



THE RECEPTION AT QUEBEC.

JOHN A.—Gentlemen, my physician has ordered me to be careful of my stomach!

A Moral Tale of the Nineteenth Century.

NOT BY THE AUTHOR OF THE IMMORAL, "ROMANCE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY."

It was a mistake. The Colonel did not "shoot him dead." Just like those sensational telegrams! But poor Mr. Vernon was badly wounded by the assassin's bullet. However, not being President of the Union, he received cool and prompt surgical treatment, the ball was extracted, and under Cynthia's careful nursing he began to recover. This is how it all came about, and the readers of Mr. Malloch's book will do us the justice to remember, subject to a few corrections necessary to vindicate Miss Cynthia's good name, which, in the said book, has been unjustly expressed by the author of the "New Republic."

Vernon was much better. He was allowed to leave his bed for the first time since the accident at the Duchess' ball—the other ball, that of Colonel Stapleton's pistol, had been got rid of. Through the open doors came the perfume of his garden, where, through the waving palms, are camelia trees ablaze with scarlet blossoms, he looked down on the blue waves and purple rocks of the Mediterranean coast. Beside him on a table of *lapis lazuli* that had once held a place in Nero's Golden House at Rome, stood a bottle of priceless Burgundy. Beside him knelt Cynthia, simply dressed in a loose morning robe of white muslin, with a single rosebud at her neck; her hair, as bright as the asphodel's heart of gold, was rippled over her forehead in a Saratoga wave—her eyes, dark and soft as the darkest and softest purple, were fixed on Vernon.

"You are a goose," she said at last, "all the trouble arose from your unreasonable prejudice against Jack Stapleton. I'm sure I don't know why, except that you saw him to be fat and thought him to be fast."

"I don't know about his being fast, I have no objection to profligates, but I draw a line against prigs."

"Prigs are as bad as pigs any day," and a laughing light shone into the violet eye, "con-

fess you were a prig to talk as you did in Mr. Malloch's book. Such a mixture of profaneness, poetry, paradox, religion most ingenuously spiced with the sophisms of society; and immoral platitudes in tricks of literary style put forward to catch an air of originality! But the worst of it all, was the way he misrepresents poor me!"

"Explain yourself, dear one, you know all memory of the past has left me in the fever caused by your fat friend's bullet."

"You met me in the society of your friends. Duchesses and great ladies of the elite of society, they were pleased to make much of me, my manner was as perfect as my dresses from Worth; my aunt, Lady Waters, had a villa next your own. We met, not only in society, but at all sorts of delightfully irregular times and places; we exchange confidences, we become interested in each other, you said you loved me."

"With a love that has outlived memory," he said, as he looked into the violet eyes that met his own with their look of intense unhesitating love, eyes that could caress as well nearly as the lips.

"Well! Mr. Malloch makes me tell you that I have done all sorts of bad things without being found out, that I had stolen spoons, and that my aunt was near being obliged to have me sent to the Mercer Reformatory! It is all nonsense; all a lie made out of white cloth by that hound Mrs. Crane because you would not flirt with her all she wanted."

"Yet Mr. Malloch's book makes me say, I loved you just as much in spite of all the wickedness you confessed, and in spite of you confessing that you liked the wickedness still."

"No, you could not have loved such a woman without being untrue to all that is best in yourself, your honor, your delicacy, your manliness. No good man could love such a woman without degradation. And I, had I been such as Mr. Malloch describes me, could I have kept the delicacy and pride of character, the grace and manner which he allows me? No! believe me, to be as wicked, and to retain the charm which belongs only to innocence, is impossible. My

only wickedness was when a school girl, when my appetite for mischief was as great as for forbidden candies, and when the Superintendent the day I left said there was not a rule of the school which I had not broken, poor man! he only knew the half of my misdemeanors. But I never, never stole the spoons, or was threatened by my aunt with the 'Mercer.'

"You say well, Cynthia; the white garments of honorable love cannot be dipped in a cess-pool, and be washed clean! Such books, with their misrepresentation of you and me, are as false in act as in morals. Vicious people may be attractive in their way, but they do not even counterfeit, much less feel the delicate charm of innocence. But in the world-circulated pages of Garr, this error shall be redressed, and you and I shown in our true colors, two young people very much in love with themselves, and with each other, and who only wait for the arrival of Father Stanley with the marriage license to carry out that primary equation in Love's Algebra, whereby Two become One."

She kissed him, not only with the eyes, which, etc., etc., but also with the organs more usually employed for that purpose. They were married by Vernon's friend Stanley, Colonel Stapleton acting as Vernon's best man. The Colonel narrowly escaped being fined under the Blake Act for carrying a loaded revolver.

C. P. M.

Very Like John A.

I have a little gaffer
Of a boy, scarce three years old,
Who makes some very happy hits,
Worth twice their weight in gold;
Quite lately, with an earnest air,
He came with face serene,
And, holding up two fair white palms,
Said, like a singer of sweet psalms:
"See, pa! these hands are clean!"

On which his mother (Liberal N. P.)
Said in her grandest way,
"There's Innocence personified,
How very like John A.!"

When the devil is at your elbow is a very good time to be "out at the elbow."—*Yonkers Gazette.*

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WOMAN'S LOVE AND LIFE.