

clad in well-worn black; a man who would be a ready tool, but a dangerous ally.

"After all it is only a question of self-interest," reflected Lady Perriam. "If I pay him well enough he is not likely to betray me—not even if he held my fate in his hands. He might become rapacious and exacting; but that would be the worst. I am set round with dangers, and must face that issue."

"Permit me to enquire if the patient is a relative or a dependent," said Mr. Ledlamb, shrinking a little under the close scrutiny of those observant eyes.

"He is both—a relation by marriage, and partly dependent on me for support. Pray what are your usual terms for board and medical attendance—inclusive terms?"

"With carriage exercise?" enquired Mr. Ledlamb.

"Do you keep a carriage?"

"My wife has a pony phaeton, which she devotes to the use of those patients whose friends desire that relaxation. It is of course an extra, and adds thirty pounds a year to the charge for board, laundress, and medical attendance."

"I should wish my brother-in-law to have every reasonable indulgence. Be good enough to state your highest inclusive terms."

"My charge for a first-class patient is two hundred and fifty pounds a year," replied Mr. Ledlamb, faint with the agonies of alternate hope and fear.

"If I agree to your becoming custodian of my brother-in-law I will give you three hundred a year for his maintenance. But mind, I shall expect him to be made thoroughly comfortable, and as happy as his wretched condition will permit."

"Madam, you may rely upon my fidelity."

"I shall take nothing for granted. I have read horrible accounts of private asylums. I shall see that your patient is really treated well."

"I am not afraid of the supervision of my patients' friends, madam. The Commissioners visit us periodically."

Mr. Ledlamb spoke with supreme confidence. The friends of his patients had, as a rule, promised frequent visits to those sufferers, and as a rule studiously refrained from the performance of their promises. Lady Perriam did not look to him like a person who would take much trouble about a deranged brother-in-law.

CHAPTER LIII.

SECRET AS THE GRAVE.

"We are agreed as to terms then?" said Lady Perriam.

"Perfectly, my dear madam," replied Mr. Ledlamb. "Nothing could be more liberal than your proposal."

"Then we have only to arrange matters of detail. Suppose that I decide upon confiding my brother-in-law to your care, there would be some legal formula to be gone through, I believe."

"Undoubtedly. The patient must be seen by two medical men and duly certificated as a lunatic."

"So I understood. Now I do not care about bringing a second doctor to this house. If you decide that poor Mr. Perriam is insane, you could take him up to London, in the charge of his nurse, and the second doctor could see him at the hotel where you put up on your arrival."

"Unquestionably, Lady Perriam, that can be done."

What could not be done for a patroness who was about to throw three hundred a year into Joseph Ledlamb's lap? He had been wearing out body and brain for twenty years of mortal strife with debt and difficulty, and had never yet compassed so large an income.

"Let it be so then. If you can conscientiously pronounce that Mr. Perriam is a lunatic, you will take him to London with you by to-night's mail, which leaves Monkhampton at half-past eight. It will be dusk by that time, and you will be able to get him away unnoticed."

"Rely upon my discretion, Lady Perriam. There shall be no scandal, no discomfort to the patient. A I shall be done quietly and agreeably. Above all if the nurse is efficient."

"She is a good nurse, but timid. You will have to rule her with a stronger will than her own. She can remain with you for a week or two, till your patient grows accustomed to his new home. Indeed she might remain altogether if it were necessary."

"I do not apprehend that," said Mr. Ledlamb, quickly. "The restraining and soothing influences of the home circle, aided by medical supervision, will, I trust, do all that we can wish. I do not promise cure—my experience has not led me to believe that the majority of cases of mental derangement are amenable to actual cure. The brain, once affected, can rarely be restored to its normal strength," continued Mr. Ledlamb gravely, with a view to the permanence of his three hundred a year.

"I do not expect cure in this case," replied Lady Perriam. "There is here a fixed and rooted delusion which I fear must be beyond cure. However you shall see your patient and judge for yourself."

She rang a bell, which was answered after an interval of about five minutes by Mrs. Carter. She had to come from Mordred's rooms, which were at the opposite end of the house.

The nurse's pale, grave face expressed poignant anxiety as she looked from Lady Perriam to the stranger, but her countenance gave no indication of surprise. She had evidently been prepared for this interview.

"How is your patient this afternoon, Nurse?" asked Lady Perriam.

"Pretty much as usual, my lady."

"Still full of fancies, I suppose. This gentleman has come to see him. You can take him to Mr. Perriam's room."

"Will you come with us, Madam?" asked Mr. Ledlamb.

"No. I would rather you should form an unbiased judgment," replied Sylvia. "My presence might agitate my poor brother-in-law. He is accustomed to Mrs. Carter, and with her you will see him at his best."

Mr. Ledlamb bowed, and followed the nurse from the room, along the corridor, to the other end of the house, and into the large shabbily-furnished sitting-room, lined from floor to ceiling with dingily bound books, where the last of the two brothers spent his joyless existence.

He looked a very old man as he sat by the fireless hearth, half buried in the roomy arm chair, his shrunken limbs wrapped in a long dressing gown of faded Indian cashmere, his head bent upon his breast, his idle hands hanging loosely at his sides—an image of imbecility—or despair.

Lady Perriam paced her room restlessly during the doctor's absence, now pausing for a moment to look at the clock on the mantelpiece, now stopping by an open window to gaze out into distance, with eyes that saw not the landscape's summer beauty. It was to the avenue she looked with that quick, anxious gaze, dreading to see Mr. Bain's neat dog cart advancing between the double range of trees. He had been at the Place only yesterday, and there was no reason why he should come to-day, except the one fact that his coming to-day would be fatal.

Mr. Ledlamb's absence seemed a great deal longer than it need have been. She looked at the door every now and then, eagerly expecting his return.

"This is the crisis of my fate," she thought. "If all goes well now, my future is safe."

Mr. Ledlamb returned, and approached her with a grave and sympathetic countenance.

"Alas, dear lady, your fears were but too well founded," he began, "there is incurable derangement. Your unhappy brother-in-law is not in a condition to be left without medical restraint. There is a rooted delusion—a mistaken sense of identity, which is somewhat curious in its nature, and to the scientific mind eminently interesting—"

"Do not go into details," interposed Lady Perriam, "the subject is too painful. Do you pronounce my poor brother-in-law actually out of his mind?"

"I do. Without a moment's hesitation."

"And do you think any other doctor would arrive at the same conclusion?"

"I have no doubt of it."

"In that case, the sooner he is removed from this house the better. I told Mrs. Carter to have everything prepared for an immediate journey, should you decide as you have decided. My carriage can take you, your patient, and his nurse to the railway station. And now, Mr. Ledlamb, there only remains one question to be settled between us. Can I rely upon your discretion—upon your keeping the secret of Mr. Perriam's

melancholy state—the nature of his delusion, from every living creature, except those who have to attend upon him?"

"Yes, Lady Perriam, you may trust me implicitly."

"Remember, if I hear that you have broken faith with me in the smallest particular, I shall immediately remove your patient."

"I do not fear such a contingency," answered Mr. Ledlamb firmly. Was he likely to hazard three hundred a year, competence, wealth, by any ill-advised prating?

"I'd cut Mrs. Ledlamb's tongue out sooner than run the risk of losing such a patient," he said to himself.

"And you will leave for London without seeing any one whom you may know in Monkhampton; you will avoid all future communication with any one in this neighbourhood," urged Lady Perriam.

"Certainly, madam. I have not been in the habit of corresponding with Monkhampton people. The place was by no means a lucky place to me, and though I am a native of this county, I have no affection for it. I have sometimes met with Mr. Bain, the lawyer, in London, and spent a friendly evening with him, but he is the only Monkhampton man with whom I've kept up an acquaintance."

"It will be best to avoid Mr. Bain in future. He is my agent, and it was he who recommended you to me. I shall tell him that Mr. Perriam is in your care, but I distinctly forbid you ever to let him see your patient, should he come to your house for that purpose. He was raised to a position of undue power by my late husband, and he is too fond of interfering with my affairs. Should you see him at any time, you will be as uncommunicative as possible."

"Madam, I will be dumb. And I shall do my best to avoid Shadrack Bain."

Lady Perriam rang the bell, and ordered dinner to be served for Mr. Ledlamb, as soon as possible. She was anxious for the hour of his departure. But it was not yet five o'clock, and she could hardly get him and his patient away before seven. The train left at half-past eight, and reached London at one in the morning.

The carriage was ordered to be ready at seven to take Mr. Perriam and his nurse to the station. "He is going away for change of air and scene," Lady Perriam told the butler, to whom she gave this order, "going in the care of a medical attendant."

"Poor dear gentleman, he do seem to want it," said the butler, who had seen very little of Mordred since the baronet's death, but had gathered a melancholy idea of his condition from the talk of the women servants, who had their intelligence from Mrs. Carter.

At seven, Mr. Perriam was brought down stairs, a curious figure in his ill-fitting, old-fashioned clothes, a world too wide for that shrunken form, an eccentric looking figure crowded with a broad-brimmed white beaver hat, which almost extinguished him. He was led, or indeed almost carried, by the doctor and the nurse, and seemed to have barely sufficient strength to drag himself down stairs and across the hall, and into the carriage, with that double support. Sylvia watched his departure from an open gallery, watched him with heavily throbbing heart. The carriage rolled away upon the smooth gravel, the heavy doors closed with a sonorous bang. He was gone.

"Will all go right at the station?" she thought. "If they were only in London, I should feel secure."

She had told Mrs. Carter to telegraph to her as early as possible on the following morning. Till she received that telegram she could know nothing more.

There was little rest for her that night. She could not keep her thoughts from following those travellers, or prevent her fancy conjuring up possible difficulties which might arise to thwart her plans. It was an unspeakable relief to know that Mordred's rooms were empty; yet till all was over, and Mr. Ledlamb's patient safely settled under his roof, there to be for ever hidden from the outer world, Sylvia could know no perfect rest. Her slumbers that night were of the briefest, and her dreams made hideous by horrible images. Death and madness figured alternately in those confused visions.

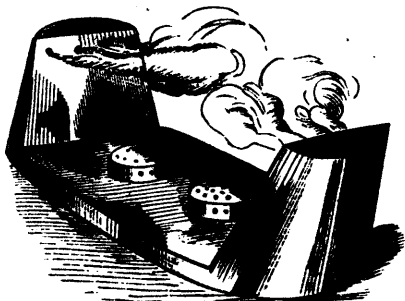
(To be continued.)

SOMETHING NEW!



(Registered at Ottawa, 27th December, 1873.)

An improved substitute for Eggs and Baking Powder, for making all kinds of PASTRY, CAKES, FLOUR PUDDINGS, PANCAKES, BUNS, BISCUITS, &c. Sold in packets, 10 cents and 25 cents, by all Grocers and Druggists. ONE TRIAL will convince of its superiority over everything of the kind ever offered for sale. 9-13-24-607



WOMAN'S FAVOURITE.

THE ROSS STEAM WASHER, STAIN-Remover, and Bleacher, an invention that has no rival. No rubbing, no pounding or tearing clothes. Steam does the work. There is nothing like it in use. The finest fabrics are washed in a superior manner, without danger of spoiling or tearing. It is truly a labour and clothes saving machine. It does its own work. Every family should have one.

T. SAUCIER, Manufacturer, 119 St. Antoine Street, Montreal. 9-6-12-598

HATS, CAPS, AND FURS.

THIBAUT, LANTHIER & Co.

No. 271 Notre Dame Street.

Cheap, Stylish, Elegant.

THE Store Recently Opened by Messrs. THIBAUT, LANTHIER & Co. recommends itself to the public by its complete assortment of Silk and Felt Hats, Umbrellas, India Rubber Overcoats, Kid Gloves, etc., the proprietors having chosen these goods on the best European and American markets, under the most favourable conditions that cash purchases can give.

Nothing has been spared to make this new Emporium of Hats and Furs the first establishment of the city of Montreal. To the superior quality of these articles are added the highest conditions of elegance and good taste.

The importation of goods of the most recherche style will be made a speciality, and this will be the easier since their stock is quite new.

The firm will take charge of furs during summer at moderate rates, and give guarantee if so desired. 9-12-6f-604

Reduction in Freight Rates.

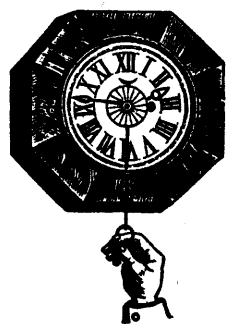
THE GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY WILL continue to send out, daily, THROUGH CARS for CHICAGO, MILWAUKEE, ST. PAUL, and other Western points, at reduced rates from the winter tariff.

Shippers can get full information by applying to Mr. Burns, Agent G. T. R., Chaboulliez Square, or at the Office of the General Freight Agent. C. J. BRYDGES, MANAGING DIRECTOR.

P. S. STEVENSON, General Freight Agent, 7-21 11

Night Watchman's Detector.

Patented 1870.



The above is a simple but useful invention. I is highly recommended to Banks, Warehouses Manufacturers, Ship-owners, and every institution where the faithfulness of the "Watchman" is to be depended upon.

REFERENCES:

A. G. NISH, Harbour Engineer. C. T. IRISH, Manager Express Office. THOMAS MUSSEN, Merchant. Messrs. SCHWOB BROS., do. For further particulars apply to

NELSON & LEFORT,

Importers of Watches and Jewellery, 66 St. James Street, Montreal.

August 5.

8-9 Jan



JOSEPH GILLOTT'S STEEL PENS.

Sold by all Dealers throughout the World.

9-25 Jan-644

TRAVELLERS' DIRECTORY.

We can confidently recommend all the Houses mentioned in the following List:

- OTTAWA. THE RUSSELL HOUSE,.....JAMES GOVIN.
- QUEBEC. ALBION HOTEL, Palace Street,.....W. KIRWIN, Proprietor.
- STRATFORD, ONT. ALBION HOTEL,.....D. L. CAVEN, Proprietor.
- WAVERLEY HOUSE,.....E. S. REYNOLDS, Proprietor.
- TORONTO. THE QUEEN'S HOTEL,.....CAPT. THOS. DIXON.

AVOID QUACKS.

A victim of early indiscretion, causing nervous debility, premature decay, &c., having tried in vain every advertised remedy, has discovered a simple means of self-cure, which he will send free to his fellow-sufferers. Address, 9-14 ly J. H. REEVES, 78 Nassau St., New York.

THE Red River Country, Hudson's Bay & North West Territories.

Considered in relation to Canada, with the last two reports of S. J. DAWSON, Esq., C.E., on the line of route between Lake Superior and the

RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

ACCOMPANIED BY A MAP.

Third edition. Illustrated by ALEXANDER J. RUSSELL, C.E. Sent by mail to any address in Canada, 75 cents; Address, G. E. DEMARATS, Montreal, 8-25-4f-568