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Literature.

A SHARP LESSON.

It is not at all pleasant to be the auditor of a dispute between husband and wife, a jangling of sweet bells that never ought to be in discord. And Robert Hume, confined to a sofa by a badly sprained ankle, exerted, internally, the arrangements of the Swiss hotel that had made a certain the only division between the room where he lay and the adjoining one.

Wilson with the accident.

He argued in vain, he could not obtain a hearing. To start for the scene of the disaster, to hurry the men who were putting a pair of horses into a light carriage, was all Harry Wilson could do or think of just then.

Within a quarter of an hour after hearing the evil tidings, the young man had wrung his friend's hand, and left the hotel, promising to double the payment to the driver if he would hasten—hasten!

And then he sank back in his seat, and covered his ghastly face.

Was it a hideous dream, or could it be a still more hideous fact, that he was hurrying through the darkness to find his young wife, not flying to meet him with outstretched arms, nor even clinging tearfully to his neck, as she had done a few hours earlier; but DEAD, drowned? His no longer, but a pale, motionless corpse, on whom he might lavish caresses, but never more obtain a response.

And they had parted—oh, Heavens! how they had parted!

He had been cold and unjust, he had refused the kiss, or the kind word for which she had pleaded so lovingly; he had brooded over her fancied offences all the live-long day, refusing to see that it was he who was in the wrong; that his conscience justified her, although his lips had not acknowledged his own jealous folly.

He could never tell her this now. Oh, Evelyn, sweetest and fondest of wives, how could he live his life without you!

Faster, man! Make your horses go faster still, or get fresh ones, no matter at what cost, so that they bear him to the spot where Evelyn was lying!

Mr. Hume limped on to the veranda to watch the departure of his friend, who was carried out of sight by the galloping horses before the news had been disseminated in the hotel.

No one on the boat had heard it, the captain prudently keeping it to himself till he had landed his passengers; but, when it was spoken of at the table d'hote, many were the expressions of sympathy and sorrow it elicited.

Someone presently inquired where was the gentleman who had joined the Wilsons here, and how had he borne the tidings of the fate of the missing bride?

But no one could answer, for Robert Hume had shut himself in his chamber, and gone to bed, if not to sleep.

Early on the morning, however, he had his chair wheeled to a little eminence in the garden that commanded the road bordering on the lake, and there he watched and waited till a carriage came in sight.

The driver waved his hat as soon as he saw Mr. Hume. Then Harry Wilson sprang from the vehicle, no longer white and fringed with despair, for with him, radiant with happiness, came his friend.

"There had been a sad accident," Evelyn explained, "and the Ormsbys were connected with it, but only so far that the unfortunate, whose lives were lost through their own rashness, in venturing on the water in the fraillest of boats and in doubtful weather."

It was a father and daughter who were drowned, the bereaved wife and mother standing on the shore unable to render any assistance.

So great was this poor creature's distress, that Mrs. Ormsby had volunteered to remain with her while Mr. Ormsby went to fetch her brother, the clergyman of a French Protestant church, distant about half a day's journey.

But Mrs. Ormsby had overtaxed her own strength, and when Evelyn arrived she found her services as nurse and consolator so greatly in requisition that she could not tear herself away.

"But I wrote," she added, "I sent a mounted messenger with a note to you, Mr. Hume, for I remembered that I had forgotten to return you the key of your travelling bookcase, and knew you might be wanting it. I asked you to tell Harry what had happened, and beg of him to join me at Belchamp. I was quite frightened, when, long after midnight, he burst into the room, where I was writing letters for this poor widow, looking quite ill and strange, and behaving like—"

"Oh, pardon, monsieur; all is well, don't be so; only I could not but remember that, before Madame started this morning, she inquired how she should most easily find Belchamp, and les Anglais who are residing there; compatriots whose name she called Ormsby."

"Then it is my poor Evelyn's old friends who are drowned. What a shock for her!" and Harry repeated all his ill-natured remarks concerning them.

"The lady was young," said Madame, in a half-whisper, "the gentleman was old; she was not his wife, but a visitor. The older lady was nervous, and remained on land. She witnessed the misfortune, and her grief is terrible."

his unutterable delight at finding her still living, will feel how dear to his heart she must be, and, with the soft answer and tender caresses of a good wife, bring him back to his better self.

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