

Only a Day.

BY W. E. HARRIS.

(CONTINUED.)

We were next found with our eyes riveted upon the interior of a large church where two people were being united in the bonds of matrimony, and each was pledging to the other, life-long devotion and fidelity.

This was a pretty scene and a cheerful contrast to the painful accident we had just witnessed. I did not feel deep personal concern in the latter event myself, but remarked that this was a never-to-be forgotten day in the lives of at least two people.

This was a day which would always be remembered as having marked the beginning of a new state of existence. Its recollection may in the future recall an event which proved a blessing to both the contractors and cause them to look with pleasure upon the course pursued during the time of their married life. On the other hand it may mark a time in their memory, which will be remembered with regret alone, and will be an epoch remarkable on account of the disappointments it brought with it. However, this day will always be a great one for the two persons I speak of.

Another scene in this great play was a very touching one, and one that I will not soon forget.

The scene was this time laid in the beautiful and quiet country. The sight was a most impressive one; being that of a funeral procession wending its way along the quiet country road towards the pretty little church with its yard dotted with marble slabs marking the last resting place of many a poor mortal. We could hear the lowing of cattle in the pastures along the road and the plaintive chirp of the robins in the hedges. All the sounds seemed subdued and mournful as though their creators were aware that one of their erstwhile companions had shaken off this mortal coil, and had passed out from their midst forever.

We saw the procession draw up in the churchyard before the yawning sepulchre in the breast of our mother earth; who seemed to be waiting with open arms to gather in her wandering and weary child once more and hide him from view forever in that element from which he sprang with all the alacrity of youth so short a time ago. So short a time ago, even though the man was counted old by us. Only a few busy years had flitted over his head and he had appeared old to us.

Let this be as it may, we have witnessed the last act in his earthly course, and we all thought this had been a day which

would be counted great could the departed one have foreseen it.

Another tragedy which is imprinted on my memory was that of a railway accident.

The scene was laid in the country as was the former. We saw the public highway leading along a flat looking country and crossing the band of steel rails which forms the solid way for the great iron horse to follow. In a moment more we saw a horse and carriage, driven by two young men, bowling along the road, and rapidly approaching the railway crossing. We waited anxiously to see what turn the play was going to take now, and my friend in the seat near by said, "Keep your eyes on the stage, we shall see something exciting in a moment."

The event which quickly followed proved the truth of my friend's words.

As the carriage neared the crossing we saw an express train dashing along at full speed, seemingly determined on reaching this same point at the same moment as the carriage.

We all wait breathless with excitement for the issue. Surely, we say, there is to be no accident here! We can see, and now easily hear, the approaching train; but the question is, Can the poor fellows seated in the carriage hear the warning rumble of the hurrying train above the clatter and grind of their horse's hoofs and carriage wheels? Nearer and nearer to the crossing come carriage and train, they are within a few yards of the crossing now and we say "they must surely hear and see their approaching danger and will stop their horse until the danger is past." No! poor, luckless fellows! they either do not hear and see their danger as we do, or else think that sufficient time remains to dash across in safety before the locomotive. The suspense grows terrible to the spectators. Another moment and the horse reaches the crossing without a halt, at the same instant as if eager to pounce upon its prey, like some wild beast unchained, the shrieking hissing locomotive dashes madly across the crossing. We see two men hurled violently from their seats and dashed beneath the pitiless wheel of the engine, whilst the affrighted horse with only the shafts of the carriage clinging to it plunges madly away from a terrible death to safety.

The train passes on for a space and then suddenly stops. We see the white countenances of the horror-stricken trainmen and passengers, as they behold the havoc which their conveyance has played with two human lives.

In a few moments all that remains of the earthly tabernacles of two spirits which have sped their eternal flight, has been tenderly gathered up, and the train goes

on its way. The shocking sight which I picture filled us with a sickening horror for a short time; but the ensuing moments presented a new scene calling our attentions in another direction, and causing us soon to forget this last sad scene. Yes! we forgot it, because we were not personally concerned, nor related to the chief actors.

We forgot it; but dear Lord, can two fathers and mothers ever forget the sadness which this day has brought to their homes? I fear not! Time will tend to efface, in a degree, its memory, but this is a day which the aching hearts of two families can never forget. The anniversary of this great day will bring to mind once more in all its freshness the details of a horrible tragedy.

I have merely mentioned to you a few of the most striking and tragic acts in a great play, through all of which I sat like one entranced.

I had watched the day break and I had seen the sun rise and mount higher and higher until it had reached and passed the zenith, and had seen and heard and breathed the sights and sounds and perfumes of a bright and beautiful summer's day. I saw the sun apparently descending from its highest throne and sinking gradually nearer the hills, which would soon shut out his glorious rays from our view for another night. If the sunrise filled us with fresh life and wonderment, the mellow rays of the approaching sunset filled our minds with thoughts of peace and comfort and rest. This was a sight to behold! Here the setting sun was filling all the land with mystic beauty at the close of another day, which had been of itself bright and beautiful; but whose train of events left a pleasant or sad impression upon our minds, as the circumstances may have been.

The inimitable manner in which this play had been conducted and its charming scenery can never fade from the mind of one who has once seen it.

The sun has disappeared from our view looking like a disc of burnished gold sinking into a sea resplendent with those tints and rays which the hand of no living artist has ever been able to satisfactorily reproduce upon the canvas.

Then followed the brief twilight during which myriads of twinkling stars swam quietly into view and seemed to us like the eyes of kindly watchers once more resuming their nightly vigil o'er our sleeping sphere.

To be continued.

One of the first covenants that every young man ought to make with himself is that he will never run in debt.