THE WEEKLY MAIL: TORONTO, FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1874.

AFTER THE CHINESE.

Although I am alone,
Although I am alone,
Although I cannot find the grave
Of those who were my own,
I can rest to be dead!
I find my life is serene,
While the moon is overhead
And the flowers about my feet.

The heavy conical sky
Is laden with a light
To ease Love's heart of aching care
And soothe its fever to calm;
For yet unsmirched by Love and Life
The silence shed rests,
While the moon is overhead
And the flowers about my feet.

It is but for a night;
Love was not for a day;
We know not what he takes his flight,
We know he will not stay;
The night will soon be spent,
I know the hours are fleet,
Though the moon is overhead
And the flowers about my feet.

The flowers are closing fast;
The moon is sinking low;
Sleep falls upon my eyes at last,
I will close and go.
But still upon my bed
My thoughts meet shall meet
As the moon were overhead
And the flowers about my feet.

I shall wake to thrill,
But strong to struggle on!
The days to such the same fix all
When night and Love are gone.
We live on blind hope
In the burden and the heat,
Till the moon is overhead
And the flowers about our feet.

The palest moon will shine
On other skies than this,
Where other flowers as fair will pine
Or I die, were I not I.
At home among the dead,
We find that the dead
Though as moon is overhead
No flower who to their feet.

G. A. Simcoe.

READY-MONEY MORTIBOY

A MATTER-OF-FACT STORY.

CHAPTER XXXV.

After living three or four weeks at Mrs. Skimp's, Frank made up his mind to shift his quarters. Great joy, accordingly, fell upon the inmates of the boarding-house in Greenville-square, in whose opinion Mr. Mellship gave himself unbecoming airs—nobody except old Bowkice and half-witted Maldrap, being good enough company for him.

"After all what was he?" they asked scornfully. "A nigger's assistant!"

Captain Bowker, who had never before found such a listener as Frank, was more astonishingly sorry, to see the only person in the place with an ear for poetry depart. Besides, the poor fellow liked Frank, and if he got him to come and spend Sunday evenings with him, when the others were generally out, This Frank promised he would do, when he could, to the Captain's great relief.

The first day after he left, one or two of Mrs. Skimp's gentlemen so far plucked up courage again as to begin their pronunciation of Mr. Edrup's name at dell. But he had a friend in the old sailor, who, taught by Frank's example, contributed his assistance with so sharp a visage, and language of such bilious fury, that they reluctantly gave up their fun.

So that at Mrs. Skimp's table Frank's memory was kept green by the Captain, and the good he had effected in Mr. Edrup's behalf was not allowed to perish.

As Mr. Lawson had sent him to Skimp's, when Frank made up his mind to leave there he mentioned the matter to him.

"You might lodge with the Silvers. They have rooms for somebody with them, I know," Mr. Lawson said—regretting near moment that he had suggested it, foreboding disturbance to Patty's peace of mind.

Frank offered to become the occupant of Mr. Silver's two vacant rooms, and was accepted without demur.

He was heartily glad to escape from the noise and coarseness of Skimp's to a room of his own, where, at least, he could be alone.

Patty Silver had furnished the first floor, left empty by their tenant—for him, not unpleasingly, it is true, but as well as the slender funds of the family permitted. He had a bed; and, in his sitting-room, a carpet and a table, and as many chairs as he could expect for twelve shillings a week.

Patty cooked his dinner for him; and before he went to the Palace, he took a cup of tea with the Silvers. Family; then after he had sung his three songs, and borne the applause—which humiliated him more than singing the songs—he smoked a pipe in Mr. Silver's company before he went to bed; but as he smoked and listened, or replied to memory bullies to the prompts (concerned of the scrobat—who never talked on any subject but one—his thoughts were miles away yet in the part of life that Love.

"I hope I'm not used to think, after his signally purgatory. "How long shall I go on with it? And what next?"

He had the pleasure of sending something early to his publisher's address. He had the pleasure weekly of hearing of them and of Grace. But he could not continue to sing at the Palace after his engagement was over. It was but the shift of a penniless man. All day he lived in terror lest some old friend should see him, and proclaim his disgrace as he thought it.

Night after night he searched the sea of faces for one he knew. He never saw one. The Palace is not a place where country cousins go. The "lionesses" who patronize Mr. Lawson were all of Islington blood; ingenuous Cockneys; City clerks, dressed *à la mode*; young chapmen, making half-a-crown purchase nearly as much display as a sovereign will buy at the west; with a good sprinkling of honest citizens, fond of an evening out, neither drinking nor smoking, averse to the smell of tobacco and the taste of beer. But no face he knew. He was safe from discovery, under the roof of Digger Ogotten, at the Palace as he would have been in San Francisco.

Still he resolved not to stay with Mr. Lawson after the two months' engagement had expired.

When he told him, Mr. Lawson sighed—

"I thought so—I always thought so! You are too good for my institution. Now I shall begin to advertise your last nights."

The posters came out. "Last Nights of Signor Cipriano!" in flaring capitals, stared Frank in the face from every hoarding round Islington. He fans would go by twenty of the bills to the breezy heights of Hampstead, to his pedigogue, in the woods of Norwood, and to far-off Finchley.

At the lodgings, Frank did not carry much of Patty. As long as he was in the evening they met; but the girl hardly spoke. She left the talking to her father, who poured out a never-ending stream of commentary. Frank, as he listened, learned what strange human religion sometimes takes in a hard, uneducated, but enthusiastic, simple, and imaginative.

Mr. Silver had but one desire—to spiritualize himself to the utmost. He regard nothing what are and drank, except what he must be sufficient to maintain his strength. He was indifferent to his calling, some failure or some success; save that he regarded it as his duty of doing his best in it. He had no fears for the future, either for himself or his children, in whom he thought he saw the "light." A man indifferent to the world, utterly selfish, utterly unenvious. Thus his daughter should perform on the bars with himself seemed to him a matter so simple, after all the practice they had had together, that he never thought about it at all; and his own conscience being satisfied, he cared absolutely nothing about the opinions of the world.

It pleased him to have Frank with him. First, because he could talk. Talk with a man who disputes and argues is a great deal more refreshing than talk with one who accepts uncoubtingly, as Patty and her brother used to do. Then Frank was a lover; he kept the children, as Mr. Silver called both Patty and Joe, alive and happy—told them stories, and made them laugh. The prophet, as Frank called him, had no objection to seeing people laugh—his religion was not a gloomy one.

I have shown how Frank sketched a portrait of Mr. Silver. But there days after he moved into his new lodgings, he renewed his proposition to draw a portrait of Patty.

"Vanity," said the Prophet, with a smile.

"You were pleased with yours, father," urged his daughter.

"Draw her if you like, Mr. Mellship."

They had a sitting that very afternoon, in Frank's attic room. His easel, the table, his canvas, a large piece of rough drawing paper; his pencils, and Mr. Silver thought to draw her listener. Mr. Silver thought there was going to be made a pencil sketch in a dozen touches, like that of himself.

Frank engaged the girl in silence, and worked away for a few mornings with a will. He only gaining her hand, as she refused to have her hands drawn. The poor girl was very sensitive about her disfigured hands.

Ugliness was perfect; but he permitted itself, with the license of an artist, to add or accentuate. Her hair was dressed and crowned with flowers; jewels were pendent from neck. She was no longer Patty the robust, but a coquette, a queen, dressed for conquest. The picture conquered Patty. Ever since Frank caught her in his arms, and saved her from death, the image of the fair-haired, sweet-spoken young man, the only gentleman she had ever spoken to, the only gentleman who had ever spoken to her, filled her foolish little brain.

Frank had a hard time of it. Patty was with him; he came and lived with them; brought brightness into a house which had almost no comfort. Kindness was shown him. He brought flowers every day for her, because she liked flowers; he bought ribands for her, because she liked a little finery; and gloves, because her own pair were old and dirty. He paid her little attentions, meaning nothing, though she thought they meant a good deal. And so, like Margaret—type of every innocent and ignorant girl—she made herself a dozen times a day, "He loves me—loves me not?" He loved her not; he hardly gave her a thought, save that she was nice, pleasant to look at, pleasant to talk to. But love!

Sometimes in the morning, when there was no rehearsal, he went for walks with her, starting early, and going into Highgate and beyond—where lime trees, fields and wild flowers still to be had, though London is near. The boy went with them; but Patty had the pleasure of talking to Frank, telling him all her little hopes; for the girl was as confiding as innocence could make her, save when her own secret was concerned.

The priestess was framed, and hung in the room where the family ate and drank. This, in spite of protests from the father—who spoke, however, just half of loud—was the portrait of his daughter. As he looked, he said, the likeness disappointed.

One day, after going day-daily at the picture for a long time, he exclaimed—

"I have it now. It is no longer the portrait of my daughter—it is the picture of the daughter Jephthah."

Frank looked at his handiwork. It was, in a sense, true. Patty's features; but somehow there was in her eye, what he had never noticed before, a look of expectancy, of suffering to come—the tale of lamentation and sacrifice foreshadowed in her face. It was wonderful. He knew had done it all unawares; but it was there.

"It might stand for the daughter of Jephthah," he continued, "but Patty's face is too bright. See, Mr. Silver," he said, as Patty looked up from her work, and fled in no sadness there. You don't see any sacrifice in Patty's eyes, do you?"

Patty blushed as her father looked first at her, and then at the picture.

"It is there; the expression is there—the look of Jephthah's daughter—as well as in the portrait."

He relapsed into one of his trances, becoming now more frequent, and was silent.

Patty's face, upon consider, certainly offered as few indications of future sorrow as many girls. The dimples in her cheeks showed how young she was, by original, not to lightheartiness and gaiety; the clearly defined arch of her eyebrows, her clustering shoulder hair, the deep brown of her eyes, the freshness of her cheeks, pointed her out as not destined to be lonely. But to all this Frank was blind. He had only one love—only one idea of womanhood.

Blind! Blind!

For they were together during these weeks; and day after day, Patty was drinking new draughts of tenderness and of passion. She looked at herself in the glass more than she had ever done before; she saw the little bright bits of colour which Frank had bought her in the shape of ribands; she lamented over her hands; she began to be ashamed of her work. More than all, she began to be ashamed of her profession. Her father had rejected that her performances began when Frank's were finished, and that he did not see there; she thought of the thousands of eyes that did. All these were nothing. What did it matter to her what the world of Islington thought, who came to see her fly through the air, and perhaps kill herself?

"He loves me—loves me not?" He is a gentleman, delicately nurtured. He cannot bear rough, coarse manners, rolled out of sharp, hard, unremarkably work. He loves women with accomplishments, who can write without having to think how to spell the words. He loves women who can dress in silk and satin, and who can all manner of bravery. He loves one in that upper world to which he belongs—some one whom he loves."

Or she would awake, fresh and hopeful, and radiant as the rosy fingered dawn.

"He kiked to me all day yesterday. He brought me flowers last night. He laughed at what I said, and called me silly. He addressed my bonnet.... He loves me! He loves me!"

So the little tragedy went on; Patty carrying in thinks that Frank forbore; the inside heart beating with all the nameless hopes and fears; she says that wakened for her age, only the smallest sign, of love; the ears that listened for the least vibration of passion—the cheeks that flushed when he drew near, and flashed again when he went away. And Frank and her father, callous to it all! I know not whether it is repentance or the gnawing of the worm that never dies, that visits me sometimes, when there was no remedy.

Great hosts stood upon his forehead as he made this confession. He was silent again for a long time.

Frank held his breath.

"After a year they found it out. I had not yet been able to do anything for them. They arrested me. It made some noise. They tried to get me off; but it was all too clear. I had no alibi—no witnesses—and came out into a world which was dark to me for the fortune. I was tried, and I was hanged. I was rich when I came out of prison. One of my relatives had died, leaving me all his property. I was a gentleman, I have, to alter his will. I paid back the money I had stolen. I had lost my profession, and was a convicted felon. I was despised and hated by every, creeping out at night. What should I do with my life? I thought I would try to make some good out of it. I would try to do some secret good; not in abominent, young man, remember—I was selfishness I thought. I was a felon, and I was alone. The evil remains. It is his misery sometimes I see when I think of it. I have tried to make amends, but it was too late. Sometimes, if he does not see it, he *feels* it."

"But what is the good of nothing? Is a life of good worth nothing?"

Mr. Edrup shook his head.

"Take it off from myself is the feeling that one *never forgets*. I want not to be forgiven so much as to forget—not so much to escape punishment, as to hold up my head in peace. Punishment is nothing—what does it mean? Nothing nothing. But self respect. Can—can I look back that? Preachers tell us of sins forgiven; they say nothing of honour restored. A Heaven of Peace, with my brother sinners, because we have escaped punishment, would be no Heaven for me. I want more—I want the consciousness of perfect forgiveness which restores as well as pardons that I want. Young man, gray, slight and manly, and all day long, that you may not be led into temptation.

He dropped his face into his hands; and Frank, meek and silent before this revelation and sorrow, slipped quietly away, and left him.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The summer passed into autumn; the woods of Hampstead Park are tinged with yellow. Dick Mortiboy, leaving Ladies' work out the Spaniard alone, "to shoot at the villa." He has bought horses and traps; he rides about the country; he knows every lane, and nearly every man in it, for miles round Market Basing; he gives dinners to the gentlemen of the district, and drinks Lord Lumselope downwards, with the same affability; throws away his money—his money—he knows not, gotten with so much labour and pains—with an easy prodigality endearing him to all that knew him, and gives which admires generosity when it flows towards itself. But for one thing, his popularity would be perfect. He is a Radical, a freethinker, a free-lancer. They lay trage for him; publicly invite him to dinner; catch him by the button-hole, and try to inveigle him into an engagement; had him to the doors of their houses, and almost drag him in. Dick won't go. One house alone he frequents, his cousins—the Heathcotes'. In his parlance, he is one of the girls? A serious question to the ladies of Market Basing.

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