind before."

"Do you think it would help you, miss, if you read my husband's notes to me? There are only three—they wont take long."

Agnes compassionately read the letters.

They were not written in a very tender tone. "Dear Emily" and "Yours affectionately"—these conventional phrases were the only phrases of endearment which they contained. In the first letter Lord Montbarry was not favorably spoken of: "We leave Paris to-morrow. I don't much like my lord. He is proud and cold and, between ourselves, stingy in money matters. I have had to dispute such trifles as a few centimes in the hotel bill; and twice already some sharp remarks have passed between the newly married couple in consequence of her ladyship's freedom in purchasing pretty, tempting things at the shops in Paris 'I can't afford it, you must keep at your allowance.' She has had to hear those words already. For my part, I like her. She has the nice, easy, foreign manners—she talks to me as if I was a human being like herself."

The second letter was dated from Rome.

"My lord's caprices" (Ferrari wrote) "having kept us perpetually on the move. He is becoming incurably restless. I suspect he is uneasy in his mind. Painful recollections' I should say—I find him constantly reading old letters when her ladyship is not present. We were to have stopped at Genoa, but he hurried us on. The same thing at Florence. Here at Rome my lady insists on resting. Her brother has met us at this place. There has been a quarrel already (the lady's maid tells me) between my lord and the Baron. The latter wanted to borrow money of the former. His lordship refused in language which offended Baron Rivar. My lady pacified them, and made them shake hands."

The third and last letter was from Venice.

"More of my lord's economy! Instead of going to an hotel, we have hired a damp, mouldy, rambling old palace. My lady insists on having the best suits of rooms wherever we go—and the palace comes cheaper for a two-months term. My lord tried to get it for longer; he says the quiet of Venice is good for his nerves. But a foreign speculator has secured the palace, and is going to turn it into an hotel. The Baron is still with us, and there have been more disagreements about money matters. I don't like the Baron—and I don't find the attractions of my lady grow on me. She was much nicer before the Baron joined us. My lord is a punctual paymaster; it's a matter of honor with him; he hates parting with his money, but he does it because he has given his word. I receive my salary regularly at the end of each month—not a franc extra, though I have done many things which are not part of a courier's proper work. Fancy the Baron trying to borrow money from me! He is an inveterate gambler. I I didn't believe it when my lady's maid first told me so, but I have seen enough since to satisfy me that she was right. I have seen other things besides, which—well—which don't increase my respect for my lady and the Baron. The maid says she means to give warning to leave. She is a respectable British female, and dosen't take things so easily as I do. It is a dull life here. No going into company, no company at home, not a creature sees my lord—not even the consul or the banker. Whenever he goes out he goes alone, and generally towards nightfall. Indoors he shuts himself up in his room with his books, and sees as little of his wife and the Baron as possible. I fancy things are coming to a crisis here. If my lord's suspicions are once awakened the consequences will be terrible. Under certain provocations the noble Montbarry is a man who would stick at nothing. However, the pay is good, and I can't talk of leaving the place like my lady's maid."

Agnes handed back the letters—so suggestive of the penalty paid already for his own infatuation by the man who had deserted her!—with feelings of shame and distress, which made her no fit counsellor for the helpless woman who depended on her advice.

"The one thing I can suggest," said she, after first speaking some kind words of comfort and hope, "is that we should consult a person of greater experience than ours. Suppose I write and ask my lawyer (who is also my friend and trustee) to come and advise us to-morrow after his business hours?"

Emily eagerly and gratefully accepted the suggestion. An hour was arranged for the meeting on the next day; the correspondence was left under the care of Agnes, and the courier's wife took her leave.

Weary and heart-sick, Agnes lay down on the sofa to rest and compose herself. The careful nurse brought in a reviving cup of tea. Her quaint gossip about herself and her occupations while Agnes had been away acted as a relief to her mistresse's overburdened mind. They were still talking quietly when they were startled by a loud knock at the house door. Hurried footsteps ascended the stairs. The door of the sitting room was thrown open violently; the courier's wife rushed in like a madwoman. "He's dead! they've murdered him! Those wild words were all she could say. She dropped on her knees at the foot of the sofa—held out her hands with something clasped in it—and fell back in a swoon.

The nurse, signing to Agnes to open the windows, took the necessary measures to restore the fainting woman. "What's this?" she exclaimed. "Here's a letter in her haud. See what it is, miss."

The open envelope was addressed (evidently in a feigned handwriting) to "Mrs. Ferrari." The postmark was "Venice." The contents of the envelope were a sheet of foreign note-paper and a folded inclosure.

On the note-paper one line only was written. It was again a feigned handwriting, and it contained these words:

"To console you for the loss of your husband."

Agnes opened the inclosure next. It was a Bank of England note for a thousand pounds.

To be continued.

A romance of crime is now coming to the surface at a hamlet called Smith's Corners four miles from Toronto. Some twenty one years ago a man named Wm. Liven suddenly disappeared from the neighborhood, no one knew why or where. A few days ago one S. Hunter, while digging a drain, turned up a skeleton in a certain place on his farm. Five years ago John Walton, farm laborer, told Hunter that if dug down five feet in this place he would find Liven's remains, but hunter paid no attention to this at the time. On the discovery of the skeleton, Walton is approached to tell what he knows of the circumstances, and asserts that on the evening of Liven's disappearance, twenty one years ago, he looked in at the window of the house of a man named Heron, and saw him standing over Liven, who was prostrate on the ground, and draw a knife across his throat. Seven years ago Heron was killed by an accident on the Northern Railroad. From these statements suspicion will be cast on some one besides the dead man Heron, and it is evident, whether by the railway or the slow course of the law, that the murdered man has been or will be avenged.

IN THE INTEREST OF MANHOOD.—Two men came into the Mayor's office recently, and halting in front of the judicial desk, doffed their beavers:

"What can I do for you?" said the urbane official.

"Well, sur, me name is Timothy Megee. I was well known in these parts for foightin', warnt I, Si? turning to his companion, who growled out "he thought he war." "I whaled them all down in Blue Rock, didn't I Si?"

Si said he believed he did.

"Si, did I iver lit a man go away wantin', when he wanted a foight?"

Si said he didn't believe he ever did.

"I want to file an affidavy against Emmanuel Compton for foightin', because he wouldn't shtay wid me. I niver had a mon arristed in me loife that gave me foight and shtayed wid me. I care not whether he whupt me or I whupt him if he shtayed wid me, but when a mon shtrikes me and ruins away and shows the white feather, I call that cowardly, and I want him arristed. He took a run and jump and hit me, but he didn't knock me down, did he, Si?"

Si said he didn't.

"Make out an affidavy, Mr. Mayor, and have him arrested for foightin'."

It was made out

A FEW DAYS AGO, in Cincinnati, a wedding was stopped at the altar. A respectable young lady discovered that her *fiance* was in the habit of drinking, but he promised never to drink again, and she forgave him. The wedding day was set, but in the morning the young man indulged his appetite. The two were standing side by side, and a moment more would have found them man and wife, when the expectant bridegroom turned toward the lady, and his tell-tale breath spoke of whiskey. When the lady was asked if she would take the man for her husband the reply came faintly, "No," and on second repetition of the question she replied decisively "No." She then turned to her lover, accused him of breaking his promise, and declared that she could not trust her happiness with such a man.

AT a recent ball in Paris, given by Mon. Cernuschi, a great banker, the most splendid toilet was that of Mrs. (Bonanza) Mackey. Her dress was of caroubier faille, covered in front with jet embroidery, worked with the beads called *mullicolore*, which are designed to imitate precious stones. Her dress was of pink sation, almost concealed by old *point d'angleterre;* her ornaments, sapphires, diamonds, etc., of the utmost splendor, the sapphire in the centre of her necklet was as large as a pigeon's egg. Her head dress consisted of red roses and magnificent diamonds, and almost at the top of her left arm she wore a bracelet in the centre of which was a single diamond the size of the largest hazelnut.

JIM YOUNGER, one of the famous Missouri outlaws, now in the Minnesota Penitentiary, is failing, and likely to die. He was, when captured after the attempt to rob the Northfield Bank, shot in the mouth, and the wound has never healed nor can it be healed. But three of his teeth remain, and the dentists are unable to put a plate in his mouth so as to enable him to eat with ease.

A Scotch wit says there is no reason why the phonograph should not be spoken of as "she," because it repeats everything.

AN Aberdeen woman has applied to be appointed a constable, despairing of catching a man any other way.

ONE who indulges in expensive tobacco.—A man who is always smoking hams.

Voltaire at Ferney.

It (Ferney) is less than five miles from Geneva, at the foot of the Jura, with the Alps towering in the background. He could still overlook his favorite field of battle. "When I shake my wig," he said, "its powder dusts the whole republic." A beautiful refuge had the old man prepared here for his declining years; and in a letter to Madame Du Deffand he declares that he is at last thoroughly happy. The mansion is invisible from the highway; a long avenue shaded by superb trees leads to it, passing within a rod from its front the stone chapel built by the philosopher for the villagers, and bearing still the notable inscription "Deo Erexit Voltaire" (erected to God by Voltaire). The theatre, which stood on the opposite side of the avenue, has disappeared. The mansion itself is simple, but not elegent; it looks down cheerfully on its front flower garden, inclosed by a lofty grilled fence. Behind it extend terraced walks, with arbors, a fountain, and umbrageous colonnades of trees planted by the "patriarch," under the shelter of which he composed many of his works. All within the chateau wears an aspect of snug comfort and simple elegance. Certain rooms are kept as he left them; there is his sleeping-room, with its bed and prim embroidered chairs intact; his little adjacent sitting-room, and his marble cenotaph designed by the Marchioness de Villette to enshrine his heart. The walls are covered with paintings—oil portraits of his royal correspondents, Frederick the Great and Catherine of Russia, of Madame Du Chatelet and the actor Lekain; and numerous engravings of Washington, Franklin, Newton, D'Alembert, Helvetius, Diderot, and other notabilities of his times. Voltaire really founded Ferney; when he went there it consisted of a few huts; he left it finally with more than 1200 inhabitants and a flourishing business. He was lavish with money in aiding the villagers, and they were gratefully attached to him. He was rich; for, like most first-rate men of intellect—Shakespeare, Goethe, Walter Scott, etc.—he never believed that pecuniary recklessness or incapacity is an essential attribute of genius. Though he gave away his copyrights, he managed skillfully his early resources, and died with an annual income of nearly two hundred thousand livres. This was enormous wealth for a man whose whole work was literary, and money then was worth more than twice its present value. He was an adroit dealer in the public stocks. Bungener says that at one time he had two or three millions of capital in "a prodigious chaos of small papers—letters of exchange, contracts, bills of every form and every value"—in his portfolio. But he loved to wonder in this forest of scraps and figures. There was not, however, a particle of avarice in his nature. He sought wealth that he might be independent of patrons and of the public, and might speak out more bravely his opinions in the face of kings and people. "I was so mortified," he says, "with the humiliations that dishonor letters, that, to relieve my disgust, I resolved to make what scamps call a great fortune." Having got it, he took skillfull care of it, but gave liberally on all proper occasions. He lived sumptuously, spending profusely on his lands, driving into Geneva in his stately coach drawn by six horses, keeping open doors and a bountiful table. His house was often crowded with guests—fifty at a time—representatives of the literature, the beauty, the nobility, of the times. For nearly a quarter of a century he was, he said, the *aubergisie*—the innkeeper in general—for Europe. Ferney was one of the most powerful courts on the Continent, and Grimm tells us that its domestic affairs interested, more or less, every court in Europe. During the twenty years that Voltaire occupied it he kept most of the Continent, from St. Petersburg to Berlin, from Berlin to Paris, from Paris to Rome, in excited expectation, and the ruling, and especially the ecclesiastical, classes in anxious apprehension of what should next come from his never-resting pen. When nearly two generations of authors who had been his contemporaries had passed away, he was still controlling the public mind—the latest and freshest writer, incessantly sending forth something new which commanded attention by its ability, though it provoked anathemas by its heresy. "It seemed at last," wrote Grimm, "that the old man, always sick, was never to die." Unquestionably he and his correspondent, Frederick the Great, were, as Morley represents them, the two most powerful men then on the Continent. Both did immense evil, but, let us hope, greater good. "Voltaire and Frederick," says Morley, "were the two leaders of the two chief movements then going on in the great work of transforming the old Europe into the new."—ABEL TREVENT, in *Harper's Magazine for July.*

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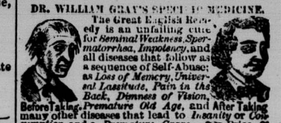
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