

"THE LORD MAYOR OF YORK TO HIS BROTHER NED."

One day,—no matter what the date,—
The unrelenting hand of Fate,
An uncommercial traveller took
Sans compère, and on her took
To York, whose time-worn Monster-Face
Was built in—forgot whose reign;
And with whose walls the vaults encrust
The warlike Thurston's martial dust;
With legends too, of sainted dead
Of whom by slanderous tongues 'tis said
That they though Mother Church's tools,
Were really more of knaves than fools.
Who after lives of war and lust,
Through gifts were numbered with the just;
The Church transcribed their epiloques,
And canonized the mouldering rogues.

But love for antiquated lore,
And scandal's charms must not ignore
Our gentle uncommercial friend
Who having reached his journey's end,
Cigar in mouth, with outstretched feet
Sits gazing down the busy street;
The smoke between his pearly teeth
In azure-tinted circles wreath.
In truth he seems reclining there
The anti-type of faint core;
Anon, he starts; then steps to greet
A pedlar rising down the street.
With donkey-cart and crockery-ware,
All bound for Pickering's yearly fair;
(Whose cash returns would greatly shame
Some fairer of more ambitious name.)

"Ha! what's that the row?" the pedlar cries.
"One moment, please," our friend replies.
"Before you take that beast away,
A word with him I wish to say."
The clown returns with calm repose,
(His digits stealing to his nose)
"A crown I'll take to crown your joke,
And quick ere I the chance revoke."
The coin is paid, the pedlar meanwhile
Retires, this face enwrathed with smiles
Whilst our old friend (with pulled back cuffs
And weed, inhaled with vigorous puffs)
Approached the pedlar's long-eared steed,
The pedlar's kicking off the weed.
And then,—excuse a mainly tear—
The burning mass rained down its ear.

A snort, a yell, a runaway.
With Hades' King and more to pay;
That donkey's sentiments seemed clear,
For *entre nous*—an ass's ear.
The weakest part is said to be
Of ass's nose and tail.
And in pursuit the swiftly ran
A mad, blaspheming, crockery man,
Whilst pot and pan, and looking glass
Were smelted by that erratic ass.
Who short of astounding powers of speed;
Tough not in vain of "Ukraine breed,"
And yet it is but fair to state,
He showed a clear 190 gait;
Indeed, unbroken stands to-day,
The record of that runaway.

But all things earthly have an end,
(That they should not, the saints forefend)—
And an exception to the rule,
Was this half-brother to the mule,
Who scoring pots and fying pans,
Soon reached the ancient bridge which spans
The hollow bed where deep and slow
The Otter's classic waters flow;
But frightened by a passing team,
He leapt the bridge and charged the stream
Where turbid waters soon alas!
For eye closed o'er that luckless ass;
Oh loud his owner stormed and swore,
He'd "bring the case before the law,"
No'er dreaming that a red-hot weed
Had caused the sad, disastrous deed.

Next day before the civic chair,
(In other words—my Lord the Mayor)—
Our uncommercial friend was sued,
"In that he did deceive, delude
An unsuspecting workman
Th' t' deal in 'pot and trying-pot,'
And who with many a mournful wail
And sigh, relates the dismal tale
Whereby the goods for Pickering fair
Are numbered with the things that were!
Up jumped our friend, and then and there
Explained the case before the Mayor,
And proved there was a bargain made,
And that the promised cash was paid;
"Tut, tut, my man," quoth York's Lord Mayor,
"Dismissed, absurd, the whole affair."

The case dismissed on leaving court,
My Lord the Mayor our traveller sought,
"I really, sir, should like to know
What made you treat that donkey so?
Now what on earth had you to say
That he should act in such a way?"
"Indeed, my lord, I must confess
'Twill cause your lordship much distress,
Yet if you wish it I'll relate
The cause of his untimely fate.
I went to him and simply said,
'What! carrying pots—disgraceful Ned,
A general monger's drudge—and you
The Mayor of York's twin-brother too;
Well blow me tight but here's a go,
How could you swindle his lordship so?"

"Now when I spoke he shook his head,
And sighing mournfully he said,
'Alas! I long have felt that we
Were born in close affinity:
Here goes, no longer will I bear
This ignominious earthward stare,
But in the river's gentle stream
I'll close for aye life's transient dream.'
With that my lord, he took to flight,
And passed for aye from mortal sight;
'Tis only just that you should know
'Twas shame that laid your brother low."
For seeing you, the child of Fame,
And he an ass of humble name,
The rest and silence of the dead,
Were sought by that poor quadruped.

Alas! the incandescent jake
Which killed that donkey—yelepta "Moke,"—
Caused York a vacant civic chair,
For he who'd filled the post of Mayor
Was cowed so much to this day
He promulgates the "MILKY Way,"
(Whose pale, ethereal bar of light
Adorns the star-gemmed hours of night);
Where for removed from mortal view,
He simulates the Wand'ring Jew;
But everlastingly avoids
The neighbourhood of A-tripode.

Toronto, 30th October, 1879.

HERKWARD.

LORD BEACONSFIELD IN THE "BOOK OF BEAUTY."

That remarkable career which was crowned by the electoral triumph of 1874 has invested the political novels of the Premier with an interest hardly less active and probably much more wide-spread than that which they engaged at their first appearance. Few, however, are probably aware that, besides his achievements as a political novelist, Lord Beaconsfield has also made at least one excursion into the field of mediæval romance. Yet such is the case. "The Carrier-Pigeon" is the title of a short story contributed by "the author of *Virian Grey*" to *Heath's Book of Beauty* for 1885, where it forms one of a list of articles from writers of no less note than Walter Savage Landor, "Thomas Moore, Esq.," Barry Cornwall, Mrs. Shelley, and others. It is a little tale of a resolutely romantic character, as its opening passages will be enough to indicate. It is thus that the author introduces the baronial homes of his hero and heroine to the reader:

"Although the deepest shades of twilight had descended upon the broad bosom of the valley, and the river might almost be recognized only by its rushing sound, the walls and battlements of the castle of Charolois, situated on one of the loftiest heights, still blazed in the reflected radiance of the setting sun, and cast as it were a glance of triumph at the opposing castle of Branchimont that rose on the western side of the valley, with its lofty towers and its massy keep, black and sharply defined against the resplendent heaven."

Everything seems ready for the entrance of the "two horse-men enveloped in ample cloaks;" but Mr. Disraeli was original even in these matters, and instead of these two mysterious personages he brings his heroine on the stage at once. A "musical bell" begins to summon "the devout vassals of Charolois to a beautiful shrine;" and "at the first chime on this lovely eve came forth a lovely maiden from the postern of Charolois—the Lady Imogene, the only remaining child of the bereaved count, attended by her page bearing her book of prayers. She took her way along the undulating heights until she reached the sanctuary." The "bereaved count" owed his bereavement to the late Baron of Branchimont, who had slain his only son in a tournament; and the distracted father, not content with having "avenged his irreparable loss in the life-blood of the involuntary murderer of his son," continues to cherish with more vehemence than ever the hereditary hostility which had always divided the two houses. In these circumstances, it is almost unnecessary to say that Imogene loves and is beloved by the young lord of Branchimont, whose Christian name is Lothair. As Imogene enters the "sanctuary" a palmer, with broad hat drawn over his face, and closely muffled up in his cloak, dipped his hand at the same time with hers in the fount of holy water placed at the entrance of the shrine, and pressed her beautiful fingers. Lady Imogene, however, had been too well brought up to notice this untimely familiarity, especially when other people were present. "A blush unperceived by the kneeling votaries rose to her cheek, but apparently such was her self-control, or such her deep respect for the hallowed spot, that she exhibited no other symptom of emotion, and walking to the high altar, was soon buried in her devotions." On the retirement, however, of the vassals from the shrine, the Lady Imogene so far overcomes her "deep respect for the hallowed spot" as to hold a short but impassioned colloquy with the palmer, "who was now shrived," and knelt at her side before the tomb of her brother. "Lothair," muttered the lady, apparently at her prayers, "beloved Lothair, thou art too bold." "O, Imogene! for thee what would I not venture?" was the hushed reply. "For the sake of all our hopes, wild though they be, I counsel caution." "Fear naught. The priest, flattered by my confession, is fairly duped." He urges her to fly with him, but their conversation is interrupted by the approach of the "fairly duped" priest. Lothair whispers an appointment, "for to-morrow at this hour," to which the Lady Imogene "nodded assent, and leaning on her page quitted the shrine." As they returned to the castle, Theodore remarked that he had "observed Rufus the huntsman slink into the adjoining wood;" to which his mistress replies: "Hah! He is my father's most devoted instrument; nor is there any bidding which he would hesitate to execute—a most ruthless knave." A playful dialogue then ensues between the lady and the page, in which the latter wishes he were a "stout knight" like Lord Branchimont, that he might fight for his mistress, and expresses admiration of that stout knight's beard. "It is indeed a beard," Theodore, said the Lady Imogene; "when wilt thou have one like it?" "Another summer perchance," said Theodore. "Another summer!" said the Lady Imogene, laughing; "why, I may as soon hope to have a beard myself." "I hope you will have Lord Branchimont's," said the page. "Amen," responded the lady.

At this point the lovers' troubles begin. Lady Imogene's father had discovered, probably through the detected Rufus, her clandestine meeting with their hereditary foe, and after having loaded her with "every species of reproach and invective," he confines her to a chamber in one of the loftiest towers of the castle, which she was never permitted to quit except to walk in a long gloomy gallery with an old female servant remarkable for the acerbity of her mind and manners. Her page escaped punishment by flight, and her only resource and amusement was her *unwieldy*. After a miserable week spent in this way, she was sitting one day in her chamber, dreaming of her Lothair,

when "a fluttering noise suddenly roused her, and looking up she beheld, to her astonishment, perched on the high back of a chair, a beautiful bird—a pigeon, whiter than snow, with an azure beak, and eyes blazing with a thousand shifting tints. Not alarmed was the beautiful bird when the Lady Imogene gently approached it; but it looked up to her with eyes of intelligent tenderness, and flapped with some earnestness its pure and sparkling plumage." The bird of course bears a letter from Lord Branchimont fastened under its wing. Lady Imogene reads the passionate epistle, and having "a thousand times—ay, a thousand times—embraced the faithful Mignon," she "tore a leaf from her tablets and inscribed her devotion;" and then, having fastened it with care under the bird's wing, launched Mignon from the window, and watched the pigeon's flight until its "sparkling form changed into a dusky shade, and the dusky shade vanished into the blending distance." In this way the lovers correspond for some time, until one day the bird is noticed sallying forth from the window of the tower by the evil-minded Rufus. His suspicions are excited, and "taking his cross-bow one fair morning he wandered forth in the direction of Branchimont." True to his mission, Mignon soon appears skimming along the sky:

"And already the Lady Imogene is at her post, gazing upon the unclouded sky and straining her beautiful eyes, as it were to anticipate the slight and glad some form, whose first presence ever makes her heart tremble with a host of wild and conflicting emotions. Ah! through the air an arrow from a bow that never err'd—an arrow swifter than thy flight Mignon—whizzes with fell intent. The snake that darts upon its unconscious prey (is) less fleet and fatal! It touches thy form; it transfixes thy beautiful breast! Was there no good spirit, then, to save thee, than hope of the hopeless? Alas, alas! the blood gushes from thy breast and from thine arms back! Thy transcendent eye grows dim—all is over! The carrier pigeon falls to the earth!"

That same night a letter wrapped round a stone is thrown into Lady Imogene's chamber. It is to tell her that "on the ensuing eve" Lothair and Theodore, disguised as huntsmen of Charolois, would wait beneath her window, and "for the rest, she must dare to descend." She is struck at the unusual mode in which the communication had reached her, and wondered where Mignon was. The handwriting, however, was the handwriting of Lothair, and she did not observe that "the paper had the appearance of being stained or washed." The next night she accomplished the daring descent from her window by a "rope of shawls," and found herself in the arms of Lothair. Before, however, they have had time to mount their horses, Theodore exclaims, "Lord Branchimont, we are betrayed!" And, indeed, from all quarters simultaneous sounds now rose, and torches seemed suddenly to wave in all quarters. Imogene clung to her lover, crying out that she would die with him. "Lord Branchimont placed himself against a tree, and drew his mighty sword." The Count de Charolois called on his followers to strike his enemy dead, and to "spare not the traitress;" but the vassals would not move; "deep as was their feudal devotion, they loved the Lady Imogene, and dared to disobey." The count was advancing to strike them down with his own hand, when an arrow glanced over his shoulder and pierced Lord Branchimont to the heart. His sword fell from his grasp, and he died without a groan. "The same bow that had forever arrested the airy course of Mignon had now as fatally and as suddenly terminated the career of the master of the carrier-pigeon. *Vile Rufus the huntsman, the murderous aim was thine.*" The last chapter opens thus:

"The bell of the shrine of Charolois is again sounding; but how different its tone from the musical and inspiring chime that summoned the merry vassals to their grateful vespers. The bell of the shrine of Charolois is again sounding. Alas! it tolls a gloomy knell. She is dead—the beautiful Imogene is dead. Three days of misery heralded her decease. But comfort is there in all things: for the good priest who had often administered consolation to his unhappy mistress, o'er her brother's tomb, and who knelt by the side of her dying couch, assured many a sorrowful vassal and many a sympathizing pilgrim who loved to listen to the mournful tale that her death was indeed a hecatomb: for he did not doubt from the distracted expressions that occasionally caught his ear that the Holy Spirit in that material form he most loves to honor—to wit, the semblance of a pure white dove—often solaced by his presence the last hours of Imogene de Charolois."

With this somewhat daring stroke of imagination the story ends. Though a slight affair, it has evidently been worked up to the highest point of elaboration and finish, as, indeed, befitted a contribution to the *Book of Beauty*; and slight as it is, it is impossible not to recognize in it some of the best-known and most enduring characteristics of Lord Beaconsfield's literary style.

HEARTH AND HOME.

PURITY.—A pure child, like a ray of sunshine, can go anywhere without contracting taint. Though a choice of associations is essential to wholesome development, yet a normal and healthful child may come in contact with a great deal of roughness and vice without being injured by it. This can only be, however, when the child carries with it continually the atmosphere of a pure, elevated, Christian home. The intuitions of a child thus nurtured will make it shrink from the taint of vice and keep it pure.

PEACE AND COMFORT AT HOME.—Man is strong, but his heart is not adamant. He needs a tranquil mind, and especially, if he is an intelligent man with a whole head, he needs its

moral force to maintain its composure in the conflict of life. Home, to be a home, must be a place of peace and comfort. There his soul, day after day, renews its strength, and goes forth with added vigour to encounter the labour and troubles and perplexities of life. But if at home he finds no rest, and constantly meets with bad temper, jealousy, and gloom, or is everlastingly assailed with complaints and censure, hope vanishes, and he sinks into despair.

MARRIAGE.—It has become a prevalent sentiment that a man must acquire his fortune before he marries; that the wife must have no sympathy nor share with him in the pursuit of it—in which most of the pleasure truly consists; and that the young married people must set out with as large and expensive an establishment as is becoming to those who have been wedded for twenty years. This is very unwise; it fills the community with bachelors, who are waiting to make their fortunes, endangering virtue, and promoting vice; it destroys the true economy and design of the domestic institution, and it promotes idleness and inefficiency among females, who are expecting to be taken up by fortune and passively sustained without any care or concern on their part. It is thus many a wife becomes not a "help-mate," but a "help-eat."

BE WHAT YOU SEEM.—There is a class of men who acquire a good deal of prominence in the community—they are much talked about, and their names are often seen in print—yet, when you get at the real opinion entertained of them by those who know them best, you find they are but little respected. The reason is because they are not really true men. They affect to take a deep interest in reform movements, and to be largely occupied in philanthropic enterprises; but in truth they are hollow-hearted popularity-seekers, caring little for anybody but themselves. Such men cannot be truly happy, for they cannot experience any feeling of satisfaction with themselves. And, indeed, it is with himself that every man should keep account. He should make it his own study to be true and real and sincere. Even if he could obtain the respect of others without deserving it, he could not obtain his own. Be what you seem is a manly rule of life, worthy of every young man's adoption.

HAPPINESS.—The idea has been transmitted from generation to generation that happiness is one large and beautiful precious stone, a single gem so rare that all search after it is vain, all efforts for it hopeless. It is not so. Happiness is a mosaic, composed of many smaller stones. Each taken apart and viewed singly, may be of little value, but when all are grouped together, and judiciously combined and set, they form a pleasing and graceful whole—a costly jewel. Trample not under foot, then, the little pleasures which a gracious Providence scatters in the daily path, and which, in eager search after some great and exciting joy, we are so apt to overlook. Why should we always keep our eyes fixed on the bright, distant horizon, while there are so many lovely roses in the garden in which we are permitted to walk? The very ardour of our chase after happiness may be the reason that she so often eludes our grasp. We pantingly strain after her when she has been so graciously brought nigh unto us.

CHILDREN.—Those who love children are not those who merely love the pleasure they can get from children; those love, not the children, but that pleasure, and the moment it ceases to be pleasure, then farewell to the children. Those who really love children love all about them—the troubling and the teasing that they make, the washing and wiping and worrying; they do not tire with their fretting, they are not disgusted with their care, they are not made nervous by their bawling; they take them in their entirety. It never occurs to them to say that these things are disagreeable, for, in reality, the agreeable things, the loveliness, the velvet cheeks, the exquisite mouth with its little pearls, the perfect eyes, the opening soul, the charming intelligence, the constant sense of the creation of a new human being going on under the eyes, the receptivity of love, the thing for love, all so far overbalance anything that is not in accord with them as to put it entirely out of sight and mind.

BEAUTY.—Neither rouge, artificial ringlets, nor all the resources of the toilet, can retard the relentless progress of that terrible foe to beauty—Time. But everyone must have noticed how lightly his hand rests upon some, how heavily upon others. Whenever you see in an old person a smooth, uncrinkled forehead, a clear eye, and a pleasing, cheerful expression, be sure her life has been passed in that comparative tranquillity of mind, which depends less upon outward vicissitudes than internal peace of mind. A good conscience is the greatest preservative of beauty. Whenever you see pinched-up features, full of lines, and thin, curling lips, you may judge of petty passions, envy, and ambition, which have worn out their owner. High and noble thoughts leave behind them noble and beautiful traces; meanness of thought and selfishness of feeling league with Time to unite age and ugliness together. Fresh air, pure simple food, and exercise, mental and bodily, with an elevated ambition, will confer on the greatest age a dignified beauty, in which youth is deficient. There are many men and women at sixty younger in appearance and feeling than others at forty.