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THE GOLDEN LION OF GRANPERE.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

"There's a pretty kettle of fish you've made," said he as soon as he had finished reading the letter. "Of course, it means nothing."

"But it must mean something, Uncle Michel."

"I say it means nothing. Now I'll tell you what I shall do, Marie. I shall start for Basle directly. I shall get there by twelve o'clock to-night by going through Colmar, and I shall endeavour to intercept the letter before Urmand would receive it to-morrow."

This was a cruel blow to Marie after all her precautions.

"If I cannot do that, I shall at any rate see him before he gets it. That is what I shall do, and you must let me tell him, Marie, that you repent having written the letter."

"But I don't repent it, Uncle Michel; I don't indeed. I can't repent it. How can I repent it when I really mean it? I shall never become his wife. Indeed I shall not. Oh, Uncle Michel, pray, pray, do not go to Basle."

But Michel Voss resolved that he would go to Basle, and to Basle he went. The immediate weight, too, of Marie's misery was aggravated by the fact that in order to catch the train for Basle at Colmar, her uncle need not start quite immediately. There was an hour during which he could continue to exercise his eloquence upon his niece, and endeavour to induce her to authorize him to contradict her own letter. He appealed first to her affection, and then to her duty; and after that, having failed in these appeals, he poured forth the full vials of his wrath upon her head. She was ungrateful, obstinate, false, unwomanly, disobedient, irreligious, sacrilegious, and an idiot. In the fury of his anger, there was hardly any epithet of severe rebuke which he spared, and yet, as every cruel word left his mouth, he assured her that it should all be taken to mean nothing. If she would only now tell him that he might nullify the letter. Though she had deserved all these bad things which he had spoken of her, yet she should be regarded as having deserved none of them, should again be accepted as having in all points done her duty, if she would only, even now, be obedient. But she was not to be shaken. She had at last formed a resolution, and her uncle's words had no effect towards turning her from it.

"Uncle Michel," she said at last, speaking with much seriousness of purpose, and a dignity of person that was by no means thrown away upon him. "If I am what you say, I had better go away from your house. I know I have been bad. I was bad to say that I would marry Mr. Urmand. I will not defend myself. But nothing on earth shall make me marry him. You had better let me go away, and get a place as a servant among our friends at Epinal."

But Michel Voss, though he was heaping abuse upon her with the hope that he might thus achieve his purpose, had not the remotest idea of severing the connection which bound him and her together. He wanted to do her good, not evil. She was exquisitely dear to him. If she would only let him have his way and provide for her welfare as he saw, in his wisdom, would be best, he would at once take her in his arms again and tell her that she was the apple of his eye. But she would not; and he went at last off on his road to Colmar and Basle, gnashing his teeth in anger.

CHAPTER XVI.

Nothing was said to Marie about her sins on that afternoon after her uncle had started on his journey. Everything in the hotel was blank, and sad, and gloomy; but there was at any rate the negative comfort of silence, and Marie was allowed to go about the house and do her work without rebuke. But she observed that the Curé—M. le Curé Gondin—sat much with her aunt during the evening, and she did not doubt but that she herself and her iniquities made the subject of their discourse.

M. le Curé Gondin, as he was generally called at Granpere, being always so spoken of, with his full name and title, by the large Protestant portion of the community,—was a man very much respected by all the neighbourhood. He was respected by the Protestants because he never interfered with them, never told them either behind their backs or before their faces that they would be damned as heretics, and never tried the hopeless task of converting them. In his intercourse with them he dropped the subject of religion altogether,—as a philologist or an entomologist will drop his grammar or his insects in his intercourse with those to whom grammar and insects are matters of indifference. And he was respected by the Catholics of both sorts,—by those who did not and by those who did adhere with strictness to the letter of their laws of religion. With the former he did his duty, perhaps without much enthusiasm. He preached to them, if they would come and listen to him. He christened them, confirmed them, and absolved them from their sins,—of course after due penitence. But he lived with them, too, in a friendly way, pronouncing no anathemas against them, because they were not as attentive to their religious exercises as they might have been. But with those who took a comfort in sacred things, who liked to go to early masses in cold weather, to be punctual at ceremonies, to say the rosary as surely as the evening came, who knew and performed all the intricacies of fasting as ordered by the bishop, down to the refinement of an egg more or less, in the whole Lent, or the absence of butter from the day's cookery,—with these he had all that enthusiasm which such people like to encounter in their priest. We may say therefore that he was a wise man,—and probably on the whole, a good man; that he did good service in his parish, and helped his people along in their lives not inefficiently. He was a small man, with dark hair very closely cut, with a tansure that was visible but not more than visible, with a black beard that was shaved every Tuesday, Friday and Saturday evenings, but which was very black indeed on the Tuesday and Friday mornings. He always wore the black gown of his office, but would go about his parish with an ordinary soft slouch hat,—thus subjecting his appearance to an absence of ecclesiastical trimness which perhaps the more enthusiastic of his friends regretted. Madame Voss certainly would have wished that he would have had himself shaved at any rate every other day, and that he would have abstained from show-

ing himself in the street of Granpere without clerical hat. But, though she was very intimate with her Curé, and had conferred upon him much material kindness, she had never dared to express her opinion to him upon these matters.

During much of that afternoon M. le Curé sat with Madame Voss, but not a word was said to Marie about her disobedience either by him or by her. Nevertheless Marie felt that her sins were being discussed and that the lecture was coming. She herself had never quite liked M. le Curé—not having any special reason for disliking him, but regarding him as a man who was perhaps a little deficient in spirit, and perhaps a trifle too mindful of his creature comforts. M. le Curé took a great deal of snuff, and Marie did not like snuff-taking. Her uncle smoked a great deal of tobacco, and that she thought very nice and proper in a man. Had her uncle taken the snuff and the priest smoked the tobacco, she would probably have equally approved of her uncle's practice and disapproved that of the priest,—because she loved the one and did not love the other. She had thought it probable that she might be sent for during the evening, and had, therefore, made for herself an immensity of household work, the performance of all which on that very evening the interests of the Lion d'Or would imperatively demand. The work was all done, but no message from Aunt Josey summoned Marie into the little parlour.

Nevertheless Marie had been quite right in her judgment. On the following morning, between eight and nine, M. le Curé was again in the house, and had a cup of coffee taken to him in the little parlour. Marie, who felt angry at his return, would not take it herself, but sent it in by the hands of Peter Veque. Peter Veque returned in a few minutes with a message to Marie, saying that M. le Curé wished to see her.

"Tell him that I am very busy," said Marie. "Say that uncle is away, and that there is a deal to do. Ask him if another day won't suit as well."

She knew when she sent this message that another day would not suit as well. And she must have known also that her uncle's absence made no difference in her work. Peter came back with a request from Madame Voss that Marie would go to her at once. Marie pressed her lips together, clenched her fists, and walked down into the room without the delay of an instant.

"Marie, my dear," said Madame Voss, "le Curé wishes to speak to you. I will leave you for a few minutes." There was nothing for it but to listen. Marie could not refuse to be lectured by the priest. But she told herself that having had the courage to resist her uncle, it certainly was out of the question that any one else should have the power to move her.

"My dear Marie," began the Curé, "your aunt has been telling me of this little difference between you and your affianced husband. Won't you sit down, Marie, because we shall be able so to talk more comfortably?"

"I don't want to talk about it all," said Marie. But she sat down as she was bidden.

"But, my dear, it is needful that your friends should talk to you. I am sure that you have too much sense to think that a young woman like yourself should refuse to hear her friends." Marie had it almost on her tongue to tell the priest that the only friends to whom she chose to listen were her uncle and her aunt, but she thought that it might perhaps be better that she should remain silent. "Of course, my dear, a young person like you must know that she must walk by advice, and I am sure you must feel that no one can give it you more fittingly than your own priest." Then he took a large pinch of snuff.

"If it were anything to do with the Church,—yes," she said.

"And this has to do with the Church, very much. Indeed I do not know how any of our duties in this life cannot have to do with the church. There can be no duty omitted as to which you would not acknowledge that it was necessary that you should get absolution from your priest."

"But that would be in the church," said Marie, not quite knowing how to make good her point.

"Whether you are in the church or out of it, is just the same. If you were sick and in bed, would your priest be nothing to you then?"

"But I am quite well, Father Gondin."

"Well in health! but sick in spirit,—as I am sure you must own. And I must explain to you, my dear, that this is a matter in which your religious duty is specially in question. You have been betrothed, you know, to M. Urmand."

(To be continued.)

SUB-AQUEOUS TUNNEL.—A railway tunnel is now being constructed under the river Mersey at Liverpool, England, to connect that city with the opposite town of Birkenhead. It will be about three miles in length, about one-third of which will be under the bed of the river, and it will connect nearly all the railways in England with the Birkenhead docks. The effect of this great undertaking, as well as of the fine river approaches—a sister scheme, and working in the same direction—cannot but be in the highest degree beneficial to local trade. The improvement has already commenced. The preliminary operations for the formation of the tunnel have been completed. A hoarding has been erected on the south reserve land, between Shore road and the river, close to Woodside Ferry, and workmen have commenced preliminary operations for sinking a shaft, in order to attain the depth of 70 ft. below the bed of the river, at which point the cutting of the tunnel railway will be undertaken. The contractor for the work is Mr. John Dickson, of Whitby, and the engineer Mr. Mackenzie. The tunnelling will be performed with two machines, each of which will make a cutting 15 ft. in diameter. Two other shafts are to be sunk on the Birkenhead side, one on the upper side of Shore road, and the other between the gasworks and Green lane, Tranmere, where will be situated what may be called the Cheshire terminus, the line there joining the Birkenhead and Chester Railway. It is anticipated that unless serious geological "faults" are met with, the cutting of the tunnel, which is to accommodate a double line of rails, will be completed in two years.

A ROYAL SIAMESE GAME.—The business of eating concluded, the king called upon his foreign friends to participate in a royal game which had been in vogue as far back as their historical records extended, and which no guest might refuse to share in without giving personal offence to the sovereign. After this introduction, at a signal given by the royal host,

five huge baskets filled with very small limes were placed directly in front of the throne. Inviting the foreigners to scramble for the fruit, and telling them that whoever succeeded in getting the largest number should enjoy his highest favour, the king threw as many as he could hold between his two hands, in such manner as to scatter them in every direction over the widest possible space. This was repeated scores upon scores of times, and the guests, wishing to humour the whim of their host, entered heartily into the sport, scrambling about upon hands and knees in pursuit of the limes, sometimes receiving from the merry old gentleman a hearty pelt over the head or knuckles, at which he would beg pardon, and assure his friends that it was quite accidental! After an hour thus spent, the foreigners begged leave to desist, and the native nobles took their turn at the sport.

On examination, each lime was found to contain a gold or silver coin, and as the amount thus obtained by each individual was quite considerable, the ladies and gentlemen of our party sent up the money to the king, stating that it would be a violation of the etiquette of our country to receive presents of money. But His Majesty begged very earnestly that the coins should be retained, though merely, he said, as a token of the royal favour, and in compliance with courtly usage—not at all for their intrinsic value.

MARK TWAIN ON WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE.—Mark Twain says that when women frame laws the first thing they will do will be to enact:

1. That all men should be at home at ten P. M., without fail.
2. That married men should bestow considerable attention upon their own wives.
3. That it should be a hanging offence to sell whiskey in saloons, and that fines and disfranchisement should follow in such places.
4. That the smoking of cigars to excess should be forbidden, and the chewing of tobacco utterly abolished.
5. That the wife should have the title of her own property when she marries a man who hasn't any.

"Such tyranny as this," says Mark, "we could never stand. Our free souls could never endure such degrading thralldom. Women, go away! Seek not to beguile us of our imperial privileges. Content yourselves with your little feminine trifles, your babies, your benevolent societies, and your knitting—and let your natural 'bosses' do the voting. Stand back—you will be wanting to go to war next. We will let you teach school as much as you want to, and pay you half price, too; but beware! we don't want you to crowd us too much."

VALUE OF SLOW READING.—Fredrick W. Robertson, the distinguished English preacher, once wrote to a lady friend: "I never knew but one or two fast readers, and readers of many books, whose knowledge was worth anything. Miss Martineau says of herself that she is the slowest of readers—sometimes a page an hour. But then what she reads she makes her own. Girls read too much and think too little. I will answer for it that there are few girls of eighteen who have not read more books than I have; and as to religious books, I can count upon my fingers in two minutes all I have ever read. But they are mine."

GRAPE-GROWING IN A ROOM.—Last year, a member of the Stuttgart Flower Club was successful in raising grapes in his sitting-room. He takes a cutting, three or four feet long, with two fruit buds at its upper end, wraps it in moss, leaving the two buds exposed, and coils it in a flower pot which is then filled with rich loam. The plant is watered with lukewarm, never with cold, water, and a little dung may be added, but not much. The flower pot is placed in a sunny position. When the grapes are formed the shoot is pruned above the bunch, leaving however two leaves to maintain the circulation of sap.

There is a little mollusk—the *Teredo navalis*—which was at one time the terror of all shipowners. It would quietly and unsuspectingly pierce with thousands of holes the hardest timbers. Ships were rendered valueless, docks destroyed, and at one time all Holland was in consternation at the discovery that the piles of her embankments were bored through, and the country in imminent danger. A distinguished naturalist discovered that at certain seasons the female of this species carries her eggs in the folds of her respiratory organs. They remain there until they are fecundated by the milk of the male, floating in the water. He also found that a weak solution of mercury thrown into the water destroyed that milk and prevented their fecundation, and thus, in a few seasons, shipowners were enabled to clear their docks of this hitherto unconquered marauder.

EFFECTS OF FROST ON PLANTS.—It has been a disputed question whether plants, killed by frost, die in freezing or in thawing. That the former is the case, at least in some cases, has been satisfactorily demonstrated by Professor Goppert, of Breslau. The flowers of certain orchids, as, for example, the milk white blossoms of *Calanthe veratrifolia*, produce indigo, but only by a chemical reaction that takes place upon the death of the parts. When they are crushed, or the vitality of the cells is otherwise destroyed, they turn blue at once. Now this change of colour occurs immediately upon freezing, which proves that life then ceases. Certain other species are said to show the same thing.

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