

confession, adding that he would himself help her to send a memorial to the Secretary of State stating the facts of the case, and adding his own and the clergyman's and doctor's testimony to what death had prevented being legally attested.

Poor Moll! How often had she hoped and prayed only to be disappointed?

Did her faith and hope fall now, do you think? Far from it, her love for Willie Bolton was, if possible, stronger, deeper, more unselfish than ever.

Deserted, in prison, he was more in need of her devotion and faith than he had ever been, and she gave it the more freely.

She never entertained a doubt of his love for her either.

"Perfect love casteth away fear," and her love was perfect as it is given to earthly love to be.

Not that she forgot Mrs. Bolton's hints, even assertion that Florence had bewitched him with her beauty, but she put the suggestion down as even less than it was worth.

Willie had no doubt admired the beauty of her friend; how, indeed, could he help it?—but beyond this, she could not, would not, and did not believe the insatiation to have gone.

Happily for her, there was no one who had the interest, desire, or labored under some mistaken notions of duty, in the necessity of undeciding her.

Long, weary days they were before the result could be known, but Moll was not without friends now.

Goodness and virtue meet with a reward even in this world, and her reward came one day in the return of the one being whom she loved dearest upon earth.

Very humble and devoted was Willie to her, when at their meeting he clasped her in his arms, mentally vowing to be true to her through life, as she had been to him, when all the world was against him.

None knew better than he that it was Moll's unswerving faith and devotion which had proved him innocent, procured his freedom, and made him feel that he could again hold up his head among those who knew him, without fearing the finger of scorn, or seeing doubt and suspicion written on the countenances of those he met.

A sadder, we will hope a wiser man, he returned to Oldham, to find flowers planted on his mother's grave; the two men who had most injured him gone to their last account, and only Moll left to love and care for him.

"When shall we be married, lass?" he asked her a day or two after his return. "I'd like to have it over soon, and then we'll go away; the world's big enough, and Oldham bean't the same since I left it."

Though Moll demurred at being married so soon after his mother's death, her objections were overruled and the day fixed.

Do you feel any interest about Moll's wedding? It was very simple; it took place on a Sunday morning too, which certainly was not fashionable, but there was a goodly number of people to attend it, early as it was; and more than this, John Gresham gave the bride away, she having no near relatives, while Lady Helen Beltram was the mill-girl's bridesmaid.

Very strange it seemed no doubt, but John Gresham and his intended wife could sympathize with Willie Bolton and Moll in the trials they had gone through, and rejoice with them also in their present happiness, and they were both honest and genuine enough to admit it.

So the marriage was celebrated, if not with as much fuss in the way of preparation, at least with as much joy and fervor as one usually meets with, and what was more to the point, what gladdened Moll's heart more than the very handsome wedding present, was the offer by John Gresham to Willie of such a good situation in his ironworks, as to make the idea of his declining it, and leaving the town, out of the question.

So Moll had her heart's desire gratified at last.

Willie Bolton for her husband, and elevated to a position of honor and trust, as though to refute the last shade of doubt or suspicion which might, by malicious tongues, have been cast upon him, what more could she ask or hope for?

Very little, it is true, and that, with her usual unselfishness, for others rather than herself.

But our story, like all other things, must come to an end, and here we are at the last chapter of it.

CHAPTER LIV. CONCLUSION.

Of course I am quite aware of the fact that Florence ought to have died that evening when her child was restored to her arms.

The physician said she would die, and stern moralists would say that she deserved to die, yet for all this she did not.

Youth and a strong constitution triumphed to a certain extent, at least, over the grim phantom death, and she still lives, but she has become a changed and repentant woman.

Not that her health and strength have returned—that she knows can never be.

Nay, death has only relaxed, not withdrawn his grasp, and though she may linger on for years, at any moment the least excitement may cause the slender thread of life to snap asunder.

Sorrow and trial, rightly accepted, ennoble and purify the sufferer, and Florence had not gone through the ordeal in vain.

Two years have passed since that night when her husband, bringing back their child, had believed her dead, and we will take one glimpse at them before the curtain falls.

Florence Carr no longer—that was her maiden name—the only name to which she believed she had a right, when frantic, fearful and half mad, she made her way into Oldham that cold, wintry November night.

Do you see that lady reclining in her invalid chair, from which she can never rise without help? That is Florence Adair, the woman we have met, working for her bread in the cotton mill at Oldham.

No wonder you do not recognise her, for lovely as her face is, it has changed as much as the rebellious, defiant spirit within it.

It is not sadness, but cheerful resignation which you see written there.

Gazing at her, you can see that she has "passed through deep tribulation," and you scarcely wonder at the rare smile which lightens up and beautifies her face, as a lovely boy, some two and a half years old, comes running up to her side, closely followed by a gentleman, who, though old for his years, we cannot fail to recognise as Major Adair.

"An old friend has come to see you, Florence," her husband says, as he comes near her; "can you guess who it is? Are you well enough today to see him?"

She looks into his face with a quick, startled glance, and a flush suffuses her previously pale cheek.

"An old friend," she repeats, "not—not my brother! Tell me, Herbert, is it Lionel?"

"Yes, my love, it is."

"Thank Heaven," was the fervent reply; "deeply as I have sinned, my loved ones are safe and around me."

And she covered her face with her hands, while tears of joy and thankfulness, which would not be repressed, forced their way through her trembling fingers.

A few minutes later, and her brother, the man who had been the unconscious cause of her misery and sin, was at her side, clasping her in his arms, and blessing her as the dear sister who had snatched him as a brand from the burning, and altered the whole course and current of his life.

Little indeed does he dream what a price has been paid for that act of devotion, and how a secret which had darkened, and the memory of which even now overshadowed her whole life, had arisen out of his sister's devotion to him.

And she prays that he may never know it. The sin, she says, was hers, and though a merciful Providence spared her from the consequence of it, the act and thought was in no degree the less sinful.

But she is not unhappy—nay, she seems brighter and more hopeful than those around, who love and watch over her.

The cross laid upon her she bears without a murmur, happy in the companionship of her husband and son, and looking forward to that home where sin and sorrow are alike unknown.

What more have I to tell you?

Bob Brindley met with the punishment which he richly deserved, and being caught in the very act of poisoning John Barker, was convicted of the murder, and in due time, hung for the crime.

John Gresham and Lady Helen Beltram soon followed Bolton and Moll's example, and were married, taking up their residence at Bankside after the indispensable wedding tour, where Miss Stanhope spent the greater part of her time, though she did not profess to live with them.

Sidney Beltram is still the inmate of a lunatic asylum, no hope being entertained of his recovery.

Edwin Leinster and Mary Garston are married.

So, to the great disgust of his daughters, is William Garston.

Indeed, he took the loss of the baby boy he had found so much to heart, when its parents claimed it, that nothing but a wife could console him, so a wife accordingly he took, and as she has just presented him with a small specimen of humanity, the very image of his father, we will hope, too, that he is satisfied.

So I trust are you.

Most of the people in whom I have tried to interest you, are still living, enjoying as much happiness as usually falls to the lot of mankind, and thus my story is ended.

THE END.

FRIED CLAMS.

A Danbury man partook of an elegant supper of fried clams Saturday night, and went home pretty well satisfied with himself and the scenery. At two o'clock the next morning he was awakened by an unusual activity of a half dozen spasms, which appeared to have moved in during his sleep. Getting out of bed as hastily as possible, he groped his way to the dresser, where he kept a bottle of "Wine of the Woods" standing, and removing the cork hastily swallowed a substantial dose. The moment he got a taste of it he experienced a falling sensation, which, together with the shape of the bottle, created a sudden and ungovernable anxiety within him. "Gracious, Ann!" he said to his wife, "what bottle is that on the dresser?" "Why, mercy!" she exclaimed, "don't touch that; that is my cococaine!" It was too late, however. He had touched it, and merely explaining that he wished to be laid by the side of his mother, he dropped to the floor, and rolled

around and groaned until every member of the family was awakened, and came dashing into the room, variously clothed with revolvers, knives, and stove legs, and not much of anything else. But it was too late to save those fried clams. They had moved.

ROSE LEAVES.

BY GORDON CAMPBELL.

We stood beside the sleeping bay;
She held my gift-rose in her hand;
It was the last sweet trysting-day,
And then, ho! for a strange, far land.
She plucked each tender leaf apart,
And each leaf told its tale to me—
Each leaf a hope torn from my heart:
The leaves fell fluttering by the sea.

And oft in far-off lands I thought
Of one who never could be mine;
Who must be loved, but be unsought—
'Twas hard to love and not repine.
Those rose leaves withered on the sand,
But other roses bloom for thee;
O lost love in the distant land,
O rose leaves withered by the sea!

INDIAN SOCIETY.

I was told I was in luck when I mentioned to some friends who had lived for many years in India that I was going to the large military station of—well, what shall I call it? Nearly every place ends in bad, pore, or lore. Suppose it to be Dasherabad. I am not as yet very well up in Indian geography, but I do not think there is any place of that name in the country, so no offence can possibly be given. This place, I learnt, was everything that could be desired—an almost European climate, easy to get away from (that being, I have always noticed, the special charm of an Indian station), a railway, plenty of society. The ladies were, of course, charming, and their costumes ravishing—none of your native tailor-made-cut-from-domestic-magazine-pattern dresses would do for them. There were two or three High Churches, there were races, there was a theatre. In short it was what Sam Slick would call an A.P.—i.e., airily Paradise. Such being the case, I could the better obtain a fair estimate of what Indian society really was.

I feel sure that many people at home have very strange notions of us and our habits here in India. They imagine us perpetually clothed in white raiment, sitting down to dinner in our shirt sleeves, smoking hookahs, a charming laxity of morals on the part of the ladies, and ditto, combined with strong alcoholic tendencies, on the part of the gentlemen. Perhaps they may have more exalted ideas of us if they have the good fortune—you see I am modest!—to read this sketch of Indian society.

The first thing I am told to do after having got a roof over my head is to array myself in uniform, gird a sword on my thigh, take cards in my hand, and call on the General and his staff; also the Resident or Chief Commissioner, or whatever else he calls himself, and his staff. That done, I may get into plain clothes, and, having provided myself with a list of all the ladies in the place, commence my round of visits. I believe it is considered the more strictly correct thing to do for a married man to call by himself, and make a kind of reconnaissance. The husband of the lady called upon then does likewise, and, if they are both satisfied, then their wives call. One rule is always observed, and that is, that, married or single, the newcomer calls first. I am, moreover, told that the only hours I can make my calls in are between twelve and two—the hottest in the day. I suppose this is by way of making it all the more meritorious and complimentary, in the same way pilgrims make themselves as uncomfortable as they can by putting peas in their shoes when they visit some shrine. I hire a gharry, or carriage. It comes to the door. It is a wonderful-looking vehicle, on four wheels; there are shutters all round, which if down can never be pulled up, and if up cannot be pulled down. Generally half are up—the very ones you do not want. It is so narrow that you squeeze into it with difficulty, particularly if you are inclined to be a little stout; and on turning sharp round it feels as if it would fall over on one side. The driver sits on the roof, his turban fastened on his head by a bandage passing under the chin, giving him the appearance of suffering from tooth-ache. He has very little other clothing. The horse is a fearful-looking old screw, mere skin and bone, which, when not jibbing, however, goes along at a decent pace. A large bundle of grass, tied on to the roof for the refreshment of the aforesaid screw, completes the turnout. I step in, and we start. The door will not remain shut; it is continually flying open, and aggravating me. The heat is intense; the dust blows in clouds; the perspiration pours down me; my beautifully-starched collars become very limp, my lavender kids are ruined. At last I arrive at the first on my list. The servant comes down the steps of the verandah for my card, and says, "Missis can't see"—the Indian equivalent for "Not at home." I remember on one occasion, when the servant was told to say "Not at home," the truthful creature came to the carriage door, and delivered himself of the following—

"Missis saying she not at home—she in bed, sar."

Sometimes you will be told the reason she can't see, entering very minutely into details that may bring a blush to your modest face. One friend of mine, irritated at going from house to house and getting the eternal "Can't see" for reply, at last requested the servant to inquire if Missis had sore eyes? However, at several of the houses I visited, Missis could see; and then I found out that what are considered evening dresses at home are supposed to be the correct things to wear, both by callers and called upon out here. Some even went so far as to have flowers in their hair. The gentlemen, as yet, have not got to wearing swallow-tailed coats and white ties, but they may do so in time. Old Indians—men who have been long in the country—are rather given to calling in white uniforms; and, as far as coolness is concerned, they have undoubtedly the best of it. Perhaps they do not possess any plain clothes. An officer, who had been thirty years in the country without once going home, told me that seven years before he purchased a suit of plain clothes, or, as he called them—he was a Scotchman—"ceevil clothes," that he had only worn them once, and was afraid of doing so now, as he thought they might be out of fashion, and that the young officers would laugh at him. As there were nearly two hundred houses to call at, it took me the greater part of a week getting through all my visits.

Having now introduced myself to the people in the cantonment, I could put in an appearance at church. Of course, having been in the habit of worshipping only in the best society, I naturally selected a High Church one. My gharry again came into use. No one ever thinks of walking to church, or, indeed, anywhere else in cantonments. Out shooting it is done, but that is a different matter. I had some doubts when I drove up to the church whether it was one of or not; it looked a great deal more like Messrs. Lamohunder, Sen, and Co.'s shop. However, as a native was pulling away at a large bell, hung in one corner of the compound, I ventured in. The interior of the building was of the most severely chaste style of architecture. The united talents of the R.E.s and the Public Works Department must have been heavily taxed in its construction. In some High Churches in England the ladies are separated from the gentlemen like sheep from the goats; but here a different plan is adopted. There is a kind of sliding scale of pety. On the seat nearest to the east end there is a large placard, with "For the General" pasted on it; the pew next behind it is for the staff, and the next few for officers; then come seats for the troops; and afterwards, in the very Galilee, the civilians can pray or sleep as they feel disposed. The decorations were very wonderful. Several most palpable banner screens, with uneclesiastical patterns, were hung near the east window. Round the top of the arches were faded illuminated texts, suggestive of Christmas decorations. The choir were correctly enough dressed in cassocks and surplices. Several of the singers were half-castes, very dark indeed; and these, standing beside their fairer-complexioned brethren, reminded me rather of the black and white keys of an organ. The dresses of some of the lady worshippers took my breath away. I know it was very wrong of me to stare about in church; but when I saw a white muslin dress over a pink satin skirt, and a green bonnet, also some rather low dresses, together with bonnets that would have formed a museum of all the fashions in existence for the last ten years, I think I had some slight excuse.

The band-stand is a great institution at a military station. Nearly every evening in the week the band of one regiment or another performs, and there is generally a large attendance. Some remain in their carriages, which are drawn up round the enclosure; others stroll about. A good deal of spooning is carried on. Unlike most Indian stations, there is a great number of spins, as unmarried ladies are called here. At one time there were no less than thirty-nine. They were irreverently called the Thirty-nine Articles, till there came a fresh importation, when they became the Forty Thieves. Tall hats are *de rigueur* at the band-stand. Were a billycock to be seen, probably a memo would appear next day to the following effect:—"The Major-General Commanding observes with regret that it is the practice of some officers to appear at the band improperly. He hopes, &c., &c." What happy people we ought to be!

We have our Mall. Every one rises early, and there is a goodly show of equestrians on every description of horse and pony—Arabs, Walers, Persians, and Pegus; some very handsome, others specimens of the inexpensive charge recommended by a late Commander-in-Chief in India to the impecunious officer. I pity some of the poor animals. There is Mrs. Growler, fifteen stone if she is a pound, on a little Arab. She ought to be mounted on a Waler, like her husband, the colonel commanding the native infantry regiment, whom I see in the distance, as usual without straps to his trousers, and in uniform too. He can't surely have seen the general order that came out a short time ago, anent wearing those articles of dress. In the evening we go for a drive. We differ from Thurbell—I think it was—who considered respectability to consist in driving a gig. A barouche and pair we think to be the height of respectability. A phaeton and pair will just pass muster; but of a one-horse chaise we don't take any account at all. What numbers of lovely brunettes do I see occupants of the carriages. Their friends say they are of Portuguese extraction. Mrs. Vinegar told me in confidence that they were half-castes. I can't think why some persons can be so ill-natured.

There is always croquet going on somewhere