

"Whew! the girl who saved you from being made into mince-meat that day at the station! Very right and proper and romantic. And you want me to draw up settlements, and pilot you through Doctor's Commons, eh? Quite delighted I'm sure."

"Stow all that—for a while at least," returned the bridegroom elect. "I'm awfully hungry—let us go to Pim's and have a chop."

The two men passed out into the busy streets—Brett inquisitive, Hilton full of importance. He was making a good match he said. The girl was acknowledged to be the belle of Blankshire; and her family dated back to the reign of Henry the Third. If there was a little scarcity of "tin," why, he had enough for both, and he was rather glad of the opportunity to do things handsomely.

"Take care!" shouted Mr. Brett as they reached the corner of King William Street. "This asphaltic stuff has so deadened the traffic hereabouts that one never knows what's coming. Why, man, didn't you see that cab? You are not parading about your own park, you must please to recollect."

But Mr. Hilton hardly heeded him. He was talking so volubly about his future plans for the comfort and dignity of the lady of Waldenshoe that he had but little attention to spare for such a common-place subject as London street traffic. Besides, he had a vague idea that people ought to make way for him, and not he for them; and truly his broad shoulders went on their way in a wonderfully direct manner.

There was a crowd gathered at the end of Chesapeake that afternoon.

"What is it?" asked somebody of a policeman.

"A gentleman knocked down by an omnibus, sir," was the reply. "I fear it will go badly with him—his skull appears to be fractured."

"Poor fellow! I wonder who he is."

The senseless form was conveyed to the nearest hospital, Mr. Brett accompanying it, to procure all that would be procured in the way of human care and skill for the Squire of Waldenshoe.

But care and skill were useless in this case. The policeman was right—the extent of the injury to the head made it impossible that there could be a single chance for his life; and long ere the night had fallen on the noisy streets of the huge town, Robert Hilton's spirit had passed away—away from the wealth he had so exulted in, away from dependents who had fawned upon him, away from friends and enemies, away from his plighted bride, out into the unknown future.

His remains were brought to Waldenshoe, and interred in the family vault. And in the church was placed a marble monument to the memory of the man whose alien name had broken in upon the long line of the Waldens whose ashes slumbered there.

Her lover's sudden death greatly appalled Harriet. It seemed so awful that the stalwart man who had left her side full of strength and life should be born back to his home a lifeless creature, shrouded with all the gloomy paraphernalia of the grave. But she was too honest to feign grief. The three weeks of their engagement had been a time of unutterable horror to her. Since their interview in the library she had never lost the feeling that she belonged to Robert Hilton—that she was his, as his dogs and his horses were his—that she must consult his wishes, and in some measure conform to his opinions.

When the shock of his sudden death had passed away, a strong sense of relief came over her. It seemed Heaven's will that she should be saved from the dreary fate to which she had sold herself, and she was thankful. People called to console with her; and they were greatly scandalized at finding that she had not even gone into complimentary mourning for the man whom she was so soon to have married.

"Harriet Cordeaux has always been a queer girl," they agreed amongst themselves, "but this conduct really exceeds the bounds of propriety. She has no heart."

Harriet thought so too. Her heart had died months ago, she told herself. Her life belonged to her father and her mother, to her friends, and to the poor village folk who adored her. She would live henceforth for them, and be as bright and as cheerful as she could force herself to be. She would wear her smiling mask as successfully as the numb, aching pain which made earth so gray to her would allow her to do. She was called upon to proclaim to curious ears that she had been so foolish as to love Philip Walden when Philip Walden had never asked her for her love. But, if she could conceal what she did feel she could not pretend what she did not feel. She could mention Philip's name without a sigh; but she would not give one to the memory of Robert Hilton.

Great preparations were being made in the village, nine months after the accident in the London streets, to welcome home the new master of Waldenshoe.

He had remained at his post in the Brazils until some one had been found to take his place there; for he had seemed in no hurry to assume possession of the heritage of his fathers.

The bell-ringers had done their part nobly, the bonfires had blazed, and the one triumphal arch which did not get out of shape looked sufficiently graceful, and the two which did at least looked green and gay, and gave indisputable evidence of the goodwill of their makers. The tenantry assembled to escort the new Squire from the

railway-station, and the bay horses pranced as they drew the carriage up the long avenue—the carriage containing a true Walden coming to enjoy his rights at last.

The Brazils had changed Philip Walden wonderfully, people said; but his gravity became him well. It was right that the Squire should be different from the enthusiastic boy whom they had known and loved in times gone by. But it had not been the Brazils which had wrought the change in him. It was the bitter memory of the sweet dream which he had dreamed in these very woods and lanes, and which he had tried in vain to forget.

They met often, those two who loved each other so truly, and misunderstood each other so miserably. Philip could never forget for an instant that Harriet had been Robert Hilton's promised wife—and he did not wish to forget it. She could never have cared for him, except in the old sisterly, friendly way, he thought, and he tried to cheat himself into believing that they had got back again to the familiar footing. But they were both conscious of the delusion. Poor Harriet tried bravely to treat him as she treated her own brothers, but it was weary work, and when done was an utter failure.

The Waldens still lived at the White House. Mr. Bently, a neighbouring clergyman asked Philip one day why he did not reside at Waldenshoe, as his master should do.

"Would you wish me to live in solitary state up there, like the weather-cock on the church spire?" he laughed. "My mother will never consent to leave the White House, and I choose to remain with her."

"You should marry," responded Mr. Bently, who had four blooming daughters at home.

Philip smiled slightly. "I must have time," he said.

One day Amy Archer and Harriet were returning from their morning walk across the park, when Philip, who had been talking to his gamekeeper at the edge of the wood, moved forward to join them.

"How beautiful those autumn tints are now!" he remarked, as they reached the crest of the hill. "Did you ever finish the picture you were painting of this very view when I went away?" he added suddenly, turning to Harriet.

"No," she replied, a little confusedly.

"Why, you were extremely interested in it then! I remember how eagerly you worked at it, and how I—"

The crimson flooded over her cheeks and brow, and, although she turned her face from him, his quick eye noticed the blush and the confusion.

"Can it be that she loved me then?" he pondered.

A new light broke in on him from that moment. Even if she was lost to him, it was sweet to think that once he had been near and dear to her, that her heart had once been his, even if her ambition and her worldly wisdom had made her listen to Mr. Hilton's addresses. She was unworthy a true man's love, he repeated over and over; but how madly he loved her in spite of all his philosophy!

Some poachers had been caught in the Wynstone Woods, and great was the excitement felt among the gentlemen of the neighbourhood. The nightly depredations had been carried on systematically for some time, and the gang had defied the watchers and game keepers of the whole district; but the arm of the law had seized them at length, if not exactly in the very act, at least preparing for its commission.

Some additional evidence had reached Philip's ears and rendered it necessary that he should consult with Sir John, as chairman of the petty sessions, immediately. He hurried through the village, and entered the grounds of Wynstone by the private gate at the end of the garden. He ran lightly over the grass, and, turning the angle of the shrubbery, came in sight of the summer-house where he had parted from Harriet more than three years ago. Did his eyes deceive him, or was she indeed there, sitting as she had then sat, an open book upon her knee, her dog lying in the sunlight at her feet? He stopped for a moment irresolute; she did not see or hear him. As he stood there, Harriet, his old child-love, seemed to return to him, and the image of Miss Cordeaux, Mr. Hilton's promised bride, faded away like a hideous dream.

He came nearer to her, over the grassy sward.

"Harry!"

She started up, her eyes wet with tears.

"What is it?" she asked, hurriedly, almost in the exact words she had used on the last occasion that they had stood face to face alone.

"What has happened?"

"Nothing, Harriet, except that I have lost my calm senses just for this moment. My darling—my darling!" and the next instant his arms were round her, and she was sobbing on his shoulder.

Long they stood there, beneath the shadow of the may-trees and laburnums, without another word. At length her tears had spent themselves, and she raised her face to his.

"Oh, Philip, I have always loved you!"

"Can you ever forgive my blindness, my idiotic folly, Harriet? Can you ever forgive what I have made you suffer?" he said, as he pressed his lips to her hair.

"You have suffered too."

"Oh, my love, indeed I have! Let that suffering plead for me now, and do not let it be very long before I take my wife to Waldenshoe. Speak to me, Harriet!"

And she spoke, and the words she said quite completed the scattering of Philip Walden's

"calm senses," to the very great advantage of the poachers on the Wynstone grounds; for Sir John had started off for the petty session before Philip remembered his existence, and for lack of the important evidence the case fell through, to the great chagrin of the magistrates, and to the poachers' exceeding joy.

"THE CHILD OF MIRACLE." THE ASSASSINATION OF THE DUKE OF BERRY.

"The Child of Miracle"—the dark and tragic story of whose posthumous birth is told in *Fraser's Magazine* for this month—is the present Count de Chambord—the man who might have been King of France the other day if he would abate one or two royal crochets, and who it is just probable will ere long ascend the throne of the Bourbons, whether he abate his crochets or not. The Count was born fifty-three years ago, a few months after the tragic death of his father, the Duke of Berry. The Duke was the second son of Monsieur afterwards Charles X. His uncle, Louis XVII., had no son, neither had the Duke's brother, the Duke of Angoulême; it was, therefore, necessary (if the Crown were to be kept in the elder branch of the family) that the Duke of Berry should marry and have a son. A wife was accordingly found for him in the person of his cousin, the Princess Maria Caroline, of Naples, who was quite a girl, almost a child, while he was over thirty-six. They had two daughters at the time of the Duke's assassination, and a son was looked for eagerly; but that son (the present Count de Chambord) did not come until after his father had fallen by the dagger of the assassin. The story of that terrible incident in thus powerfully related:—

A few weeks before his death, the Duke told of a remarkable dream which he had, which was repeated in society—a fact which was confirmed to Mr. Raikes by the Duke of Guiche. He dreamed that one night he was standing at the window of his apartment at the Tuilleries, which overlooked the gardens, accompanied by two individuals, and while he was admiring the beauties of the prospect, his attention was suddenly attracted to the iron railing, by what seemed to be passing in the Rue de Rivoli. A dense mass of people was assembled in the street, and presently there appeared a grand funeral procession, followed by a train of carriages, evidently indicating the last tribute paid to some deceased man of fortune and consequence. He turned round to one of the bystanders, and inquired whose funeral was passing; the answer was made that it was that of M. Greffulhe. In a short time, after this procession had filed off down the street, another and more splendid cavalcade made its appearance as coming from the château. This far surpassed in magnificence its predecessor; it had every attribute of royalty—the carriages, the guards, the servants, were such as could only be marshalled in honor of one of his own family. On putting the same question, he was told that it was his own funeral! In a few nights after this vision the Duke of Berry went to a grand ball given by M. Greffulhe, at his hotel in the Rue d'Artois; it was a very cold night, and M. Greffulhe, who was not in a good state of health, attended his royal highness to the carriage bareheaded, and was struck with a sudden chill, which brought on a violent fever, and terminated his life in a few days. Before a week had elapsed the remaining incident in the dream was consummated.

This was on a Sunday night. The Carnival had been gay; the Duke and Duchess had dined with the King, and amused him with an account of a brilliant ball which they had attended the night before. They themselves had given two magnificent entertainments, which had made a sort of sensation, and the courtesy of the host and hostess had been specially remarkable. For this evening there was no particular attraction, so they determined to fill it up with a visit to the Opera. The King retired to his apartments, and the royal party broke up.

The theatre was specially brilliant, being crowded from floor to ceiling. The pieces—long after recollected—were the "Carnival de Venise," "Le Rossignol," and "Les Noces de Gnanache." Lady Clementina Drummond, (late Davies) was present, and recalled the show of diamonds and gala dresses. Brightest of all was the Duchess. When it came to eleven o'clock the Duchess complained of fatigue and rose to go, while the Duke attended her downstairs to the carriage, intending to return and see the ballet.

At this time the Opera House was in the Rue Richelieu, and occupied a large block of building that stood isolated, the entrance for the royal family being in a side street called the Rue de Rameau. Visitors to Paris will recollect that this portion of the city still preserves its old character, having escaped the rage of the levelers and beautifiers. The streets are narrow, the houses high, while there is a certain air of squalor which is yet not unpicturesque. There the carriage was waiting, and a group of equeuries standing at the door to attend the Duchess. There was only a solitary sentry for the Duke disliking the ceremonial attending royal departures, had only a short time before desired that the turning out of the guard should be omitted. All were bowing, and had their backs turned to the street; the footman was putting up the steps, and the Duke, stepping back, was waving his hand and calling out joyously, "Adieu, Caroline! we shall soon see each other again!" Suddenly

a figure glided from the Rue Richelieu, passed one hand on the shoulder of the Duke, and with the other stabbed him to the heart. Leaving the weapon in the wound, he fled round the corner of the Rue Richelieu, and darted down the Colbert Passage. So sudden, and at the same time so effectually accomplished, was the deed that the aid-de-camp, De Choiseul, fancied it was some awkward passer-by who had jostled the Prince, and thrust him back with a "Take care where you are going." Even the Prince had felt nothing but a push. But the next moment he tottered, and gasped out that he was assassinated. Instantly the aid-de-camp, the sentry, and some others darted off in pursuit. The assassin had all but escaped, but mistook his road and was captured.

The Duchess meanwhile had heard her husband's cry, and would have flung herself over the side of the carriage, but was stopped by her attendants. He had just drawn the fatal weapon from his breast, into which it had been plunged nearly up to the hilt—a sharp two-edged blade—was staggering, and would have fallen had she not caught him. They hurriedly placed him on a bench in the passage, and opened his shirt to examine the wound. She sank on her knees before him, and was trying to staunch the blood, when he exclaimed, "I am dying—a priest! Come, my wife, that I may die in your arms!" She threw herself on him, and clasped him to her heart. She was deluged in his blood. The assassin had been brought into the guard-house, where the soldiers could scarcely be restrained from despatching him on the spot. An ardent royalist addressed him, "Monster! by whom hast thou been urged to commit such a crime?" (this oburgation of prisoners being tolerably common in France), and was "shut up," as the expression is, by the reply, "By the most cruel enemies of France." It was at first sapiently thought that this was a confession of conspiracy, but professional judges later saw that it was intended to be sarcastic.

Meanwhile the Duke had been carried into the little antechamber which was behind the royal box, the most convenient place that offered—the last place in the world where a Prince could ever have supposed that he was to die. No such reflection, at least, would have occurred when the gay party retired between the acts after witnessing the regular operative agonies of, say, the tenor's dying moments. And here it may be said that nothing more noble, or Christian, or becoming a descendant of St. Louis could have been conceived than the way in which this dying Duke composed himself. When he recovered consciousness his first words were, "Is he a foreigner?" and on being told he was not, said sadly, "It is a cruel thing to die by the hand of a Frenchman." The doctors had now arrived, and some members of the royal family. The wretched wife was on her knees; her rich dress, flowers, and jewels all bathed in blood; while through the slender partition came the loud crash of the orchestra and the sound of bursts of applause. The ballet was still going on. But gradually the news spread, the performance terminated, and the audience departed, awe-stricken and whispering. That night there was a brilliant ball at the Duchess of Albuefera's, to which the news was presently brought. The dancing stopped, the guests gathered in groups, and soon silently departed.

Now the Duke's own surgeon actively applied his mouth to the wound to encourage the flow of blood, for the Prince was oppressed by the inward bleeding—a step of considerable risk. "What are you doing?" he said, gently pushing away this faithful servant: "the wound may be poisoned." Now, priests, surgeons, more members of the family began to fill the little room; his little girl was brought by the governess. "Poor child!" he murmured, "may you be less unfortunate than your family has been." All that he longed and prayed for now was to see the King, principally for the purpose of obtaining the pardon of the assassin. This was no romantic whim, but his ardent, eager purpose, up to the last moment.

He was now carried into the committee room of the administration, where it was found necessary to enlarge the wound. The great Dupuytren had now arrived, and proceeded to perform this operation. Nothing could exceed the patient's resignation and piety. It was then that he begged that his two illegitimate children should be brought to him, and the scene begins to lose something of its dignity from the rather demonstrative "effusion" of those about him. They were sent for, and "two graceful little girls" were roused from their sleep and brought in. The Duchess "threw herself on the incident" with a passionate excitement. She would be their mother. She led up her own little daughter to them with the invitation, "Embrace your sisters," and whispered to her husband, "Charles, I have three children now!" An austere voice—that of the ascetical Duchess of Angoulême—came from behind the couch, "She is sublime!" The "two graceful little girls" were later adopted into the family, and brought up under the same governess with the lawful offspring. Towards three o'clock he began to grow weaker, and the last rites of the Church were administered by the Bishop of Chartres, the Duke making his confession aloud, and asking pardon from those present for any scandals which his life had occasioned. It seems rather a hard lot that when a person of such distinction in France dies, he should be obliged to hold a sort of levée of all the important functionaries of the kingdom, who come to offer their compliments, or at least sympathy, at so dreadful a moment. Thus "the marshals of France" were now among the