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The Viper of Milan.

A ROMANCE OF LOMBARDY.

BY MARJORIE BOWEN.

(Continued.)

"Gladly will I," replied Conrad, as they descended the narrow stairs. "And always shall I keep him for thy sake."

"Aye, do," said Vincenno wistfully again, "otherwise thou would'st forget—of a surety, forget."

"Not I—I shall always remember."

Horses were brought to the courtyard, and Vincenzo called his little page and put him on one.

The sight of him brought memories to both of a certain game of chess—how fatal it had been: how long ago it seemed!

"I tried to make atonement," he murmured.

"My atonement I think, is to come," said Vincenzo. "But Mastino will never hear of it—Mastino is dead."

Conrad winced. He knew Mastino was not dead, but he would as soon have stabbed Vincenzo d'Este as told him.

"Fare thee well," he said, holding out his hand.

"Fare thee well."

Vincenzo took his hand, smiled up at him gravely, and re-entered the castle, mounting to the room he had left.

Visconti was on the march.

Vincenzo caught his breath sharply and went to the window to see the last of Conrad. Again he wished he was riding away into the sunshine, away from the dark walls that seemed closing round him forever.

"Farewell!" called back Conrad, gayly waving his mailed hand, and Vittore, excited at the sudden journey, drew off his cap and waved it gayly too. "I go to my own land," cried the Count. Vincenzo's lip trembled, but his words sounded as cheerily as Conrad's.

"And we stay here in our's,' he called back.

And in after days, in peaceful days in Germany, when that brilliant, blood-stained Lombard summer seemed far away and strange as a wild dream, Conrad remembered; a memory he shared only with the dead.

The spurs jingled, with a trampling of hoofs the horses turned, the strong sun caught Conrad's plumes and Vittore's bright hair, he looked back with a laugh, and at a swift trot they passed through the gate.

Down the long paved street they clattered, till that sound too was gone.

Count Conrad had ridden away. Vincenzo stood silent in the great patch of sunlight that lay along the floor till Conrad's bridle bells were quite lost in the distance; then he turned, with something like a sigh.

He was not alone long—Ippolito re-entered with a calm face, and yet one his son was startled by.

"Count Conrad's news has been confirmed," he said; "a messenger has returned." He paused a moment. "All the country is in Visconti's hands."

"The saints save us!" cried Vincenzo.

"Aye, the saints, for there is no hope in man!"

"We must get arms—and succor into the city——"

Ippolito looked at him with proud affection.

"Follow me, Vincenzo."

He opened one of the small doors; it led to a twisting flight of steps, and the two mounted in silence.

At the head of the stairway was a chamber used as an outlook toward—Milan.

"Gaze yonder," said Ippolito, pointing through the narrow arched window.

Vincenzo obeyed, and looking out over the great wide plain, with its white campaniles dazzling in the sunlight, at first saw nothing.

But on the horizon was a silver light, a light that danced and quivered, flecked here and there with red, and dotted about with curious faint smoke wreaths, fires in broad day.

"Visconti's army!" said d'Este. "And those fires the forts and villages Della Scala held—held but yesterday!"

Their doom was in those words and in what they saw; there was no need for more.

"Santa Maria save us!" murmured Vincenzo, with a blanched face. It was all he said—words were poor, there was little enough time for action, none for comment.

Outside could be heard the steady tramp of the sentries, and the hurry of more soldiers to the walls.

"Do they know?" asked Vincenzo, as they descended.

"The soldiers—yes they are Modenese, The townsfolk—poor wretches—why tell tell them?"

They watched the other plunder, and after a silence Vincenzo spoke incredulously.

"Conrad said Modena had fallen?"

"It is true," said his father, in a low voice. "And Ferrara—oh!—my city!"

Vincenzo gave a little gasp of pain.

"And Verona?"

"That too."

"The younger d'Este looked out blankly at the sunshine, all hope had faded from his face.

"And Mastino, father?"

Ippolito was silent, a silence worse than speech. Vincenzo was awed.

"So we are abandoned—defenceless, resistance hopeless! Oh, my lord! my father! We cannot fall into Visconti's hands! We—the Estes.!"

"Hush!" said his father, sternly, yet with sparkling eyes. "I have been considering all—the Viper shal never fly in triumph from the walls from which a living d'Este is turned. Oh! had I never left Modena! See, Vincenzo—as soon as Visconti is within two miles of the gate—this!" He touched the door beside him, pushing it open, and Vincenzo's startled gaze followed the direction of his hand.

In the dark recess were the stone steps leading to the store beneath; the powder, the rude engines of war, and a vast quantity of wood, stored for winter use, and piled high even to the door. Vincenzo felt his heart grow cold; he looked from his father's proud face to what the steps beyond conveyed, and understood.

He raised his eyes steadily and smiled. He, too, was an Este, and in this moment the proud glory in his birth was plain.

"My son!" cried Ippolito, suddenly, passionately. "My son!"

Vincenzo could not trust his voice to answer; he sat very still, the smile on his lips, his hand on his toy-like dagger.

D'Este turned his head away. From without came the sound of voices and shouts.

Ippolito turned to the door.

"I go to give the last orders," he said, and left Vincenzo alone with his approaching fate.

He sat very silent.

This, then, was the end, the end of it all!

That one thought beat strongest on his brain—this was the end. What had he not meant life to give him—all he had seen others enjoy, all he had ever dreamed of, honor and fame, power and love, visions there were no words for—the future for him had held all these—and now, a burst bubble!

In the very richness of his youth he had flung away his days and hours, laughing at time, if he ever thought of it, and at life—then were life and time and an unending world before him.

Life! And even while he sported with it as endless, it could have been measured by hours.

A great wave of homesickness rushed over him, homesickness for the world, for the past he had never treasured, for Modena, the leaves and roses outside his father's palace, and Conrad riding away into the sunshine—away from this dark chamber he would never leave. Yet he did not for a moment flinsh, such a thought never entered his mind, only he could not bear to have to wait; he wished it were done and over—now.

From the street below rose a great uproar; there was some panic among the people; the country folk were pressing through the gates, fire and sword behind them—Visconti was on the march! Wild, frightened screams, and the hurry of feet, rose to the gloomy room, and Vincenzo sprang up; he wished his father had not left him, he wished he was not alone.

For his thoughts were bitter, and hard to bear alone. His life would be different, he thought, if he lived it again; not wasted, flung away. For the first time he felt time he realized how Mastino loved his wife—he understood. Was all knowledge coming to him so late, things to be made clear only to be darkened forever?

Ah, well, it was all over now; there were only a few moments to—what? He shuddered a little—to what? He wished his father would return, passionately he wished it; he did not want to think—for the first time and the last. He stood there with tight-clasped hands, his eyes on the door, holding desperately onto his control.

And at last Ippolito entered, quietly, closing it behind him. He held a missal in his hand, and a parchment. As he laid them on the table, Vincenzo noticed the last was sealed with the seal of Venora, the ladder of the Scaligeri.

"Mastino?" he whispered.

"Mastino is dead," said d'Este, in a calm voice, and he crumpled the parchment in his hand.

'On it was written: "I have betrayed you for Isotta's life,' 'and it was signed with the proudest name in Lombardy—"Mastino Orazio della Scala."

"That shall not destroy the glory of Vincenzo's death," thought d'Este sternly, and he flung it from him, into the room beyond, among the powder—something only fit to be consumed.

The castle within was built largely of wood, and Vincenzo, looking into the darkness with a painful eagerness, watched the powder laid carefully about the walls, extending in a long train to tanks of oil, while fire boughs, dry and leafless, lay scattered thickly. D'Este had not been taken unprepared. Vincenzo's flesh stirred and shrank; he remembered snatching a bat once from the camp fire, and how the pain in his hurt hand had tortured him.

"'Tis a fearful death!" he murmured.

Ippolito turned a drawn face toward him.

"What didst thou say, my son?"

(To be continued.)

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Daily Fashion Hint for Times Readers.

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The woman who possesses a lace berthe is, indeed, fortunate, for with such an accessory a number of charming effects in dress are made possible. Plain blouses of fine and dainty wash fabrics intended for morning use need but the addition of one of these berthes to make them most appropriate for afternoon wear. There are various ways of adjusting the berthe and one should study these carefully to see which is the most becoming. The short-waisted woman should never wear a berthe draped around the shoulders, as though outlining a yoke, no more than her slender, long-waisted sister should adopt the Marie Antoinette fichu draping. One attractive way to adjust this length of lace is to drape it around the shoulders in the back and close to the arm's eye in the front, thereby giving a bolero effect, pinning it to the blouse at several points with modest fancy pins or tacking it here and there with needle and thread.

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Pimples, boils, eczema and other eruptions, loss of appetite, that tired feeling, fits of biliousness, indigestion and headache, are some of them.

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NEW MEMBERS

Many Taken Into Natural History Society at Monthly Meeting Held Last Night.

The monthly meeting of the Natural History Society was held last evening, the president, Senator Ellis, in the chair.

Mrs. J. M. Lawrence read an extremely interesting and accurate in detail paper on Our Spring Birds, which was attentively listened to by an appreciative audience. A hearty vote of thanks was tendered the lecturer.

The library received the usual large number of exchanges from the leading scientific societies of the world.

The museum was enriched by a hammer-headed shark from J. McN. Blaine; key of the dissecting room of the old University of Glasgow, two keys of the store of Jardine & Tilton of this city; a queen helmet shell; two large specimens of brain coral from Robert Jardine; iron casting showing chilled section, from H. J. Fleming; iron ore, from Peter Campbell; skull of blue heron and a variety of nuts, from George deForest; trade pipe dug up in the North End, from T. M. Burns, Metcalf street; painted tortoise and shells, from Geo. Morrisey; a cocoanut (green), from Jack deForest; a number of polished stones, from Wm. G. Haslam; three pieces of wood (oak), from the celebrated old church at Ashburton, Devonshire, England, removed in rebuilding—these pieces are several hundred years old and show some of the original painted decorations; a flint pebble, from the tower of London; a South African gourd cup, shells, granites and minerals, from R. S. Edgecombe.

The following have been loaned to the museum by Kendall Hall: A number of interesting Chinese articles, souvenirs of the Boxer rebellion, and several curios from Puerto Rico.

The following members were elected:

Ordinary—W. G. Estabrooks, F. J. G. Knowlton, E. A. Goodwin, Wm. Downie, L. W. Barker, J. R. Ferguson, J. P. MacIntyre, I. H. Northrup, H. H. Mott, J. Walter Holly, L. P. D. Tilley, A. W. Adams, G. E. Barbour, J. B. M. Baxter, J. Harvey Brown, G. Wilford Campbell, L. G. Crosby, W. E. Foster, T. U. Hay, A. P. Hazen, R. T. Hayes, M. E. Agar, J. Allan Turner, Richard Sullivan, James Hunter, G. S. Fisher, H. J. Sullivan, F. A. Dykeman, Lewis J. Almon, Dr. J. V. Anglin, R. B. Kesson, F. H. J. Ruel, S. B. Bustin, E. L. Philps, C. F. Sanford, Geo. A. Chamberlain, Albert S. Hay, Stanley Hopkins, J. G. Carleton, M. E. Grass, J. N. Harvey, H. C. Tilley, W. A. Simonds, H. C. Page, Arthur M. Irvine, A. S. Bowman, A. M. Belding, Col. M. B. Edwards, Percy B. Holman, Thos. R. Christian, E. K. McKay, W. S. Barker, F. E. Holman, Frank B. Ellis, George Fleming, Walter M. Fleming, Wm. Hawker, Peter Clinch, Samuel A. Corbett, Wm. E. Bowman, F. Maclure Sclanders, George M. Robertson, G. N. Hevenor, J. A. Sinclair, John S. Currie, Dr. W. A. Christie, George H. V. Belyea, G. O. Dickson Otty, F. S. Bonnell, W. L. Williams, Edward Sears, Theophilus Cushing, J. Hunter White, Guy C. Dunn, Allan D. Barbour, Wm. Bruckhoff, C. E. L. Jarvis, Geo. W. Hoben.

Junior—Arthur Anglin, Roland Kingston, A. Smith, Geo. Millar, Ralph Jones, D. G. Willet, W. Harold Hayes, James Hoyt, Basil Winter, Maurice Rubin, Egbert Robertson, Lesley Creighton, James Holly, Hugh Teed, W. Bennett, Frank C. Thomas, Clarence R. D. Wetmore, Lloyd Campbell.

Associate—Mrs. James Dever, Mrs. Richard Sullivan; Mrs. H. H. Mott, Mrs. W. A. Simonds, Mrs. Arthur M. Irvine, Mrs. H. C. Page, Mrs. C. W. Weldon, Mrs. L. P. D. Tilley, Mrs. W. B. Tennant, Mrs. E. L. Rising, Mrs. R. J. Ritchie, Miss Otty Maxwell, Mrs. C. Masters, Mrs. E. K. McKay, Mrs. D. G. Lingley, Miss Lee, Mrs. R. G. Haley, Mrs. M. E. Grass, Mrs. Walter M. Fleming, Mrs. F. B. Ellis, Mrs. M. B. Edwards, Mrs. M. L. Chamberlain, Mrs. H. J. Sullivan, Mrs. F. S. Bonnell, Mrs. A. S. Bowman, Mrs. C. E. Cowan, Mrs. John S. Currie, Mrs. M. Case, Mrs. J. V. Anglin, Mrs. S. Wilford Campbell, Mrs. L. G. Crosby, Mrs. R. T. Hayes, Mrs. Joseph Harrington, Mrs. J. Hunter White, Mrs. Philip Grannan.

A. H. Hanington has purchased from W. H. Trueman for some $4,300 the dwelling in Wellington Row, lately occupied by Mrs. J. T. Steeves. John F. Morrison has sold his warehouse and wharf property in Smythe street to W. B. Tennant for some $27,000.

SPRING ADVICE

Do Not Dose With Purgatives and Weakening Medicines --- What People Need at This Season is a Tonic.

Not exactly sick—but not feeling quite well. That's the spring feeling. You are easily tired, appetite variable, sometimes headaches and a feeling of depression. Or perhaps pimples and eruptions appear on the face, or you have twinges of rheumatism or neuralgia. Any of these indicate that the blood is out of order, that the indoor life of winter has left its mark upon you and may easily develop into more serious trouble. Don't dose yourself wth purgative medicines in the hope that you can put your blood right. Purgatives gallop through the system, and weaken instead of giving strength. What you need is a tonic medicine that will make new, rich, red blood, build up the weakened nerves and thus give you new health and strength. And the one medicine to do this speedily and surely is Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Every dose of this medicine makes new, rich blood which makes weak, easily tired and ailing men and women feel bright active and strong. If you need a medicine this spring try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and you will never regret it. This medicine has cured thousands in every part of the world and what it has done for others it can easily do for you.

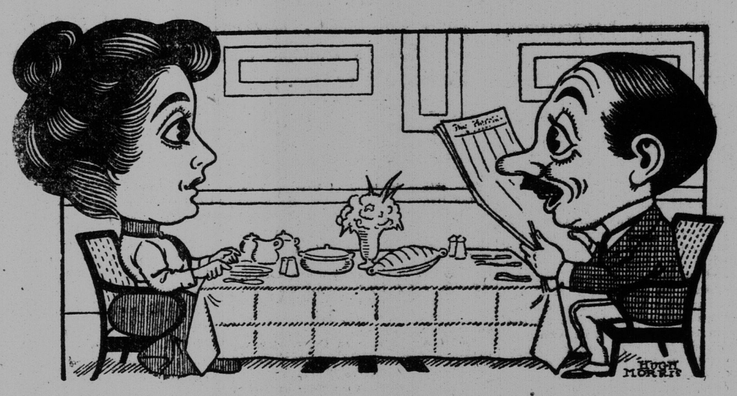
The headquarters for the genuine Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People in Canada is Brockville, Ont. So-called pink pills offered by companies located at other places in Canada are fraudulent imitations intended to deceive. If your dealer does not keep the genuine Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People send to Brockville, Ont., and the The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co. will mail the pills to you at 50 cents a box or six boxes for $2.50.

A very enjoyable time was spent last evening in the Orange Hall, Simonds street, when Dominion Lodge, No. 141, L. O. L., gave a reception to the county officers and to lodges Cullom and Dominion of the L. O. B. A. The regular business of the lodge was transacted, followed by an excellent supper. Speeches were then given by J. King Kelley, Alexander Thompson, H. Sellen and others. Songs were sung by Mr. Laskey, Miss Kilpatrick and a delightful social evening was enjoyed.

The Misses Reynolds will leave on Thursday for Buffalo, to spend the summer with their sister, Mrs. P. C. Millett.

COMES IN HANDY

Lion (to Monkey using his tail as a duster)—What are you trying to do?
Monk—I just wanted to dust the bric-a-brac.



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Wifey—By the way, George, there are strawberries in the market.
Hubby—Are there? That's the best place for them.

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