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URIEL; Or, the Chapel of the Holy Angels.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE AUSTRALIAN DUKE; OR, THE NEW UTOPIA," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.—CONTINUED.

"What a change there will be up there when the old gentleman goes to heaven," he said. "I suppose Marmaduke, M. P., will then come in for everything."

"What! the Pendragon of Eaglehurst!" said Julian; "is he the next heir?" "I fancy so," replied Rodolph. "You know there are no sons left now, since the last one was hanged or drowned—which was it?"

"Hanged!" said Paxton, with sudden interest, as he recalled the lines on the meaning of which he had been speculating the evening before; "was that the fate of the last heir of Merylin? Then what would fit into the second line of the old prophecy?"

"But just then Julian looked up, and saw poor Geoffrey struggling with mixed emotions: the effort to use his carving-knife and fork for the ordinary purposes for which those implements are intended battling with a vehement desire to throw them at Rodolph's head. He saw also a piteous expression on Mary's countenance, and plunged forward to the rescue."

"You must know, Miss Houghton," he began, "we sat up last night and got Lindesay to tell us ghost stories, and bloody-bones legends, till our heads were well crammed with horrors. Mr. Paxton is prepared to find you all living in enchantment, and I have promised to guide him to the exact spot on the seashore where Excalibur was flung into the mere."

Then, having secured Paxton's attention, he led him on to some of the curiosities of Cornish topography, and on once more glancing at his host's countenance, perceived by its relieved expression that he had done him a timely service. Later on in the evening, when the party had returned to the drawing-room, Mary found her opportunity at a moment when the others were engaged in conversation; and, as Julian took a seat beside her, she endeavored to express her thanks.

"I was so grateful to you at dinner," she said, "Mr. Beresford did not see and you did."

"In a foggy sort of way," said Julian. "I only comprehended that, unless relief was speedily ministered, Geoffrey would certainly have choked."

"They had touched on a painful subject," said Mary. "Geoffrey, you know, has made the Pendragon troubles his own. I saw he could not bear having them ventilated in that careless way over the dinner table."

"Do you know," said Julian, "I have a very dim sort of idea what their troubles were. People make allusions, and shake their heads, but I have never heard the real story."

"Oh, it is no secret: Uriel, the last surviving son, when only nineteen, was charged with a murderous assault and robbery. It seemed inconceivable, he had always appeared so good; but they supposed there must have been secret debts to account for it. It was fully proved, and he was condemned to five years' penal servitude. At the end of that time they tried to get off to America; but news came that, a few days after he had sailed, he fell overboard and was drowned. The poor old father has never got over it, and at the time they feared he would lose his reason. He recovered after a while, but he has

never passed the threshold of his own home since the first shock of the disgrace. You could not estimate it fully unless you knew what sort of pride the Pendragons have always had in their family honor."

"What a sad story!" said Julian. "I remember it now. He was in the army, I think, and the affair took place with a brother officer. I have heard, too, of the family pretensions; they must truly have come down with a crash."

"Yes," said Mary, "I don't think there is much of that sort of thing left now. Aurelia has nothing of it. I sometimes fancy that she feels all this is a sort of punishment, and that she and her father are expiating the pride of their ancestors."

"And what was Geoffrey's share in the history?" said Julian. "Dear Geoffrey!" replied Mary, "he has been like a son of the old man, and has done everything for him. You will laugh if I say it, but really I think his devotion to the father and daughter is his romance, his poem, I was going to say, if the notion of Geoffrey and poetry were not so incongruous."

"Why incongruous?" said Julian. "I don't know, of course, what you mean by poetry; but what I understand of it has nothing that would not suit the dear old fellow excellently well."

"Really?" said Mary; "just explain."

"Why, it is very simple, I think," replied Julian. "Poetry deals with what is great and noble, with what is above the common standard, and that is just what I take Geoffrey to be."

Mary's eyes sparkled with delight, it was so rare a pleasure for her to hear Geoffrey thus spoken of. "He is, indeed," she replied; "only one does not expect the world to guess at the treasure hidden under that rough exterior," and she glanced as she spoke at the figure of her brother, as he stood with his hands in those everlasting pockets, listening to Paxton's easy talk with much indifference as to the impression he might himself be making on his guest.

"The world," said Julian; "oh, of course the world cannot appreciate what is above its standard. But we were not speaking of the world, but of poetry. I know what you are thinking of," he continued, as he followed the direction of Mary's eyes; "you would say that there can be no poetry without beauty, and it is true; but the beauty must be within, in the first instance. If it is not there, it is nowhere. Outside show is not beauty."

"Do you know," said Mary, "I was thinking how like that it is to Aurelia. Everyone who sees her speaks of her beauty, and it is simply dazzling. But for all that, there is something in it I never understood till now. She never seems to value it, hardly to be conscious of it, or, if conscious, seems to wish only to hide it away. What she makes me feel is far more the beauty of soul than of person."

"That is to say," said Julian, "that in her case the beauty of the soul has overflowed exteriorly, and you see it. Well, if we could see the soul of dear old Geoff, we would just veil our eyes from the splendor. I tell you I know him through and through, and there is not a selfish fibre in him. If that is not poetry, I should like to know what is, let the world say what it likes about grace and so forth."

Mary smiled at the little allusion to her brother's catchword, and understood all that Julian meant to imply by it. She felt that he had precisely what Rodolph had not—a keen perception and delicate feeling for others—and a sympathy was at once established between them, which was felt by both to be very pleasant.

"Poetry and beauty," said Paxton, who had caught the words in the lull of the conversation, and seemed to think he had a right to join in the discussion. "Now, in the name of both those capital things, Miss Houghton, will you soften your excellent brother's heart, and try and persuade him to find some way by which I can get admitted within the haunted towers of Merylin Castle? He assures me no profane foot is ever suffered to enter there; and, of course, my desires to taste the forbidden fruit have immediately increased a hundred-fold."

"If you could prove yourself an architect, you might have a chance," said Mary; "I don't know any other expedient."

"An architect?" exclaimed Paxton, "well, one never knows till one tries; I think I once built a pig-sty."

"Ah! to be sure," said Geoffrey; "I was forgetting about the chapel; I promised I would ask you about it, Julian. Dye see, they want something done to it and don't know how to set about it. I said I was sure you would find them the right man."

Julian listened whilst his friend related the substance of Miss Pendragon's conversation on the previous day. He took in the whole case with surprising quickness; the desirableness of arousing the old baronet's interest, the rocks to be avoided, and the object to be attained.

"Bluemantle is your man," said Rodolph, "that is, if you want first-rate quality, work, and design."

"Bluemantle is a puppy," said Julian, "and as arbitrary as the Czar. If he had a mind to sweep the mortuary chapel right away, he would do it, and never take a word from any one. There's Gules; he would do exactly what he was told, though I am not sure if he has gumption enough for such an undertaking. If he had a plan, he would carry it out, but the plan is the difficulty. Do you think one could see the place?"

"Of course," said Geoffrey; "and, besides, it has been engraved and photographed a dozen times. Mary will get you a portfolio full of views, but they give you no idea of the state of the roof, which is half a ruin. Gives you the rheumatism to go there, but till now the old man would not have it touched."

"Well, then, you'll take me there to-morrow," said Julian; "that's settled."

"And myself as architect's assistant," said Paxton. "Have no fear, I will sit up all night with a glossary of Gothic architecture, and lay in such a vocabulary of 'corbels' and 'string-courses' as that Mr. Wyvern shall be able to pass me off for Bluemantle himself, if needful."

Meanwhile, the portfolio, of which Geoffrey had spoken, was produced, and its contents at once fired Julian's enthusiasm. He examined the photographs with the eye of a real artist, and was lost in admiration of their architectural beauty. "What proportions! what elegance, what marvellous tracery!" he exclaimed, "to think of such a jewel crumbling to ruins for want of care! I've half a mind to say it must be Bluemantle, after all. But we must see it first."

And so the expedition to Merylin, to Paxton's great satisfaction, was fixed for the morrow.

CHAPTER VIII. SOMETHING ABOUT THE ANGELS. Rodolph's departure at an early hour the next morning prevented his forming one of the little party who, shortly after breakfast, took their way up the steep hill and through the dark pine woods which surrounded the venerable pile so often mentioned in these pages. Geoffrey was not sorry that circumstances had delivered him from the necessity of introducing his loquacious friend along with his other guests. The feelings with which he was wont to regard the castle and its inhabitants were of that character which would not bear the touch of ridicule, and perhaps he was conscious that there was just such a spice of what Mary had called "romance," as would be most likely to provoke it. From his present companions, however, he had nothing to fear. Paxton's interest in the scene before him was unmistakably genuine, and as to Julian, his imagination had received a certain degree of exaltation from his conversation of the previous evening, and he was prepared to see in everything appertaining to the Pendragons and their residence "a beauty and a mystery." His was one of those characters whose judgment is not always able to make head against their impressionability, and it was this facility with which his sympathies were aroused and kindled by new objects which led superficial observers to charge him with fickleness of purpose.

They reached the courtyard gate, where Paxton failed not to search for the mark left by the mysterious dagger, as related in the Legend of Sir Caradoc. They passed through the quaint old hall with its armor and its pictures into a panelled chamber with high antique chimney, over which appeared a portrait of the hapless cavalier who had died on the scaffold, the golden-haired Sir Arthur, as he was called; and Geoffrey was just explaining that the golden hair was not a metaphor, but a reality, when the door opened and gave admission to Aurelia. Prepared as he had been by Mary's words to look for beauty, Julian was yet startled by that which he now beheld. He gazed at her as he would have done at a picture of Raphael or Correggio; for the form that stood before him, in its sable robes and flowing golden hair, did not seem to belong to the workaday world of the nineteenth century. It was a dream, a vision; for a second or two everything around him assumed the same character; until he was roused by hearing Geoffrey's attempt at an introduction, and advanced to reply to her salutation. All that he had heard of the Pendragons, their lofty lineage, their honorable fame, and their unparalleled misfortunes, rushed upon his mind, and imparted to his own manner an unwonted degree of earnestness and respect. Geoffrey stood apart and looked at them; and thought to himself what a noble pair they were! Aurelia was just a princess; he had never thought of her as anything else; but Julian—for the first time he became aware that his friend also was cast in the highest type of humanity. Why, if you had dressed him in black velvet, and given him a laced collar and a peaked beard, it might have been the martyred cavalier himself who was standing there. It was a wondrous picture; but as poor Geoffrey stood and beheld it, he caught sight of the reflection in a pier-glass, at the end of the room; it gave him back, at the same time, the image of his own ungainly person, and, for the first moment in his life, the pang of a dreadful passion seized upon his heart. Shame and mortification were mingled with a new feeling to which he could give no name, but it at once created such a disturbance within him, that in his simplicity he besought him if he were going mad. "I'm a fool, I know," he said to himself, "I've known that all my life, but this is lunacy." Alas, poor Geoffrey! it was only his first attack of the passion of jealousy, and, unluckily for him, it was not to be his last. It was not lessened when, taking their seats, the subject of the chapel and its projected restoration was at once brought under discussion. Julian understood it all so surprisingly, and he expressed himself so well; to hear him and Aurelia talk together, whilst, now and then, Paxton dropped a judicious word, it

seemed as though there was a sort of freemasonry between them all. "Why, it would have taken me a week to have said all that," thought Geoffrey, "and I shouldn't have made it clear even then!" Evidently here were people who had been made out of the same lump of clay, and Geoffrey felt that whereas his particular bit of mother earth had turned him out a rough specimen of very common earthenware, those before him might have been likened to some wondrous vases of finest porcelain. "Well, of course," he tried to reason, "it's all as it should be; here are the descendants of kings and crusaders; with a poet, as they call him, ready to put them both into verse. A century ago the Houghtons were just honest yomen—no wonder I am not up to this sort of thing—it's just what one might expect." Admirably argued, and his honest heart did its best to accept the inevitable conclusion, but not the less did the sharp pang continue to wring that poor heart, and down it in its bitterness.

Julian begged to see the chapel, and Aurelia at once arose, and led the way. Even in its present ruinous condition, his practised eye could discern the wonderful beauty it must once have possessed. The tall lancet windows of the eastern apse were filled with fragments of ancient glass; the walls of the sanctuary, discolored by damp, yet showed remains of painting; the carving of the screen and reredos was broken and defaced, but enough was left to indicate its former beauty of design. A little chapel, at the extremity of a side aisle, contained the monuments of two knights, and names cut deep into the stones of the pavement. The burial-place of the Pendragons, dug out of the solid rock, lay below, and Aurelia explained that the chapel was a chantry, and that Mass was said here daily for the souls of the departed members of her house.

"The chapel is dedicated to St. Michael, is it not?" asked Julian. "No, not exactly," said Aurelia; "guide books and such things say so, but the real dedication is to the Holy Angels—a much more uncommon one, as you are probably aware. Our family has always cherished a peculiar devotion to the Holy Angels; my father bears the name of Michael, as you know, and I could not count up all that have been called by that name, to say nothing of Gabriels, and others," and she pointed to two flagstones engraved with the names of "Arthur" and "Gabriel" Pendragon. "My two brothers," she said.

Julian thought to himself: "And Uriel, the third, where is he?" But Aurelia continued: "You would not understand the chapel if you did not know its dedication. All these defaced paintings on the walls were angelic figures, I believe; and the seven windows of the apse are said to have been filled with representations of the Seven Spirits; St. Michael, you see, is still perfect."

"I beg pardon," interrupted Paxton, "I am an outsider, you know, and these things are new to me. Do you only reckon seven angels? My notion of them was a sort of a starry host, which no man living could number."

"But with seven stars of greater magnitude than the others," said Aurelia; "the Seven Spirits before the throne." The devotion to these "Seven Spirits" has been a favorite one in our family, and I believe the old wall paintings I spoke of bore traces of it."

"I must know something more about those Seven Spirits," said Julian. "If that was the idea in the mind of those who built the chapel, it would furnish a key to the whole of the symbolism. Where can I learn all about the subject, for I fear my notions, at present, are a little indistinct?"

"If you will come to the library," said Aurelia, "our chaplain, Father Segrave, will, I daresay, give you all the authorities you can desire. He has made the chapel his special study, and is longing to see it saved from destruction."

To the library, then, they adjourned, a room which bore the same stamp of antiquity as the rest of the building. Its dark oak shelves were filled with toms, of which a considerable number exhibited vellum bindings and folio proportions, though there was a fair number of volumes in more modern garb. Father Adrian Segrave speedily made his appearance, and proved to be a cherry-looking man of middle age, whose ecclesiastical soutane Paxton appeared to scan with curious eye. He expressed his satisfaction that something was going to be done for the chapel, and was anxious to know into whose hands Mr. Wyvern proposed to commit the work.

"I don't know," said Julian; "I am going to beg for four-and-twenty hours reflection on the subject. But my inspection of it just now has suggested many new ideas; and Miss Pendragon gives me hopes that you will help to clear up some of them. I want more perfect instruction in all that regards the Seven Spirits. If, as I gathered, they are the patrons of the chapel, the symbolism of the ornamentation would all bear reference to the fact, and to destroy that would be to blot out the meaning of the whole fabric."

TO BE CONTINUED.

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ALLEGRI'S MISERERE.

A Beautiful Allegory of the Great Maestro.

At the base of a cliff flowed a tiny rivulet; the Rock caught the raindrops in his broad hand, and poured them down in little streams to meet their brothers at his feet, while the Brook murmured a constant song of welcome. But a stone broke from the cliff, and, falling across the rivulet, threatened to cut its tender thread of life.

My little strength is useless, moaned the Streamlet. "Vainly I struggle to move onward; and below the pebbles are waiting for their cool bath, the budding flowers are longing for my moisture, the little fish are pausing for their breath. A thousand lives depend on mine. Who will aid me? Who will pity me?"

"Wait until Allegri passes; he will pity you," said the Breeze. "Once the cruel malaria seized me, and bound messages of death upon me. 'Pity!' I cried. 'Free me from this burden, from which I cannot flee.' Hear the wind moan, said some; but no one listened to my prayer till I met a dreamy musician with God's own tenderness in his deep eyes. 'Have mercy!' I sobbed; and the gentle master plucked branches of roses, and cast them to me. I was covered with roses, pierced with roses, filled with roses; their redness entered my veins, and their fragrance filled my breath; roses fell upon my forehead with the sweetness of a benediction. The death I bore fled from me; for nothing evil can exist in the presence of Heaven's fragrance. Cry to the good Allegri, little brooklet; he will pity you."

So the rivulet waited till the master came, then sighed for mercy. The rock was lifted, and the stream flowed forward with a cry of joy to share its happiness with pebble and flower and fish.

A little bird became entangled in the meshes of a net. "Trust to the good Allegri," whispered the breeze; "it is he who gave me liberty."

"Trust to the good Allegri," rippled the brook; "it is he who gave me liberty." So the bird waited till the master passed, then begged a share of his universal mercy. The meshes were parted, and the bird flew to the morning sky to tell its joy to the fading stars and rising sun.

"Oh! yes, we all know Allegri," twinkled the stars. "Many a night we have seen him at the bed of sickness."

"Many a day I have seen him in prison," shouted the sun with the splendor of a Gloria. "Wherever are those that doubt, that mourn, that suffer; wherever are those that cry for help and mercy—there have I found Allegri."

The people of the earth wondered what made the sun so glorious, not knowing that he borrowed light from the utterance of a good man's name.

A multitude of Rome's children had gathered in St. Peter's. The Pope was kneeling in the sanctuary, princes and merchants were kneeling together under the vast cupola, the poor were kneeling at the threshold, even a leper dared to kneel on the steps without, and was allowed the presence of his Lord. All souls were filled with longing, all hearts were striving for expression.

Then strains of music arose: O soul! cease your longing; O heart! cease your strife; now utterance is found.

Sadder grew the tones, till, like the dashing of waves, came the sigh; "Vainly I struggle to move onward. Have mercy, Father!" The lights flickered and died, a shadow passed over the worshippers, and the Tiber without stopped its course to listen.

Sadder grew the tones, till the moans were heard, "Vainly I strive to escape these meshes. Have mercy, Father!" The shadow grew deeper, and a little bird without stopped in its flight to listen.

Still was the music sadder with the weight of the sob "Vainly I flee from this loathsome burden. Have mercy, Father!" Vaster and darker grew the shadow, and the very breeze stopped in its course to listen.

And now the music mingled sigh and moan and sob in one vast despairing cry: "Vainly I struggle against this rock of doubt. Have mercy, Father! Vainly I strive to escape the meshes of sin. Have mercy, Father! Vainly I flee from this evil self. Have mercy, O Father! have mercy." Darker and deeper and vaster grew the shadow, and all sin in those human hearts stopped in its triumph to listen.

All light was dead, all sound was dead. Was all hope dead? "No!" wept a thousand eyes. "No!" sobbed a thousand voices; for now high above the altar shone forth the promise of light in darkness, of help in tribulation—in sight of Pope and prince, in sight of rich and poor, and even in sight of the leper kneeling without, gleamed the starry figure of the cross.

How was this Mass of Allegri so completely formed, "cry the three centuries that have passed since then, that we have been able to add nothing to its perfection?"

The calm voice of nature answers: It is because his own love and mercy were universal; because he had learned that all creation needs the protecting watchfulness of the Maker; because he gave even the weakest creature's voice in his embracing cry of Misereere.

"Success is the reward of merit," not of assumption. Popular appreciation is what tells in the long run. For fifty years, people have been using Ayer's Sarsaparilla, and to-day it is the blood-purifier most in favor with the public. Ayer's Sarsaparilla cures.

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