

"Who cares for such a miserable villain?"

"Perhaps there is no reason why we should fear him in an open fight; but under the excitement he labours he will consider as fair any means that will put you on one side and prevent you coming to the camp."

"Twaddle! Jethro."

"But so; I have warned you of the danger, and now you must look out for yourself."

"I am as cunning as he is, and far stronger; and should the viper attempt any of his tricks on me, I will crush him beneath my heel in a moment."

"You must first catch him, Sir Harry."

"Tush! hold your nonsense. I now wish you to serve me."

"Your humble servant, with the money down."

"Cursed money! there is no one willing to do anything but for money."

"To consider money a curse when one has to part with it is the way of the world; but, when we receive it, it is popularly esteemed a blessing."

"Cease your prating," replied the baronet, angrily.

"Well, what is it you require of me?"

In reply to this question the proud Sir Harry Chillington placed himself in such proximity to the gypsy, that the exhalation of his plebeian breath could but be inhaled by that haughty man; and he, whose horror at his daughter daring to hold intercourse with one of common birth, had but a short time before driven him to the verge of madness, now, for the sake of revenge, fraternizes with the outcasts of society and subjects himself to their insults and scorn.

Class is a fiction of social life attractive in its aspect, but insufficient to resist the appeal of passion or the claims of interest. The existence of class may be useful as a preventative against an attempt at destructive communism, and as forming a goal for the exercise of ambition; but they who sacrifice reason to dignity, that they may enshrine themselves within a false notion of divinity, destroy the nobleness of their position, and subject themselves to the contempt of such whose good opinion is worth anything.

The conversation of Sir Harry with the gypsy was protracted, and the interview closed with the understanding that they should meet again in company with a third person. Having settled their little matter, the baronet departed in the direction of the Priory, and the gypsy returned to the command of the smugglers.

"That's the lot," said Jack Pegden, as he placed the last two kegs of brandy on the shoulder of one of the men, and just as Jethro reached the vessel.

"It is well done," replied the gypsy.

"Rather; this fog has made old 'Luff' sleep with his nose under the sheets to-night, for had it stuck out he would have smelt us and quickly been upon us."

"Never mind, skipper, he'll catch it presently," said one of the crew.

"How's that, Tom?"

"How's that! why all the boat-officers, when they die, are turned into white donkeys; and I never pass one but I give it a kick, and say to myself, 'It's my turn now, my hearty!'"

A shout of boisterous laughter succeeded this declaration of the sailor, and numerous satirical remarks were made on the living appearance and resemblance to their future lot of those guardians of the revenue.

"Now, then, my lads, off with her," shouted Jack Pegden, and in obedience to his orders the crew pushed the *Nancy* over a kind of railway sleeper, greased, and technically termed bridge, that she might overtake the receding tide. "Push away, my lads! there she goes," and a strong effort, accompanied with vigorous shouting, quickly placed that lagging free in her native element, to trip it again in style over the bosom of the deep.

The *Nancy* being once more in safety afloat, and Jethro and his men having secreted the goods without being observed by the coast-guard, and having given to the haystack its original appearance, they separated for their homes.

The force of public opinion has always had its influence in society, and has proved itself to be a greater deterrent to crime than the heaviest punishment inflicted by the most rigorous laws.

"Honesty among thieves," was practically illustrated in the conduct of smugglers toward each other. Hundreds of pounds worth of contraband property was frequently left unguarded, and the secret known to the greatest villains in the district; yet although such was the case, seldom was it touched or betrayed to the government. This fact shows the influence of public opinion upon the worst of characters. To murder a coast-guard in the endeavour to save a cargo of contraband goods, was tolerated as being the result of a fair fight for the principle of free trade, and the murderer was accepted in society as a hero who had fought for a right, although held in opposition to the government; but to betray goods secreted to the revenue was an unpardonable offence that brought public opinion down in force upon the transgressor; and there were but few in a smuggling district, even of the most hardened, who would not have chosen to be shot rather than to run the gauntlet of daily life with every one pointing toward them the finger of scorn.

Should public opinion ever be brought to brand the wretch who, conveniently forgetting the laws regulating the well-being of society, makes a raid rudely, or in a manner more refined, upon the property of his fellow-creatures, it will do more to correct crime than imprisonment or the lash;

but so long as robbery is considered as only a daring exploit, and the criminal who is detected as simply unfortunate, crime must abound. Men may and do dare the punishment of the law, but the veriest villain would dread to encounter public opinion.

(To be continued.)

ADELE'S VALENTINES.

A MONTREAL ROMANCE.

BY W. S. HUMPHREYS.

I.

"Shall I have any valentines to-day?"

The speaker, Adele Seymour, was a young lady of some eighteen years of age—beautiful, accomplished and possessed of a princely fortune.

She was an orphan, her father having died when she was a mere child, leaving her in the guardianship of a sister of his wife, Adele's mother, whom she never remembered to have seen.

There was something strange about the mother of Adele. Her name was never mentioned in her presence, and all Adele knew concerning her was that she had left her home about a year after the birth of her child, but where she had gone was a mystery. Adele had repeatedly questioned her guardian—Aunt Isabel—but that lady either knew nothing or refused to tell anything to her niece.

This mystery was the only thing to mar the happiness of Adele. She was mistress of a large residence on Sherbrooke street, possessed of an ample allowance, and petted and cajoled by her inferiors, and should have been happy.

But Adele had a lover, and what young lady has not? But Adele's lover did not belong to the class of society in which that young lady moved. He was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth. In fact, I am not sure but that at the time of his birth his parents were without spoons altogether, as well as a good many other necessities. Nevertheless, although born in a garret, without any silver spoon in his mouth, and although having to work for his daily bread as a clerk in a wholesale store in St. Paul street, earning barely sufficient to keep body and soul together, Arthur Hastwell was a truly noble fellow—not a gentleman born, perhaps, but one of Nature's gentlemen.

But Adele had also another lover, and this other lover was not one of Nature's gentlemen, but a gentleman born and bred, at least the world of fashion said so, and that world is supposed to speak the truth.

Robert Fortescue's father was a reputed millionaire, and lived in a palatial mansion adjoining Adele's residence. Robert was an only son, and it was the wish of his father that he should secure the hand of Adele—also her fortune.

Fortescue the elder had a large warehouse in St. Paul street; but Fortescue the younger did not take kindly to trade, in fact, he was no hand at business. His father had once or twice entrusted him with missions to Europe to make purchases, but Robert's investments had turned out so disastrously that the old gentleman, his father, thought it best that his son should have no place in the counting-house. So it happened that Robert was a gentleman of leisure, with an allowance settled on him—"devilish small, you know," as he said—and nothing to do but to spend it. He paid his court to Adele, treating her as his affianced lover, although no truth existed between them. Adele, being a high-spirited young lady, chafed under this treatment, and many times sent Robert from her side with "a flea in his ear," but the said Robert only laughed at her, putting it down as "skittishness" on her part, and telling his boon companions that "when she was his wife, he would let her know that he was master and would not submit to her whims."

Arthur Hastwell, Adele's other lover, entered old Fortescue's store as office-boy, and by perseverance and exertion had risen to the post of confidential clerk. He had frequently been to his employer's residence on business, and on one of these visits had met Adele—met her and loved her—at a distance. But Adele liked the young man—liked his frank, open manners; and although he first gazed upon his idol at a distance, that distance gradually grew shorter, until by degrees it disappeared nearly altogether; and now they were on friendly—yes, something more than friendly—terms.

Of course they had to keep their love for one another a secret, for Aunt Isabel was proud and haughty, and would never have consented to the union of her niece with a young man who was working at a desk for a living—especially a young man who was born in a garret, with no silver spoon in his mouth. She had no objection to Robert Fortescue. She considered it a settled thing that Adele and Robert would one day be man and wife. It was a very appropriate match, she thought, and she had only the evening before broached the subject to her niece. But Adele had evaded the subject, telling her aunt there was time enough to think of her marriage, that she wanted to enjoy her freedom a little while longer. For Adele was a wise little lady, and knew it would not do to offend her guardian. Although her father had left his wealth to his child, a clause was inserted in the will providing that in case Adele should marry without the consent of her guardian, or her mother—if living—everything he died possessed of should go to a distant cousin, leaving

Adele only one hundred pounds a year, as "pin-money," the document said.

Adele knew all this, and therefore endeavoured to continue in the good graces of her guardian, keeping Robert at her side, and keeping her love for Arthur a secret, meeting the latter clandestinely whenever opportunity offered, and waiting patiently for the time when her lover could secure a partnership in the firm on St. Paul street—a reward promised him if he succeeded in a venture he was at the present time negotiating in Europe.

All very wrong, of course—this secret love and clandestine meeting—but what else could they do? and then "all is fair in love and war."

II.

"Rat-a-tat-tat," the postman's knock.

A peculiar knock—unlike everybody else's knock. It is not like the butcher's or the baker's knock—a hasty "rat-tat," nor the beggar's knock—a single loud-sounding "rat," nor the rich man's knock—a consequential series of "rat-tat-tats," nor the lady's knock—several timid little raps, dying gradually away; nor is it like the old maid's or old bachelor's knock—much alike—three or four long-drawn-out "rat-tat's." In fact, it is peculiarly the postman's knock—a modulated "rat," a gentle little rap, as though the knocker had slipped from his fingers, followed by a thundering "tat-tat."

"Rat-a-tat-tat."

Adele knew the knock, had often listened for it before, but never with such longing as on the present occasion.

"Shall I have any valentines?" she repeated.

And, as if in answer to her question, a servant entered with a salver, saying:

"Three letters for Miss Adele."

Now this was more than the young lady had expected—she had only expected two—one from Arthur and one from Robert. Who could the other be from?

She took up the first that came to hand, a very large one—a valentine in a handsomely-embossed envelope. "From Robert," she said, and put it aside unopened. Next came a tiny little missive in a pink envelope, bearing the English postmark. "From Arthur," she said, and did not put it aside, but with glowing cheeks and trembling hands, broke the seal, and saw therein—what? Not a handsome valentine, such as she knew the big one to contain, but a tiny little slip, telling her that he hoped to be in Montreal almost as soon as his note; that he had been successful in his enterprise, and requesting that he might present his valentine in person, closing with words of love and endearment.

Adele was happy, and read the little note over and over again, forgetting for a time that another missive lay waiting her perusal. But finally her eye caught this other note and she took it in her hand.

It was a peculiar-looking letter—the envelope was soiled and creased, and it bore a United States stamp.

Adele sat with the letter in her hand, trying to think who it could be from, as young ladies are wont to do, forgetting for the time that all that was necessary to acquire the desired information was to open it and glance at the bottom.

At length she decided to open the letter—but her hands trembled—why, she could not tell.

The enclosure was as much soiled as the envelope—if anything, more so; but it was not that that caused Adele to utter a stifled cry and clasp her hands to her head as though about to faint. It was something she saw at the bottom—a name—her own name—her mother's name—"Adele Seymour."

And this is what the letter contained:

"PRIVATE LUNATIC ASYLUM,
"B —, U.S., February 12, 1879."

"To my darling daughter,—

"I have been confined in this asylum for seventeen years, and am as sane as you, my child. I cannot enter into particulars, I am too closely watched. I have had to use almost the cunning of a madwoman to convey this note to you. Do not show it to your Aunt Isabel, my sister, but try to devise some means to liberate your mother from a living tomb. I have bribed Jacob Holstein, one of the keepers, to post this letter to you, and pray to Heaven that I may soon be free, when I have a story to tell that will astonish you."

"Your much-wronged mother,

"ADELE SEYMOUR."

Such was Adele's third valentine, after she had read which she sat for some time pondering on the revelation it contained—a revelation as from the dead.

What to do she hardly knew—but help her mother to freedom she was determined.

Suddenly a thought struck her—a heavenly thought.

"I will see Arthur! Thank God he is home! He will help me, I know." Such was her thought, and she buried her face in her hands and wept.

III.

Arthur Hastwell was seated at his desk in the counting-house of Mr. Fortescue on St. Valentine's Day—happy. Yes, he felt happier than he had felt for many a day. His mission to Europe had been very successful, passing his most sanguine expectations. He had seen his employer and been congratulated by him—the

promised junior partnership was a thing of the near future; he was to sup that evening at the residence of Mr. Fortescue, and he considered his position in society assured. But it was not only this that made Arthur happy. He was soon to meet Adele. He would be near her that evening, perhaps, see her—hear her sweet voice once more, and, perchance, who could tell but that, now he was a partner in the great house of Fortescue & Co., Aunt Isabel might consent to his meeting his lady-love in her own house, avoiding clandestine meetings in the future.

These and other such happy thoughts were passing through the young man's brain, when his delightful reverie was interrupted by—

"A letter for Mr. Arthur Hastwell."

Arthur took the note, glanced at the address and his heart filled with delight—the writing was Adele's.

Hastily opening the letter he read:

"—SHERBROOKE STREET,
"February 14, 1879."

"MY DEAR ARTHUR,—

"Meet me in Victoria square between 12 and 1 to-day. I want your help."

"Your own

"ADELE."

Now Arthur was rather disappointed. He had expected—well—a love-letter, not an appointment. An appointment in a certain place, known only to him and Adele, would have been very acceptable to the young man, but an appointment in Victoria square between 12 and 1 he hardly relished. He wanted their first meeting after his return private. But she wanted his help, and she signed herself "Your own," and what more could he do than reproach himself for being ever so slightly disappointed. What could he do but hurry to her side and give her all the help in his power.

His dinner hour was between 12 and 1, therefore he had no difficulty in getting away from the office, so hastening out he made his way with all the speed possible to Victoria square, which he reached as the clocks were chiming the half-hour.

He glanced quickly over the square. There were several ladies walking backwards and forwards, but he had eyes for only one—a lady dressed in black and closely veiled. He knew it was Adele, and hurried to her side.

"Adele."

"Arthur."

They clasped hands—a fervent clasp,—then crossed the square and walked up St. Antoine street arm-in-arm.

They had much to say to one another, and it was some minutes before Adele could mention the object of her sending for him.

"I want your help, Arthur, as I told you in my note. My mother is confined in a lunatic asylum, and I want you to help me to set her free."

"Your mother—confined in a lunatic asylum," gasped Arthur. "How—why—I do not understand."

"No. I have never spoken about my mother to you. I did not know till this morning that she was living, when I received this note," handing it to Arthur.

Arthur took the note and hastily glanced at the contents.

"Good heavens," he said, "there is something strange in this. Your aunt is mixed up in it in some manner. Has she never spoken to you on the subject?"

"Never. Whenever I have mentioned my mother's name she has always turned the subject, telling me that she were dead."

"Something must be done, and that quickly," said Arthur. "I have it. I will go up to B—myself."

"You, dear Arthur. Can you?"

"I think so. I have not had a holiday for seven years, and I think I am entitled to one now. I am going to dine with Mr. Fortescue to-night and will then ask leave for a week or ten days, and I do not think I shall be refused."

"God bless you, dear Arthur," whispered Adele. "I know you would help me."

"With my life, if necessary. But you will meet me to-night at the old summer-house, will you not? I will endeavour to leave Mr. Fortescue's shortly after 9, and hasten to you with the news that I have leave of absence, and then we can mature our plan of action. You had better write a letter of introduction to your mother, telling her that I am acting with your full consent and approval, and that I will leave no stone unturned to secure her liberation."

"Thanks, thanks, dear Arthur: I will be there with the letter. But here we are at the corner of Guy and Sherbrooke streets, and although I would like you to see me to my door, I think we had better part. So, good-bye till this evening."

"Good-bye, dear Adele, till this evening."

Another clasp of hands and they separate, she to her home and he back to the office, thinking to himself how many hours it will be till 9 o'clock.

But hours soon pass,—the office is closed for the night—Arthur dines with Mr. Fortescue,—is very cordially received by that gentleman and his family, even the exquisite Robert unbending for once—his leave of absence is graciously granted—nine o'clock arrives—he makes his adieu—hurries to the summer-house and finds—Adele.

Is there any necessity to describe what took place—how he imprinted kisses on her ruby lips—how he drew the fair girl to his—No, we