

paying it away, and giving me release from Adam's persecution."

"No, Miss Schoolar; your fortune remains. Lillymere, as heir after his mother, is to lay sixpences at the root of every tree before the mortgage is discharged. You will have to gather the coins. It was a contract made in a merry hour by some of your predecessors."

"It is generous, dear lady. Far beyond anything ever done by any woman in your position for one in mine."

"You know not that, poor drooping lily. I have more favours to confer; but also a heavy bond to impose, and payment to exact. You love Lillymere?"

"Pardon, gentle lady. In some unguarded moment I glanced at Lillymere, not then knowing him. He was a boy from the work-house humbly clothed, and I pitied him; for I heard him spoken of contemptuously as orphan of some unfortunate hand-loom weaver. I caught the light of his eyes in mine. Sweet Donna Euryntia, you also love him, and know how impossible is the task to undo one's own nature."

"Glanced at him, you say? His eyes met yours; was that all?"

"All for a long while. I rode into battle and, with riding-whip, smote aside a murderous hand with loaded pistol directed to his heart. He said not much then; indeed he spoke hard words in reproof of my indiscretion, as he termed that incident which realized to me a dream of joy surpassing any that ever fell in the way of woman."

"Fortunate Agnes, to have been there at that perilous moment. How wondrous! But you are insane, and dreamy. What came next?"

"Ah, lady! If you doubt me, I'd rather be silent and retain the sweet remainder in the deep recess where it has ever since been guarded. Vigilant silence guarding from profanity of the open air the most precious words ever sealed in the secret casket of a maiden's memory. The most delicious words of music ever spoken to my ear. Most thrilling music that ever charmed one willing to be enchanted. Yes, dear Lady Euryntia, I would retain the precious words a secret until he demands them back; or again makes melody repeating them."

"Oh, prosperous, happy Agnes. Lillymere said something to you which is vital for me to know. Why else this insanity of yours? What were the words?"

"So delicious to my ear they might offend yours, gentle, gracious lady. Pardon if I expose them not to painful commentary."

"I entreat you speak the whole, sweet Agnes, as they were given, you by him. You are the more esteemed by me, beautiful girl, that your heart has in keeping some precious thing committed to you by Lillymere. Tell all, pretty bird. It is meet I should know. Lillymere is very precious to me."

"If so, beautiful, gentle Euryntia, that sweet and tender nature could not bear to listen to the words of love he spoke to me."

"Yes, my flower; I would know the number of the drops of dew lying in the bosom of your pure being, breathed there from lips of Lillymere."

"Ah me, sweet Donna! If there were two Lillymeres how happy both of us. If you can bear to hear what would have killed me if addressed to you, I will dare the utterance. But I fear the offence, gentle Euryntia."

"Speak, Agnes. The words so full of life and love to you, may be terms of doom to me, I know. Speak, I pray you."

"Oh, Donna! you exact from me that which a maiden's reserve may not disclose."

"Speak, Agnes, I pray you."

"It was when riding under escort through a forest at night, some hours after the battle, we were turned back by the falling and exploding of shells around us. Then at the Byner Clyne homestead where the escort rested till day-break, I being about to leave them and ride forth into the wilderness alone; I and Lillymere about to part, he said—Oh, Donna, gentle lady! I have not courage to relate what he said."

"Do you remember the form of the sentences?"

"Every sentence, word, syllable, letter. Every letter of the words of that sweet speech I have selected from the alphabet, one by one, anointing them nightly with my lips."

"Speak the words, Agnes, I pray you."

"It was when we had reached the Byner Clyne homestead the night between the two battles, and we about to part, he said: 'Agnes, if passionate love had a language all its own, and I the master of its eloquence, I'd tell through every hour in all the circuits of the sun betwixt now and death, that I love, I love, I love you!' Those were the words. Pardon me the ungracious pain they may afford you, dear lady."

"I, Agnes, had a dream of the fancy too welcome to be repressed at first; too widely enlarged and enlivened by ambitious aspirations to be easily extinguished now; that his preference might have been for me. It is not so. Indeed from the manner and time of his going from Montreal, I inferred his love was pre-engaged. Repose on your sweet thoughts, Agnes. I leave you a while to seek counsel of my heart and shape my thoughts. The

ladies will attend and cheer you with conversation, books, and music."

A day later the Donna returned, saying: "I, who assumed much of the world out of moral harmony, and thought to reform society, have to go through the process of self-reconstruction. My ultimate trust is in the High and Holy, but as I would teach others I feel that conscience demands I begin with myself."

"Surely, dear lady, the Donna Essel Bell Euryntia is as nearly perfect as any angel in human form may ever be?"

"I am American born, dear Agnes, with paternal ancestry dating to the earliest white settlement in Maryland, and know I inherit good qualities with the great American people; with energy of the English and Irish miscegenation in my father's earlier ancestry. While on the side of my mother I inherited from Scotland, not alone ancestry of superior mind and worth, but also—pardon the strange phrase young lady—a drop of the devil's blood. All the females of the Ogleburn race were said to have possessed it. In old time they were witches. In later days the witchcraft develops to philosophy, poetry, and superior reach of mental powers. And mark what this inheritance of the drop of the blood of the Evil One has done:

"When a child, on a visit from America to Scotland, I had the babe Lillymere in charge one day. Lured by a gipsy, or witch, or magnetic necromancer, I carried the babe into the woods of Ogleburn which was wrong. The two strains of witch seed—DePeri possesses it largely, and affirms it to be a superabundance of magnetic iron held in solution and circulating in his veins,—the two strains of iron blood in the gipsy woman and in me, operated magnetically. I saw visions, went into ecstasy, and on return to reason discovered the babe Lillymere was gone; and the gipsy too. I dared not disclose the whole truth, fearing the people would burn me for a witch. Terribly has my conscience expiated that involuntary error, and the wilful equivocation in veracity. And a thousand fold more terribly has the magnetic fascination of the gipsy over me affected the early life of the heir of Lillymere, and of his mother, my distant kinswoman, Lady DeLacy Lillymere, poor demented wandering Edith."

"To make amends, I have vowed to accomplish, as far as one woman may, some good and great ameliorations in the moral life of my beloved America. Now, I desire to engage the Earl and Countess Royalfort, Lillymere and you, Agnes, to join with Lady Mary Mortimer, Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Kinnaird, the Duke of Sheerness, and the galaxy of wealth and fashion in your Imperial Great Britain and Ireland; and work as I and the many illustrious ladies of Republican America will when the war is over, to purify and elevate the social life of the people of toil."

"And, as already said, I begin by reconstructing myself."

The Quebec ice-bridge had formed on the St. Lawrence. Instead of the perilous navigation of canoes in the icebergs, a wide glacial plain lay open. The Donna, paying a year's rent in advance there and at Montreal, said they would take advantage of the magnificent sheet of ice; get to the railway and journey West to the Casa Euryntia in Michigan. She desired to enjoy the luxury of travel in the superb coaches of the Grand Trunk and Great Western Railways in the season of winter. The most enjoyable time of all railway travelling to the mind which accepts delight in contemplating, in close proximity of observation, the triumphs of mechanical science over the wildest conditions of nature; and of the moral science involved in the managerial organization which conducts complexities of traffic over thousands of miles daily and nightly with a regularity equal to the domestic concerns of a common household.

At Toronto, Queen City of Canada West, they associated in the high intellectualities of its people. And at Hamilton renewed the social life, which Euryntia and Lillymere had severally pronounced, on a former occasion, to be poetry.

At the Casa Euryntia in Michigan, they lived till the war was over; joined by the Wandering Shepherdess carrying a lamb as before, and leading two blind sheep, her old companions.

Until the war closed no earthly inducement could draw Lillymere from the field. He held, in the inspiration of high political philosophy, that loyalty to the progressive civilization of the age demanded the conservation of American national life, with the extinction of negro slavery from off the fair face of this majestic continent.

But his devotion and fidelity to the land of his fathers was not the less.

I have imbued into him what is in me. All my busy life until now, I have not ceased to feel, and be weighed down or buoyant under the responsibility, that the honour, peace, and well-being of the British Empire rests on me personally.

When the war was over the friends of Lillymere received him in England. I cannot follow him in the events next succeeding. But I recall one of many joyous days.

Ring the bells, swing the bells, proclaim the day in Irdale. Ring out the peal from

Irdale tower, this is Whitsun well flowering. They came up the dales, over the hills, in pairs and in trooping companies. Some to be wedded, all to make holiday; and be merry on the green at the well dressing.

Among visitors in chariots were the Earl and Countess Royalfort, our Agnes, lovelier than ever; and a nurse holding in arms a baby heir of Lillymere. Squire Steelyard of Canada and the Pealys, Mrs. Inkle and young Tom were there.

Euryntia was there on a visit from the States. The Hon. Mrs. Pensyldine of Philadelphia and lovely Sylva, Duchess of Sheerness; they were there. The Wandering Shepherdess roamed no more, but tended her lambs in the park at Lillymere Hall.

Then the Lillymere party went to Scotland. Euryntia with her superb retinue encamped in her silken tents on Black Castle hill. In the evening Sandy Cowe lighted up the ruins of Enderwick Castle—the fortalice of Ogleburn having disappeared—and entertained in tents a thousand of the friends I once knew. I stood upon a broken tower observing their faces. Not one was old. In the morning all were gone.

But Lillymere lived, and spoke in the nation.

In all the nations the people's freedom increased in degree as a man respected the rights of another man.

THE END

THE Canadian Illustrated News PORTFOLIO, (FOR 1872.)

Which is about to be largely circulated both on the American Continent and in Great Britain, will contain an

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Descriptive of Canada, its Cities, Public Works, and Scenery, its Industries, Resources, and Commerce, and also a GUIDE to the Principal Cities, Watering-Places, and Tourists' Resorts of Great Britain, together with the Weekly Current Numbers of the

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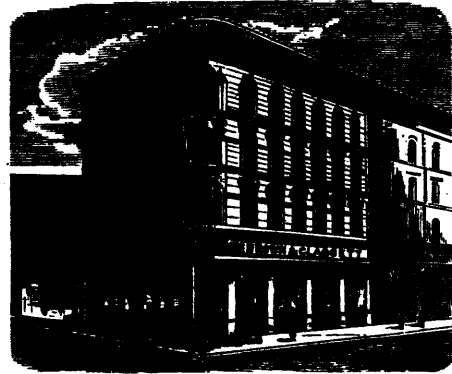
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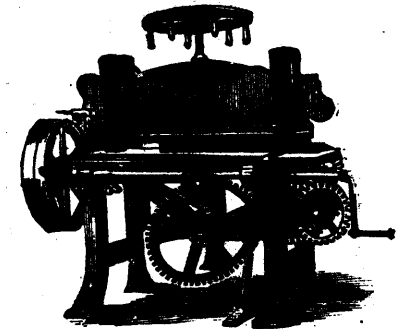
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