

THE HEARTHSTONE.

watering place where there are no unpleasant questions asked, as long as a man can pay his way. Miss Edie's exhibition of temper and passion in the theatre, had greatly discomposed him, and his estimation of that lady had fallen considerably; he had no wish or intention that she should suddenly kill the goose which he expected to lay so many golden eggs; and he made up his mind that he would in future play his own game alone. He had conceived a very little scheme in his own mind of how he would "get square" with Miss Frank for refusing him, by gradually drawing most of her fortune away through Arthur, helped out by the presence of Edie in Montreal; but her sudden passion had shown him that she was a very unreliable agent to work with, and he tried hard to find some way to make a "big haul"—that's what he called it—and leave Canada. There was one vision which constantly recurred to him as he lay tossing on his bed; and that was a vision of seventy-five thousand dollars of "available funds," and after much thought, he believed he had solved the problem of how the available funds of Lubbock, Lownds & Co. were to be appropriated to the personal use of Mr. Robert Brydon; and then he turned over, went to sleep, and slept happily and comfortably.

Arthur Austin hesitated for some time before accepting the terms his wife offered him. He knew he would be utterly unable to carry out the agreement for any length of time, as he had simply promised to pay her more money than he was working for; but in the miserable hope of "something turning up" to free him from his difficulty, he decided to temporise, and accordingly paid Miss Edie five hundred dollars, and agreed to pay her a like sum every three months. Of course, he expected that she would leave Montreal at the close of her engagement at the theatre; but to his surprise she remained at the hotel day after day and week after week, and announced her intention of spending the summer here. For this result he was indebted to the influence of Mr. Brydon, that gentleman having made up his mind that he needed Miss Edie's presence for a short time in order to assist him in carrying out his plans with regard to the "big haul" he contemplated. Mr. Brydon studiously avoided her, at least he appeared to do so, but he managed to meet her nearly every day in private, and he kept her well informed of Arthur's movements, and so it happened that Miss Edie was constantly meeting Arthur in the most "accidental" manner. In his drives with Jessie he was almost certain to encounter Miss Edie, and she would smile so sweetly and bow so kindly that poor little Jessie began to be quite jealous of the bold looking, handsome actress, who seemed so intimate with her husband. Arthur had told her that Edie was a friend of Brydon's, and that he (Arthur) had only a very slight acquaintance with her; but as the meetings continued and the bowing and smiling grew more and more marked, Jessie began to be seriously grieved, and had many a hearty cry at what she considered Arthur's faithfulness to her. Arthur, for his part, was driven almost crazy by the continued presence of Edie, and the daily, almost momentary risk he was running through her being here. He abandoned himself more than ever to drink, and for days at a time scarcely knew what it was to be once thoroughly sober. He was fully assisted in his drunken orgies by Mr. Brydon, who, however, took good care not to get very drunk himself, and managed to be always able to attend to his duties, so that he was gradually getting the affairs of Lubbock, Lownds & Co. under his own control.

There was one person who had long ago suspected that Brydon was trying to turn himself into the secrets of Lubbock, Lownds & Co., for some purpose of his own, and that person was Miss Frank. To think and to act was synonymous with that energetic young lady, and she, therefore, wrote a long letter to her uncle, telling him what habits Arthur had fallen into, and begging him to come home at once, as she feared that he was not going well at the office. Mr. Lubbock found it was impossible for him to leave England at the time he received Frank's letter. The winding up of his old partner's affairs proved more complicated than he had expected, and he found it would be necessary to remain in England some months longer. The news he received from Frank about Arthur affected him deeply; he felt hurt, grieved and angry at Arthur's conduct, and resolved to read him a severe lesson. He wrote to him expressing himself very severely, and informing him that Mr. Lownds would leave England at once to take charge of the house during his (Mr. Lubbock's) absence. This letter reached Arthur a little, and he really made an effort to break his habits of intemperance, but in vain. Mr. Brydon was constantly at his elbow, and Miss Edie was too regular in her annoying attentions to leave his mind very easy, and he became troubled again, he again fell into his bad habits.

Mr. Lownds arrived about ten days after the letter. He was a small, wiry, active man of about two or three and thirty, close and sharp in business matters, fond of hard work, attentive to business and having few pleasures outside of the office. Moderate and abstemious in all things himself, he was little disposed to view Arthur's excesses leniently, and he felt slightly prejudiced against him before he had seen him. Acquaintance, unfortunately, did not very much alter the first impression. Arthur sobered up for a few days, but in the course of a week had fallen back into his old habits, and sank proportionately in Mr. Lownds' estimation. Mr. Lownds at once took the general management into his own hands; but Arthur still acted as cashier, although his power of attorney to sign for the firm had been cancelled, and Mr. Lownds signed all cheques, &c., himself.

Mr. Brydon was in high feather; he took the pledge—so he said—the day of Mr. Lownds' arrival, and he was so attentive to business and knew so much of the affairs of the firm that he created quite a favorable impression on that gentleman. Mr. Brydon had not, however, forgotten the "available funds," and as it was now getting near the opening of navigation, when the available funds were to be active, he employed the best of his mind to get them, and finally had every thing arranged in his own mind to his entire satisfaction.

One morning, about a month after Mr. Lownds' arrival, Arthur was sent to Laclaire on business which would probably detain him all day. It so happened that on that very day Mr. Lownds needed ten thousand dollars to send to Chicago as an advance on some grain he expected from there as soon as the river was open; he, therefore, gave Mr. Brydon a cheque on the Merchants' Bank, where the firm had a balance of about twelve thousand dollars, and told him to get a draft on Chicago for the ten thousand dollars. Mr. Brydon speedily returned with the startling intelligence that there was only about two thousand dollars to the credit of Lubbock, Lownds & Co., and that a cheque for ten thousand dollars had been paid to Mr. Austin a few days previously. Mr. Lownds was very much astonished; he knew Arthur as a drunkard, but never once suspected him of being a thief. He went to the bank and examined the cheque; it was apparently filled out by Arthur and signed with the signature of the cashier. Edie's name was written

at all about it, and Mr. Lownds at once consulted the Chief of Police. The case was given to Cullen, who immediately formed his own conclusions, but said nothing about them, based on what he knew about Arthur and Mr. Lownds did not, viz.: that he had two wives, and Cullen could see what Mr. Lownds could not, a motive for the robbery. He had very little doubt that Arthur had left the city, but took all proper measures to ascertain the correctness of his suspicion. He found that Arthur had gone to Laclaire, and following him there, discovered to his surprise that he had returned to Montreal. Cullen was puzzled at this. It looked curious that Arthur should not take advantage of so good an opportunity to get across the line, and he thought that perhaps there may be a mistake somewhere, and Arthur may not be guilty. He returned to the city and went to Mr. Lubbock's house; Arthur had not been home. It was now evening, and Cullen thought the only thing he could do was to put a man at the depot to see that Arthur did not escape that way, and watch the house himself on the chance of Arthur's returning there. About eight o'clock he accidentally met Arthur in the street. He was very drunk, and staggered from side to side. Cullen went up to him, and laying his hand on Arthur's shoulder, said:

"I am very sorry for it, Mr. Austin, but I have orders to arrest you. You are my prisoner."

(To be continued.)

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TO THE BITTER END.

By Miss M. E. Braddon.

AUTHOR OF 'LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

"AND ONE WITH ME I COULD NOT DREAM YOU."

Mr. and Mrs. Harcross lived in an intensely new house in an intensely new neighbourhood. There are people who have an instinctive love of ancient habitations, whose souls yearn for ivy-clad manor-houses and mottled granges; who languish for the narrow windows and red-brick fronts of Queen Anne, and are thrilled with delight by the oriel and mullions of Elizabeth; people who would endure any inconvenience for the sake of knowing that the curled darlings of the Restoration had held their orgies in the dining-room, or that fair dames in hoop and wimple had made their bowler in the best bedroom; people who would smile calmly while the water came through every ceiling, if the house was warranted to have been part of a favourite palace of Anna Boleyn's; and, O dear, how many favourite abiding-places Henry VIII., Anna Boleyn, and Elizabeth seem to have had, scattered over the face of the country!

Augusta Vallory was not one of these enthusiasts of antiquity. Her ideas, likings, and dislikes, were essentially modern. A house could not be too new for her. She liked to see the walls fresh from the trowel of the plasterer, to choose every yard of paper-hanging, to know that no inferior clay had ever been sheltered by the roof that was to cover her own superior head.

"I hardly like the idea of a house other people have lived in," she said; "especially if there are cupboards; they generally leave an odour."

So when, prior to their marriage, Hubert Walgrave suggested one of the pleasant streets between Grosvenor-square and Park-lane—Upper Brook-street, or Green-street, for example—Miss Vallory shook her head peremptorily.

"My dear Hubert, all those houses are as old as the hills," she exclaimed; "there would be beetles, and all kind of horrors."

Mr. Walgrave ventured to hint that the class of people who lived in Upper Brook-street would hardly submit to beetles—in the drawing-rooms, or on the principal staircase, that is to say.

"Putting beetles out of the question, Hubert, I know for a certainty that there are people in Upper Brook-street who let lodgings. It is quite impossible that you and I can live—what is that horrid expression? check by jowl?—check by jowl with a lodging-house. Now, in the new district of the Marquis of Westminster's estate—"

Mr. Walgrave made a wry face.

"I abominate new houses," he said.

"That is to say, you abominate cleanliness and convenience. You might just as reasonably say one thing as the other. Near Grosvenor-place we can get a house fit for people of some position; a house in which I shall not be ashamed to receive my friends; and, of course, we must have our evenings, Hubert."

"Our evenings! Of course, my dear Augusta; I shall make a point of spending my evenings at home, if you wish it."

"I don't mean that. I shall expect you to stay at home after dinner naturally, when we have no engagements; but I mean an evening a week for reception."

"O, a 'Tuesday' or a 'Thursday,'" said Mr. Walgrave, with another wry face. "Do you think that kind of thing pays, Augusta? To be obliged to stop at home on one particular evening, and have no end of candles burning, and to see a pack of people come straggling in, in an inane kind of way, with the air of performing a social duty and not expecting to get anything to eat—do you really think it pays? Isn't it rather a treadmillish kind of entertainment?"

"I don't know why my friends should only 'straggle' in," Miss Vallory said, with rather an offended air; "I trust they would come willingly."

"O, no doubt, as willingly as any one ever does come to that undecided sort of entertainment. Still, to my mind, it is always more or less treadmillish; and then there is the wear and tear of brain you go through all the week in trying to secure something a little out of the common—some pianist who lets off louder fireworks than the general run of pianists; some literary wad who has just published a successful book; or an astronomical swell who has discovered a new planet; or a legal swell who is leading counsel in the latest sensational trial; or a crack physician who has just got a baronetcy; some one to care at and whisper about. Seriously, Augusta, don't you think we might get off with three or four dinner-parties and a ball in the course of the season?"

"I hardly know what you mean by 'getting

off" Hubert. I like to see my friends, and I hope they like to see me."

Mr. Walgrave shrugged his shoulders, with that accustomed air of polite indifference with which he was wont to end any dispute with his betrothed.

"My love, if you like to establish a hebdomadal treadmill in your drawing-room, I cannot possibly object," he said lightly.

So the house in Mastodon-crescent was taken, on a seven years' lease; quite a small house, for that region of mighty mansions. There were only nine bedrooms on the four upper floors, three bath-rooms, and some little stunted passages, with narrow pitched gables squeezed into corners, which were *par excellence* dressing-rooms. On the ground-floor there was the regulation dining-room, with a gloomy den behind, which was to be the library and stinking-chamber of the master of the house. The first floor was absorbed by the drawing-rooms, which were as the Acropolis-square drawing-rooms, with a difference that was hardly perceptible to the indifferent eyes of Mr. Walgrave. There was the grand piano, the vast tract of velvet pile, dotted with serpentine-backed occasional chairs, *dos-a-dos*, *vis-a-vis*, *condemned*, and other species of the sofa tribe. There was an ottoman which was twin brother to the Acropolis-square ottoman; there were stands for portfolios of engravings and photographs—the minds of Miss Vallory's friends requiring to be sustained by engravings and photographs, as their bodies by coffee or ices.

Hubert Walgrave looked round the room with the most casual glance when he came with his future wife to see what a fashionable upholsterer had done for the house which was to be his home during the next seven years. If it had been a question of lodging there a week, his gaze could have hardly been more listless.

"Are you satisfied, Hubert?" Miss Vallory asked, after she had given her own opinion about the carpet, and condemned a chair or two.

"My dear, I am supremely satisfied if you are pleased. There is such a family likeness in drawing-rooms, that one comes to lose a good deal of one's interest in them. At Sir Daniel Dundee's summer lodge at Richmond there is no drawing-room, only a vast library with a bay-window looking on to the Thames; and if I were gratifying my own fancy in a house, I would have no drawing-room. I would give the largest room the house contained to my books; a room to read in, to think in, to live in; and if it were my unlucky lot to have many visitors, I would receive them in a winter-garden."

"I trust your fancy will be gratified in this house," said Augusta, "and I do wish you would not speak of it in that cold way, as if it belonged to some one else."

"A London house has no individuality, at least not a modern London house. Let us make it what we may, we should find the same kind of thing next door. I daresay I might walk into any dining-room in this crescent, sit down, and make myself at home, and not discover my mistake till a strange footman came in with the coal-scuttle."

They ascended to the second floor, and made a tour of the chief bedroom, Mrs. Harcross's dressing-room, Mr. Harcross's bedroom, Mrs. Harcross's bathroom; Mr. Harcross's dressing and bath-rooms—both in one—was on the floor above, and approached by the servants' staircase, the principal staircase breaking short-off at the second floor. Happily, Mr. Walgrave-Harcross was not a Sybarite, and made no objection to the secondary staircase.

"I am sorry they were obliged to put you on the next story, Hubert," Augusta said apologetically; "but they could not contrive my rooms any other way. A *boisoir* is no use unless it is next one's dressing-room. *En revanche*, I give you up the library altogether; I even told them to arrange the ventilation for smoking."

"That was very considerate. Yes; I shall be glad of a den in which I can smoke my cigar. I shall impart some of my books from the Temple immediately. I take possession."

They wandered in and out of the rooms. The *boisoir* was the prettiest room in the house; all dainty, dainty chintz rose-buds, butterflies, lilacs-of-the-valley; a mantelpiece of gaily-coloured majolica, with timepiece and candelabra of the same bright ware; a cottage piano, low luxurious arm-chairs on each side of the fireplace, fern-cases and aquariums in the windows; tables and cabinets all bird's-eye maple, inlaid with various coloured woods.

It was a cheerless rainy day, a day that made the brightest things look dull, and Mr. Walgrave grew strangely silent while his betrothed lingered in this gaily furnished chamber; it reminded him just a little of another room that had been gay with birds and flowers on a dark November day.

His betrothed was too much absorbed in the consideration of her rooms to perceive the sudden gloom upon his face. Miss Vallory was in excellent spirits; the upholsterer had executed her orders admirably. She felt a pleasure in the expenditure of her own money, a pride in this house of her own finishing, which she had never felt in the splendours of Acropolis-square; and she was really anxious that his position should be improved by these handsome surroundings, that her fortune should assist him in his professional career. That indifference of Mr. Walgrave's, which annoyed her somewhat at times, she took to be nothing more than manner, a merely conventional listlessness, of no more real significance than the fashion of his clothes, which he wore because other men wore them. It had never entered into her mind to doubt the reality of his affection for her. What could any man desire more in a wife than she could give—beauty, education, accomplishments, and fortune?

Mr. Walgrave assumed the name of Harcross early in the summer, but the marriage did not take place until term was over—a very brilliant marriage at a fashionable West-end club. Mr. and Mrs. Harcross went to the Highlands for their honeymoon, and contemplated the beauties of that illustrious land in a cool leisurely way that was peculiar to both of them. In November they came back to town, and began housekeeping in Mastodon-crescent, Hubert Harcross falling into the routine of his wife's existence with a sufficiently graceful submission. She did not demand quite so much of him as many women might have demanded in her position. She had made up her mind to be a woman of fashion, now that she had slipped her moorings as it were, and sailed out into the open sea. As Miss Vallory she had been only a rich solicitor's daughter, always fettered

more or less by the narrow views of her father. As Mrs. Harcross, with a handsome fortune, and a husband on the high-road to distinction, she felt her social position secure. The very best society she told herself, would be open to her by and by, when her husband had made himself talked about. In the mean while she was content to be a person of importance in a somewhat lower circle, and to wait the hour when the doors of that higher paradise should be opened to her.

Thus the new life upon which Hubert Harcross entered was by no means a domestic life. It was rather a perpetual round of petty forms and ceremonies, which were almost as irksome to him as the routine of court life was to Madame de Maintenon, in those dreary years of her grandeur, when she languished, sick at heart, for one half hour of freedom. Mrs. Harcross liked to live "in society," which meant that all the best years of her life should be devoted to visiting, and receiving visitors. Her circle was always widening. People perpetually wanted to know her, and her weekly evening afforded an open field for the growth of new acquaintance. Hubert Harcross sickened of the simpering strange faces; the men who insisted in talking shop to him, and complimenting him on his admirable line of argument in this or that case; the amateur tenors and sopranos, who were always warbling by the grand piano; the last celebrity whom he was expected to worship. Men of the world as he was, he had his own notion of a home, which was something widely different—O, how widely!—from this splendid house in Mastodon-crescent, where the only room in which he felt himself his own master was that vault-like chamber looking on to a stony yard, and a high wall that shut out the sunshine. He submitted, however; allowed his wife to give as many dinners as she pleased, content to add his modest list of guests to her longer roll; went with her to as many parties as she pleased, sat out all the new plays produced at fashionable theatres, wasted an hour or two at the opera every subscription night, put in an appearance at private views at all the West-end picture galleries; and when his professional engagements permitted, would even submit to be paraded amongst the azaleas or rhododendrons at South Kensington or the Botanical.

"He was not sorry, however, when his work grew heavier, and forbade these concessions on his part, until little by little he contrived to drop away in a great measure from his wife's amusements, pleading the exigencies of his profession. She would have liked much better to keep him by her side; but since she was bent upon his becoming a great man, she was fain to endure the loss of his society, and to go on her frivolous way, for the most part, without him, serene in the consciousness that she was the handsomest woman and the best-dressed woman in her circle; spending a thousand a year or so on her toilet and small personal requirements; and considering that she acquitted herself of all her duties to her God and to her neighbour, when she put a sovereign in the plate handed round after a charity sermon, or subscribed five pounds to an orphanage or hospital.

"The life was a barren life. They had been married more than two years, and no child had been born to them, to sanctify their union. No innocent baby face shone star-like amidst the common-place splendours of their home. That mutual source of interest and pleasure, which might have drawn husband and wife nearer together, was wanting. With a strange inconsistency, Hubert Harcross, whose whole career had been based upon a purely selfish philosophy, took this childlessness to heart, bitterly disappointed, and thought of himself as he might have been with little children in his home, purified and elevated by that sacred trust.

He would rouse himself from gloomy brooding over this subject sometimes with a cynical laugh.

"Why should I languish for a son?" he would ask himself. "What have I to bequeath to him? A name without association but such cheap renown as I may win for it, the blood of a selfish spend-thrift, and a past which is something worse than a blank. And when my children grew up, would not their clear eyes perceive what their mother may be too blind to discover, our cold and loveless union? Better as it is; better that I should go childless to the grave, than that I should live to see my children blush for me."

Mr. Harcross had in nowise overrated the value of his marriage with William Vallory's daughter and Stephen Harcross's heiress. His professional status had been very much improved by the fact of his private fortune. Perhaps there is no reputation in the world of more use to a man than a reputation for plenty of money. Mrs. Harcross's carriage, Mrs. Harcross's opera-box, Mrs. Harcross's evening parties, nay, even the pines and peaches on Mrs. Harcross's dinner table in early May, brought Hubert Harcross more briefs than he could count. His clerk had learnt to decline retainers under a certain sum, and on one occasion, Mr. Harcross being at the Lydo villa with his wife, refused a fee of a hundred guineas, with daily refresher of twenty-five, on the ground that the weather was too hot for law, a refusal which was worth a thousand to him in reputation. The man who knows how to give himself airs at the right moment, is a man who knows how to succeed. Thus did Hubert Harcross prosper in the first years of his married life, and his name became a marked name, and solicitors in their agony besought his aid as a sure defence, a very tower of strength against the adversary. He was not a noisy advocate, not a florid rhetorical speaker. He had a good voice, which he rarely raised, a quiet level tone and manner, ever and anon relieved by some biting sarcasm that went home to the souls of his antagonists. He was a remarkably successful man, "lucky," people called him. To secure Harcross on a side was almost tantamount to securing a victory.

There were times when Mr. Harcross told himself that the life he led was all-sufficing for a man's happiness; that the one thing wanting in it was a very small thing, hardly worth thinking about. Often, seated at his dinner-table surrounded by pleasant faces, with the knowledge that he was admired, envied, liked perhaps by a few, it seemed to him that he must needs be happy; yet after this came the dark hour, the heart that was cheerless in spite of its luxury, the oppressive sense of unsympathetic companionship, the miserable thought of what might have been, and what was.

Mrs. Harcross, for her part, was thoroughly

satisfied. She had as much of her husband's society as this professional engagements permitted. She cried him at her chariot wheel almost wherever she pleased; her mode of life was his mode of life. If he was compelled to be at times a great deal away from her, she did not complain; she was not jealous, because nothing had ever occurred to awaken her jealousy, nor could she conceive it possible that any other woman could exercise the smallest influence on the heart of a man whom she had distinguished by her choice.

Although her husband was not always able to be by her escort, she was very rarely without attendance. Weston Vallory was ever ready to waste his time in her service. He was one of those early risers, who contrive to get twice as much out of the day as their lazier fellow-men can obtain out of it, and he had generally accomplished a day's work before luncheon. That office of tame cat, which he had filled so well during Miss Vallory's girlhood, it was his honour and pleasure to retain in the household of Mrs. Harcross. Weston brought her the newest photographs for her portfolios; Weston hunted celebrities for her Thursday evenings; Weston helped her to select the guests for her dinners, to compose the *menu* even; in short, Weston had an infinite capacity for all those trivial things about which Hubert Harcross disdained to concern himself. He saw Weston Vallory dancing attendance upon his wife, and he was quite content that she should be so attended. It saved him a great deal of trouble, and Augusta was above suspicion. Mrs. Candour herself could hardly have hinted the possibility of a flirtation between the consins.

In all their married life—not even when it had lasted for some years—had there been half-a-dozen hours of confidential talk between husband and wife. Of Hubert's childhood or youth, of his early manhood, its trials and temptations, Augusta knew nothing. She was not a person to be intensely interested in anything which had occurred before her own time; but she did once or twice express some curiosity upon the subject of her husband's antecedents.

"I don't think there ever was a wife who knew so little about her husband as I do, Hubert!" she said once, in a tone of complaint.

"Simply because there seldom is so little to know as in my case," Mr. Harcross replied coolly. "Some men have a history; I have none. My only antecedents are Rugby and Cambridge; my history, incessant hard work. I have worked hard; that is the story of my life so far, my dear Augusta. If there are to be any strong incidents in the drama, the strong incidents are yet to come."

Mrs. Harcross had been married a year before she penetrated the privacy of those rooms in the Temple. One summer afternoon, when she had made an impromptu dinner-party for the same evening, and wanted to insure her husband's presence at the social board, she ordered her carriage and drove straight to the Temple. Cuppage the respectable ushered her at once into the barrister's room. Mr. Harcross was leaning over a standing-desk, turning the leaves of a brief with a weary air, and looked up with considerable surprise at the radiant vision of Mrs. Harcross smiling towards him with all her charms spread.

"You here, Augusta! I should as soon have expected a call from the Princess Mary, or any other great lady. Is there an earthquake, or anything of that kind, in the Crescent?"

"I have asked some people to dinner, Hubert, and I wanted to make sure of your dining at home. What comfortable rooms! I thought everything in the Temple was dirty and horrid!"

"Not necessarily, my dear. We sometimes take the liberty to make ourselves comfortable. Will you have some pale sherry, or sherry-and-soda? I have my own particular cellar here, you know."

"You know I never take wine before dinner. What a life-like painting!" cried Mrs. Harcross, looking up at the picture over the fireplace. "It looks like a portrait. Rather a pretty face; but there's something about it I don't quite like."

"I am sorry for that, Augusta," Mr. Harcross answered quietly; "that picture is a portrait of my mother."

"Indeed I beg your pardon; but you are always so reticent about your belongings, that I may be forgiven for not supposing the picture to be a family portrait. The face is very pretty, no doubt; but I cannot see any likeness to yours."

"There is no such likeness. I have the honour to resemble father and his ancestry."

"With what a sneer you say that! One would think your father must have been a very unpleasant person."

"I do not say that he was pleasant. My only knowledge of him is that he was a most consummate scoundrel, and that he did in some small measure reap the reward of his scoundrelism, which is not the fate of every scoundrel."

"O Hubert, how shocking it is to hear you speak like that!"

"An outrage of the conventionalities of life, is it not? I suppose every father ought to be a paragon in the opinion of his son. You see, Augusta, what little history I have in not an agreeable one; it is better for both of us that I should avoid the subject, it always sets my teeth on edge."

"Just as you please. But why was Mrs. Walgrave painted in a fancy dress?"

"Because it was her fancy, I suppose, or perhaps a fashion in that remote age. I was not old enough to inquire into her reasons. The picture is an heirloom, and my only one."

Mrs. Harcross made a tour of the room, looking at the book-shelves, the mantelpiece, with its neat array of meerschaum pipes, cigar-cases, tobacco-jars, its skeleton clock, and thermometer in the shape of Cleopatra's Needle; the bright view from the windows, the commodious arm-chairs. She was hardly pleased to discover that her husband had a better room here than the gloomy chamber allotted to him in Mastodon-crescent.

She departed, however, without giving any expression to her feelings upon this subject; departed with her mind full of that picture over the mantelpiece.

(To be continued.)

A RETURN has been published showing the numbers of the non-commissioned officers and men in the army according to their religious denominations, stating—1. Episcopalian Protestants, 2. Roman Catholics, 3. Presbyterians, 4. Other religious denominations. It appears that Episcopalian Protestants number 114,160; Roman Catholics, 44,282; Presbyterians, 16,994; other religious denominations, 7,668; total, 183,026.