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MIGNONETTE

TO GEORGE LITERATURE ROMANCE & C.

VOLUME III. GEO. E. DESBARATS, No. 1, PLACE D'ARMES HILL. MONTREAL, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1872. TERMS, \$2.00 PER ANNUM. SINGLE COPIES, 5 CENTS. No. 50.

MIGNONETTE.

That low white wicket! As the sun went down,
I bent above it, drawn by such a waltz
Of sweet, soft, pulsing fragrances, as is blown
From you small grave. A single golden shaft,
Thrilling the dusky eodors, touched a form
Still, snowy-veatured, ghostly in the gloom.
Peace, silence, fragrance! In the troubled storm
Of such unrestful life as is my doom,
Those hours at least were halcyon. Let me yet
Steal solace from their memory, Mignonette!

That small soft hand, warm, white, the very dove
Of grace to me, how shyly forth it stole
With its sweet burden. Ah! my little love,
How shouldst thou know the value of thy dote?
A bunch of brown sweet blossoms; and they turned
The current of a life that set to death.
Thou didst not guess the bitter fire that burned
Within my bosom, while thy peaceful breath
Fanned the hot fire, and thy sweet dew-wet
Brown blossoms made to tremble, Mignonette!

Thou wert not lovely little one, thy face
Was but a simple face with soft brown eyes,
Thou wert but covered with a bird-like grace,
A silver voice low-set to pure replies.
Yet sweet, yet stainless, yet serene and strong,
The spirit that inspired thee, 'thou to me
Art ever as thy flower: to thee belong
Sweetness, and solace, and sure constancy.
My little darling! Would those eyes, tear-wet,
Might see thee through the shadows, Mignonette!

Thou wert no April girl, whose smiles and tears
Were swift as sun and shadow on a plain
Wind-blown in gusty spring. Nor soulls fours,
Nor shallow joys were thine. So didst thou gain
Sweet empire o'er a soul that passion's waves
Had scoured and stained. Oh! darling, would
That I could lift my eyes to yonder stainless stars,
And feel no sting in their calm purity.
Say, dost thou know this anguish of regret
That wrings the heart that loved thee, Mignonette?

And thou didst love me! Doth the bruised flower
Love the black storm that breaks and beats it low?
What had I worthy of that priceless dower?
What brought me near thee? Sweet thy blossoms
blow
And sweetly thou hadst crown, oh! flower of maids,
But for my love, started coming. Were these arms
A nest for thee? If those soft evening shades
Had hid thee from me sweet, thy winsome charms
Full flowering now, though bud-like modest yet,
Had blessed a happier lover, Mignonette!

I loved thee, but the curse of early years
Clung to me. May he hope for any grace,
Who filled those tender eyes with patient tears,
Who stole the bloom from that pathetic face?
Loved thee and left thee! Not again to see
Thee, my brown blossom; let it fade and fall
Though it be the sweet soul-healing purity
That might have won me from a cruel thrall.
Nay, my dear darling, thou shalt win me yet,
For dying thou hast conquered, Mignonette!

And now I sit beside thy lonely grave,
Wreath'd with the dew-drenched flower that was thine
own.
Blest at the heart of grief once more to have
The faint familiar fragrance round me blown.
Sweet, pure, so constant in my darling, bond
From those blue heights; and bless me ere I go;
That dear dead hand shall hold me to the end.
Lo! love, I pluck one fragrant spray. I know
That when we twain shall meet, this purple regret
Shall pass at thy sweet welcome, Mignonette.
All The Year Round.

DESMORO; OR, THE RED HAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TWENTY STRAWS," "VOICES
FROM THE LUMBER-ROOM," "THE HUMMING-
BIRD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

A whole fortnight had passed away Ralph Thetford had communicated with the deceased Miss Tillydale's lawyer at York, and her remains had been interred according to his directions.

A few days after the funeral, the man of law called upon Mrs. Thetford, and informed her that she was the sole heir to all her late aunt's possessions: at the same time recommending Ralph to give up his profession, and look after the management of his young wife's affairs.

So it was arranged that Ralph was to quit Manager Jellico's strolling company, and become an independent gentleman; to live henceforth at his ease, without the fear of poverty or scant ever visiting his domestic hearth.

"Desmoro," said Ralph, a few hours before his departure from Freshfield, "my wanderings are now all over, and I am a wealthy man, possessed of a loving wife; for which worldly blessings I have to thank you, my friend."

"Me!" repeated the youth, in surprise.

"To be sure! Had we not found you in the snow that night, we should never have called at Tillydale Hall, and I should never have become acquainted with my Dinah. Now do you see how much I owe you, Desmoro?"

"And how much do I not owe you, sir?" responded the other, in a grateful tone. "Have you not been very kind to me always?"

"But now that I have the power, I wish to be still kinder to you, my lad," pursued Ralph. "I want you to abandon this erratic life, and come with me."

Desmoro shook his head, and turned a shade paler than his wont. He did not like to appear thankless, and knew not how to decline this offer.

"I am much obliged to you, sir," stammered he, in some embarrassment, "but I should not like to live a life of dependence. I would rather, for awhile, rough it, as the saying is, and strive to carve out my own fortunes, than be indebted to any one."



THE RECOGNITION IN THE THEATRE.

Desmoro was thinking of the clown's lovely daughter; it was for her sake that he was thus refusing to accept Ralph Thetford's generous offer.

"Is it possible that you would rather lead this wandering existence than enjoy one of respectability, peace, and rest?"

The word "respectability" grated on the youth's ear, and for a few seconds his mind wavered, and he felt quite at a loss how to reply.

It was ten o'clock in the morning; and this scene was passing in one of the dingy rooms of the theatre where Desmoro abided. A comfortable apartment it was, looking out upon the roofs of other buildings, and stowed full of stage furniture and stage properties.

Desmoro was sitting before the fire, his feet upon a rude fender, across his knees a steel breast-plate, which he was polishing, rubbing at while he thought.

The place had a desolate, ghostly appearance, that seemed to make Desmoro's heart sticken in his bosom. For here was a gilded chair, tarnished and broken; there, a sofa, with its cover all faded and torn, with rickety back and crippled legs; in another place, a couple of dilapidated banners, on one of which was painted a crucifix—on the second, a skull and cross-bones. Hanging on the walls were several tin shields, rusty swords, suits of armour, battle-axes, chains, helmets, masks, gauntlets, belts, pistols, daggers, knives, soldiers' knapsacks, guns, sabres, whips, caps, cowls, and gaudinets.

Desmoro glanced around at all these articles; as he did so, a shudder passed through his frame. The youth had an eye for cleanliness, order, and comfort; and there was nothing here but dust, confusion, and discomfort. It was a sad shelter for a proud-spirited boy; but it was a shelter which he paid for by the labour of his own hands, and the sweat of his brow; and therefore it was his own for those hours during which he desired to occupy it.

"Well, my lad?" interrogated Ralph Thetford.

Desmoro roused himself from his musings. "Mr. Jellico might think me ungrateful, were I to leave him, sir," he observed, his gaze slowly moving to the embers in the grate, and thence to his companion's face.

"Not at all," was the ready rejoinder. "I have already spoken to him upon this subject, and he will only be too happy to see you better your present condition."

"He is very good to me, and so are you, sir," Desmoro hesitatingly returned; "but—"

Just at this "but," the room-door was thrust open, and Shavings' head made itself visible.

Desmoro's mind was made up in a moment, now. The sight of the clown's face, which was soon followed by that of Comfort, had fixed his wavering resolution. He could not go hence, and see her no more—oh, no! He would rather endure anything than lose the tones of her silvery voice, the soft glances of her eyes, and the gentle touch of her friendly hand. And Desmoro's visage brightened, his breast grew lighter, as he replied to Ralph.

"I think, sir, I'd prefer staying where I am. I ought to work for my bread, and here I shall have to do so."

"Reflect, my lad—reflect!" said Ralph. "Remember, there is a tide in the affairs of man, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune!"

"What's that you're saying about fortune, Thetford?" inquired Shavings, entering the

room, followed by Comfort. "Ah, it's well for you to be able to talk of fortune; I wish to gracious I could!"

"I'm advising Desmoro to quit this sort of life, and to come with me," returned Ralph.

"And very good advisin', truly, Thetford; although we shall be sorry enough to have him leave us," answered the clown.

Desmoro glanced at Comfort during the above speech, and remarked that she had suddenly grown very pale.

Did she fear his going? Oh, then, not for the world's riches, would he forsake her dear side!

"And what's he sayin' to you, your proposal, Thetford?" queried Shavings. "He's jumpin' at it, of course?"

Comfort's eyes were fixed upon Desmoro's lips, which she was watching in painful anxiety.

"No; he's preferring to stay where he is!" answered Ralph, in regretful accents.

"Ah, he's smelt the footlights!" laughed Shavings, slipping Desmoro on the shoulder as he spoke,—"he has smelt the footlights, and cannot leave 'em! Is that the fact, Desmoro?"

"Perhaps so," answered the youth, with an abashed air.

"Ah, I understand all about it, my lad! I once felt in the same way, exactly."

"And I, also!" chimed in Ralph Thetford. "But the stage has ceased to fascinate me, now."

"And very naturally so," responded the clown. "You have grown rich and are married to a woman whom you admire and love; but this lad is poor and ambitious, so we must have some consideration for him!"

"I wish I had time to relate my own history to him," Ralph added, in serious accents.

"Well, youth must have its fling!" exclaimed Shavings, who did not relish the notion of parting with his young friend, Desmoro. "You have had yours, Thetford, and I've had mine; and now we both of us pretty nigh sobered! I know I am; just forty years of age, as I be, a widower, and one of my daughter's! Oh, my dear, clapping his hands, and then turning a pirouette in the middle of the floor. "But never say die, is one of my mottoes; and make yourself as happy as you can, is another! That's your sort—aren't it, Desmoro, my boy?"

"Well, if you should ever stand in need of a friend, Desmoro, whether soon or far hence, send me at York, and your application shall be instantly attended to. I am grieved that I cannot influence you as I could wish; but I trust that you will change your mind by-and-by, and come to me!"

"Thank the gods I am in time to bid you farewell, Ralph!" a sonorous voice exclaimed; and Mrs. Polderbrant, in one of her peculiar costumes, made herself apparent.

"O dear Mrs. Polderbrant, you are just the very person I am waiting to see, and speak to!" returned Ralph.

"Is it possible, I am delighted to hear as much," rejoined she, significantly glancing at the clown and his daughter, who, taking her hint, at once left the room, followed by Desmoro.

"My dear Mrs. Polderbrant!" commenced Ralph, as soon as they were left alone together; "we are no strangers to one another; we have known each other for some years!"

"Five years and ten weeks exactly, Mr. Thetford," was her matter-of-fact rejoinder.

"Yes; I dare say it is that length of time since you joined Jellico's company. Well, knowing you all those many years, and always

admiring your good sense and charitable nature, I am emboldened to ask you to do me a real service!"

"I'll do it, Mr. Thetford; I'll do it, whatever it may be?" was her ready and earnest answer.

"Thank you, thank you. I was quite sure that you would help me in this little matter."

"What is it, Ralph—pray pardon me, I forget that I ought not to take the liberty of addressing you by your christian name now?"

"Nonsense, nonsense!"

"But you are now a rich man, you must remember, and, as such, ought to have some extra respect paid you."

"Oh! very well, just as you please, Mrs. Polderbrant!" laughed Ralph, in his usually light-hearted manner.

"Now for the service of which you spoke?"

"I want you to watch over that lad Desmoro, Mrs. Polderbrant—to be a friend to him in every way you can. I place the fullest dependence on you, as you will find on examining this lay-and-by, when I am gone! And so saying, Ralph produced his pocket-book, took thence several bank-notes, folded them, and put them in her hand.

"What are these for, Mr. Thetford?" she asked, greatly bewildered by his donation.

"Do not suffer Desmoro to want in any way; look after the lad, and may heaven bless you. You comprehend me now, Mrs. Polderbrant?"

"Yes; I am to use these, your gift, for the benefit of the boy?"

"Precisely so."

"And I will do so, you may depend on't, Mrs. Thetford. I will not rob the lad of one penny of the money!"

"I am sure you won't, I'm sure you won't!" returned Ralph. "Poor motherless fellow! I feel quite rejected to be able to commit him to such careful hands as yours."

"You flatter me, Mr. Thetford; but I will do my best to merit a continuance of your good opinion."

"Well good-bye, Mrs. Polderbrant; recollect that a line, addressed to me at York, will always meet with a response." And wringing her hand, he left her, and quickly found his way to the stage, where all the members of the company had assembled in order to take leave of their favourite, Ralph Thetford.

The women were in tears, and the men all looked sorrowful at this parting.

Ralph kissed the former, and shook hands with the latter; then, waving his hat, he was gone, and over the threshold of the stage-door, into the street, where a postchaise was awaiting him.

Just as Ralph's foot was on the step of the vehicle, some one touched his arm.

"Desmoro!" he exclaimed, turning and perceiving the youth close to his elbow. "What, have you changed your mind?"

"No, sir!"

"I'm sorry to hear you say so. What do you want, then?"

"To shake hands with you again, sir, and to beg you not to think me a thankless fellow. I didn't care to bid you good-bye just now before all the people, because I couldn't have told you as I wished to do how much I like you, and how grieved I am to say farewell to you."

Desmoro was almost choking as he thus delivered himself, and the hand resting in Ralph's palm was icy cold.

"Continue to be a good lad, Desmoro!" returned his friend. "And since you have chosen

your own path in life, let us hope that it may one day lead to fortune. Heaven bless you!"

"And heaven bless you, also, sir," half-sobbed Desmoro, wringing Ralph's hand.

"Change your mind, my lad; it's not too late to do so, and come along with me," said Ralph, touched by the sadness of the youth's looks and tones.

"I—I wish I could, sir!" faltered Desmoro; "but I cannot, I feel chained here!"

Ralph was in the chaise, and its door was closed.

"Carry my respectful regards to Mrs. Thetford!" added Desmoro.

Ralph waved his hand, gave the signal to the driver, and the equipage dashed quickly away, and Desmoro was left with tears in his eyes, and sorrow in his heart, watching the vehicle recede from his view.

For several days after this, Desmoro was very silent and very mournful. He missed Ralph exceedingly, and deeply regretted the loss of his cheerful presence.

Well, time progressed. The *troupe* had left Freshfield, and was now located at a town called Braymount, which had a neat little theatre situated in its principal street.

Desmoro still continued to be industrious; and Jellico, seeing him so, was doubly kind to him, and matters proceeded smoothly enough between the manager and his protégé.

Despite the many discomforts he had to endure, Desmoro contrived to make himself tolerably happy in his position. His chief solace was Comfort, who was fast learning all the lessons he had to teach. Desmoro was very proud of his pupil, and robbed himself of many a meal in order that he might save pence enough to purchase certain second-hand books for her to study from.

One day, Desmoro, seeing a ticketed volume in a bookseller's window, and longing to possess himself of that volume, began to pinch himself in every way he could, on purpose to scrape together money enough to buy it.

The bookseller's shop was close by the theatre, so Desmoro had no difficulty in keeping a daily watch over the much-coveted prize, which had probably been in that same window for half a score of years or more.

Never did a hungry man look upon a loaf of bread with the longing eyes that Desmoro looked upon that shabby dog-eared tome. He was actually ill with longing for it; for he feared that it was far beyond his reach, seeing that, however he scraped and pinched, his pence but slowly accumulated.

One dark morning, as Desmoro was sitting in his room, surrounded by stage properties and playbills, eating his breakfast, and dreaming of his old grandfather, of Comfort, and of the volume in the shop hard by, the door of the apartment opened, and Mrs. Polderbrant entered.

"Surprised to see me at such an early hour, ain't you?" said she, taking a chair opposite to our hero. "Of course you are; I see amazement written in 'her looks!" she continued, in her usually exaggerated style of language. "Well, I will proceed to explain myself. You have been looking very poorly of late, very different from your former self, and I am come to inquire into the state of your bodily health, and to see if I can do anything to benefit you in any way. In the first place, what are you taking for breakfast?"

Desmoro coloured deeply, and looked much confused, for he knew not how to tell her that his morning meal was only bread and water. But he was too honest to deceive her in any way, so he let his visitor satisfy herself concerning his repast.

Miss Polderbrant lifted her hands in surprise.

"What!" she exclaimed; "can I believe my eyes? Only bread and water, as I'm a sinner! Why, Desmoro, do you mean to tell me that Jellico does not allow you the means of living in a Christian-like manner? Good gracious! Why, I'm horror-struck! Bread and water! Oh, you may well be looking puny and haggard, thus feeding yourself on prison fare! How much do you get a week—tell me that?"

"Quite enough, ma'am, and more than I deserve!" answered Desmoro, modestly.

"That's not a satisfactory answer to my question. I ask you what sum you receive here weekly?"

Desmoro hesitated. He could not understand wherefore Mrs. Polderbrant was so particularly interesting herself respecting his affairs. He was aware of the actress's eccentricity of character, and he felt some reluctance at gratifying her inquiries.

Now Desmoro's nature, although proud in the main, was naturally confiding and affectionate; and his companion, knowing as much, still pursued her theme, and in a manner which she thought he would be quite unable to resist.

"Desmoro," she went on, in altered tones, her hands clasped in her lap, "I have not always been the lone woman you behold me now. I once had a son, who was handsome in person, and full of bright promise as well. But he is now no more! He is above, above!" she added, lifting up her eyes, which were filled with sudden tears. "And I have an empty heart! Desmoro, will you accept a corner in that heart? It is not all cold—there are warm pulses beating in it yet?"

"You're very good, ma'am!" stammered he, at a loss how to reply to her.

"And you will confide in me, eh?" she eagerly cried.

THE HEARTHSTONE.

"I have nothing to confide to you, ma'am."

"I want to know wherefore I see such a meal as that before you?" persisted she. "I want to be informed why I see you thus starving yourself to death, Desmoro Desmoro?"

He bit his lips, faltered out a few unintelligible words, and then remained silent.

"I must know the truth!" pursued she, perseveringly, and in her blunt but kindly tones. "I'm not going to watch you dwindle down to mere skin and bone, and hold my peace all the while, just as if I had no feeling in my breast. I've promised somebody — it doesn't matter whom — to bestow an eye on your doings, therefore I am only keeping my word as an upright woman should. Now look here, my boy, if you don't tell me all about this starvation process of yours, I'll go straight to the manager, and report it to him; and, ah, that I will, as sure as my name is patience Polderbrant!"

Desmoro's features worked spasmodically. He saw determination in all his companion's looks, and though he recoiled from revealing his bosom's secrets to any living being, he felt compelled to do so now.

"I am trying to save a little money, Mrs. Polderbrant," quivered he, in great embarrassment.

"Save?" repeated she, in amazement. "Good gracious! Save, boy! For what?"

"The colour, which had vanished from his face, came back to it now in a scarlet flush.

"I don't like to say, ma'am!" faltered poor Desmoro, his eyes cast on the ground.

Mrs. Polderbrant looked at him suspiciously. "Young man!" she exclaimed, in solemn accents, "young man!"

"I am doing no wrong—indeed, I am not, Mrs. Polderbrant," he uttered, in increasing confusion.

She shook her head. "I don't like secrecy, Desmoro!" she said, severely.

"Neither do I, ma'am."

"Then why practise it?"

"True," he rejoined.

Then there ensued a somewhat lengthy pause, during which Desmoro was sitting with his gaze on the floor, like one who had committed some guilty act.

"Whether he be old or young, there is nothing like having a clean breast of one's own," she remarked.

"I have a clean breast, ma'am," he answered, on the instant, speaking in a proud tone, and with his head now raised.

"I'm glad to hear it, my boy—glad as if I were your own mother."

"I'm only saving my money to buy a certain book that I want," explained he.

"A book! Goodness! what book?"

"One that's in the bookseller's shop close by here, ma'am."

"How much is it?—and what's its title?"

"Hume's 'Treatise on Human Nature,' and other miscellaneous subjects."

"What! half-screamed the lady, in blank amazement. "And what do you want with such a work?"

"To study it, ma'am."

"Well, you are an odd youth!" she returned, with a twinkle of pleasure in her cold eyes. "How much have you saved towards purchasing this volume?"

"As yet, only eighteenpence, ma'am."

"And how much is this treatise?"

"A bargain—only six shillings."

"Go instantly and spend that eighteenpence in buying a comfortable meal, and let me hear no more about this pinching and killing yourself in order to get books on—heaven knows what. Now, make me no answer, Desmoro, but be off with you for so we coffee and some butter. There—not another word!" added she, seeing him about to speak. "Maybe some good fairy or other will get you what you want besides. Go! Stand out on the order of your going, but go at once!" she commanded, starting up, and waving her hands in a tragic manner.

Desmoro vanished at once, and went out to do her bidding, which he performed reluctantly, parting with his few pence, his garnered store, as if he were parting with his very life.

As he returned from spending his hoarded sum, he paused before the bookseller's window, in order to contemplate the much longed-for treasure, which he now deemed further out of his reach than ever. But judge of his surprise when he discovered that the volume was gone out of its usual place, and was nowhere to be seen! Desmoro's heart seemed to sink in his breast as his eyes scanned the several shelves of books, large and small, only to meet with disappointment.

"Some one has bought it at last!" sighed he. "Well, it was such a rare bargain that I don't wonder at its being gone!" And with a deeper sigh than before, the youth proceeded onwards, his spirit full of sadness and sore regrets.

Arrived at his dingy apartment, Desmoro was astonished to find his Mrs. Polderbrant there.

Mechanically he put down his recent purchases, and then, seating himself on a stool in front of the fire, he rested his chin on his two palms, fastened his gaze upon the dying embers in the rusty grate, and silently lamented his hard fate.

He never once thought of the coffee and the butter he had just bought—of the comfortable meal which was now within his reach. His reflections were all on a widely different subject.

Yet there was no atom of selfishness in these sorrowful repinings of his. If he wished to possess money, it was only that he might be able to procure books, procure pens, ink, and paper for Comfort's use—no more, as his own wants and desires were simple enough, and easily gratified.

While Desmoro was thus buried in his musings, the door of the room was opened, and Jellico entered.

The youth started up on the instant, and the warm blood flushed his face as he recognized the worthy manager.

"What is the matter with you, my lad? Are you not well?" queried Jellico.

Desmoro did not answer. His amazed eyes were fixed on a book—on the very volume which was in his thoughts at this moment, now lying on the table before him. He could not move; he felt as if he were transfixed to the spot—as if some sort of enchantment were at work around him.

Presently he rubbed his eyelids, doubting his waking senses, and then he lifted up the tome, and tenderly examined it.

"It's all a dream, isn't it, sir?" he breathed, looking at Jellico, who was standing in dumb wonderment, watching Desmoro's strange actions; "or is it by magic that this book came here?"

"Whatever is the matter with the lad?"

queried the manager, laying hold of Desmoro's shoulder, and shaking him. "Look me in the face, boy, and don't stare about you in that scared manner. One would imagine that you had just seen a ghost, or something very like it."

Desmoro, who had the volume clutched tightly in his hands, made no reply, but sent his wandering orbs round and round the room, which, to his present disturbed imagination, had suddenly become peopled with all sorts of fantastical forms,—with fairies and elves, goblins and sprites, who were all dancing about him, laughing and grinning at one another, and pointing at him as if they were making him their sport.

Again Jellico shook the youth, who dropped into a chair in an almost powerless state.

At this, the manager began to be somewhat alarmed. Desmoro was shivering all over, and his features were of a deathly hue. A cup, containing cold water, being within Jellico's reach, he gave the youth a draught of it.

Then Desmoro looked up with a clearer countenance.

"Whatever ails you, my lad?" inquired the manager, curious to learn the cause of his protegee's strange behaviour.

Desmoro once more examined the welcome volume.

"Sir, did you bring hither this book?" asked he, still in nervous trepidation, his brow covered with a cold dew.

"That book?" repeated Jellico. "No, lad, I brought no book here!"

"You did not, sir?"

"Not I, indeed!" uttered the other.

"Then how came it here?" returned Desmoro, in great perplexity.

"How came what here?"

"Hume's 'Treatise on Human Nature,' sir," was the simple reply.

"Hume's botheration! I never in my life heard of such a book!"

"Is it possible, sir?"

"What's the lad's brain rambling about, I wonder?"

"Ha!" exclaimed Desmoro, suddenly. "Mrs. Polderbrant—'tis her work; I see it all now!"

"What do you say you see?" said Jellico, wholly bewildered. "I verily believe, Desmoro, you are taking leave of your reason! Here have I been questioning you this ever so long, without being able to get a sensible word in reply. I can't understand your ways, and beg that you'll change them as soon as you can."

"Please to pardon me, sir, and I'll at once endeavour to explain myself."

"The sooner the better," responded the manager, very bluntly. "Go on!"

After a little hesitation, Desmoro obeyed, and Jellico was put in possession of most of these particulars with which you are already acquainted.

Jellico, who had listened to Desmoro in amused surprise, laughed, saying that it was altogether a most mysterious incident, and that he supposed some sort of magic had been at work in the affair. Mrs. Polderbrant looked like a witch, he thought, and he had no doubt but that she had been exercising her supernatural powers, and had removed the book from its owner's window, and transported it into Desmoro's hands.

"I wouldn't have anything to do with the thing, if I were you, Desmoro," said the manager, jocosely. "I really wouldn't!"

But the lad, all heedless of his companion's words, hugged his treasure close to his breast, as if he feared its being rudely torn from him.

"If Mrs. Polderbrant made you a present of that great tome, she has certainly sprung a mine somewhere," pursued Jellico, jestingly.

"It was to be had a great bargain, sir," remarked Desmoro—"a very great bargain, sir."

"There—there, that will do," returned the manager. "Now to other and more important matters. Have you breakfasted?"

"Yes, sir."

"That's right! Now pay attention to what I am about to say. I have obtained a fine bespeak for next Friday evening, the patronage of no smaller a personage than the mayor of this very town. But his worship has brought me some trouble, for, double the parts as I may, I am afraid I shall not be able to give him the play he desires. Therefore, his absence has crippled me. I have a *Julius*, but no *Romeo*. Now I remember your once telling me that you knew all Shakespeare's plays from beginning to end—consequently you must be up in the character of *Romeo*?"

"I know all the words, sir; but for all that, I dare not undertake to act the part," answered Desmoro, in considerable dismay. "Besides, I am far too young to perform the lover; the people would laugh at me did I attempt to do so, and the whole tragedy would be spoiled through my youth, inexperience, and lack of ability!"

"Ta, ta, ta!" cried Jellico. "Never heed your youth, lad, if you can make anything of the part. And as for people laughing! why, let those laugh who win, say I. I'm sure you're a fine strapping fellow, looking far older than your years; and the very figure for a lover, too! Come, you must try the part; who knows what you may achieve by doing so?"

"I have never yet spoken one long speech on the stage. I have only delivered lines and messages."

"Then it's high time you strove to do something more," returned Jellico. "I'm sure you have talents if you will exert them. You have industry in plenty—of that much I am assured—then have some courage as well, and the thing is at once accomplished."

Desmoro was confused, and quite at a loss what to say about the business. The proposed undertaking was one of great magnitude in his eyes, and he shrank at the mere idea of making such an arduous attempt.

But, by dint of much persuasion, Jellico at length prevailed upon our hero to essay the character of the love-stricken *Romeo*, and the tragedy was at once put in rehearsal, and Desmoro's whole attention was, for a time, completely absorbed in practising his several scenes over and over again, and in struggling against all his rising fears of that evening which was fast approaching—the evening of his debut.

"Never mind, my lad," said Shavings, one day, when Desmoro, who had been rehearsing his part to Comfort one day, was speaking of his apprehensions, of his terrors of the forthcoming ordeal through which he was about to pass, "Twelve o'clock must come! Think of that fact when the curtain first rises, when you feel your heart going pit-a-pat underneath your spangled doublet, and you don't know what a sight of consolation it will afford you."

"Hear me through that scene again, will

you, Comfort?" said the youth, speaking to that daisied, who was sitting on a stool in their humble lodgings, an open play-book on her knee, her sweet face full of admiration and wonder of Desmoro's powers of declamation.

"Now begin," said the maiden, her eyes still fixed on Desmoro.

"But you are not looking at the book," returned he.

"Because I have no occasion for so doing. I am as perfect in all the parts as you yourself are, and I mean to prompt you at night."

At this, Desmoro opened wide his eyes, while Shavings blinked, rubbed his hand and chuckled merrily.

"What do you think of that, Mr. Desmoro Desmoro?" he exclaimed, in accents of triumph. "Comfort is for coming out strong, by-and-by, I expect! When do you think you'll be able to attempt *Julius*, eh?" he added, his orbs twinkling with delight, caused only by his own anticipations.

Comfort blushed very prettily, and nodded her head in a self-satisfied way, as much as to say, "Wait awhile, and you shall see!"

CHAPTER VIII.

At length the all-important night arrived. The mayor was in his box, and the theatre was crowded in every available part.

The band, which consisted of a violin, a trumpet, and a drum, now commenced to play "I'll save the King," of which the trumpet and the drum had decidedly the best: the tones of the poor fiddle being only heard to squeak out at intervals, and somewhat spasmodically.

But the country folk listened to the music in rapt attention, and rapturously applauded the performers, beating time to the trumpet and the drum, which instrument evidently met with their warmest approbation.

All this while, Desmoro was in the room assigned to him and the various stage properties belonging to the establishment. The youth was under the skillful hands of Mrs. Polderbrant, who, herself attired as *Lady Capulet*, was painting his face, blackening his eyebrows, and darkening his upper lip, upon which a slight down was just beginning to appear.

"Now you are as perfect as hands can possibly make you," spoke the 'sassy lady,' adjusting the set of Desmoro's hair. "You are a very youthful *Romeo*, I'll admit; but if you act the part well, that's all you have to mind. You look quite eighteen, with that moustache," she added, regarding him critically.

He did not answer a word; at that moment he was too full of anxiety and trepidation to command his voice.

At this instant there came a gentle tap at the door, which, being pushed open a little, showed the delicate face of Comfort Shavings.

"May I come in and take a peep at him, Mrs. Polderbrant?" queried the damsel. "Of course, I knew you were here, else I shouldn't have made bold to come," she added, still addressing the grim-visaged matron, who had nodded permission for her to enter.

"Oh, doesn't he look beautiful!" exclaimed the maiden, gazing at Desmoro, and clapping her hands admiringly. "Oh! won't *Julius* fall really; love with you?"

"Julius had better mind her own business, and do nothing of the sort," retorted Mrs. Polderbrant, indignantly. "Fall in love with Desmoro! Why, Miss Ormound is thirty, if she's an hour! I wonder, child, to hear you talk such nonsense!"

Comfort coloured at this rebuke, and turned aside to hide her confusion. She felt that she had made a foolish speech, and she was very sorry for it.

Desmoro, whose face had brightened, and heart had lightened at the first glimpse of her countenance, now drew near her, and whispered in her ear, "Keep near me, Comfort; I shall have courage while you are within my sight!"

"I am going to stand at the wing, and prompt you, should you need such assistance at any time," was the blushing reply.

"Thank you, Comfort; I'll do as much for you some day."

"You have already done plenty for me, more than I shall ever be able to repay you for."

"What are you chattering there about, Desmoro?" authoritatively demanded Mrs. Polderbrant, who had been contemplating her physiognomy in a piece of looking-glass. "Don't you know that you ought to remain quite quiet, thinking only of your part, never for one instant permitting your mind to wander from it. I once heard the following observations from Mrs. Siddons—with which wondrous actress I have often had the honour of appearing in public.—'Few actors or actresses that talk much in the green-room will ever be heard with any extraordinary pleasure on the stage.' Bear that piece of advice in your minds, young people. Hark! there's the bell, the curtain is going up."

Saying which, Mrs. Polderbrant linked her arm through that of Desmoro; and, without a word more, marched him off to the wings, there to remain until his entrance—she would be given.

Comfort Shavings was standing on the opposite side of the stage, trembling for the success of her kind young tutor, whom she perceived glancing at her from time to time, as if to take courage from her looks.

At length, the waited-for cue was given; and our hero, by whose side Mrs. Polderbrant had sturdily remained, entered and stood before the audience.

In a private box near the stage were lounging a lady and gentleman, both of whom were looking very weary, as if they had come there only to look at others and yawn their time away. The gentleman was in the full-dress uniform of a military officer, and appeared to be somewhat past forty years of age.

The lady glanced at Desmoro; and, being struck by his youthful appearance, and by the peculiar beauty of his face, referred to the play-bill before her, in order to learn his name.

"Most extraordinary!" exclaimed she, aloud, the bill in her hands.

"Eh?" returned her companion, arousing himself, and opening his eyes, which had been closed. "What's extraordinary, Caroline?"

"Why, look here," she returned, giving him the programme, her finger on Desmoro's name.

"*Romeo, by Mr. Desmoro Desmoro*," read the gentleman, in calm syllables. "Then of a sudden there was a rush, like fever-heart, to his brain and heart, as a crowd of old memories came surging over him, and his eyes fixed themselves on the printed letters before him.

"Is it not strange to find in a play—bill your name—which is one so very singular?"

"Oh, Desmoro is an old Irish name—a name which, in all probability, does not belong to this young fellow," added he, his lips twitching nervously as he spoke. "Actors rarely play

under their own legitimate appellations. For, be they either Browns, or Joneses, or Smiths, as soon as ever they don the sock and buskin, they become Doloris, Be monts, and Aubreys."

"Very absurd of them, I'm sure!"

And the lady shrugged her white shoulders, and again lounged back in her chair, looking languidly on the scene, as if it were a positive trouble to her to have to keep her eyes wide open.

But her companion, who was fairly aroused out of his apathy, was now leaning over the front of the box, narrowly watching all our hero's actions.

I have said that this box was close to the stage. Such being the case, the gentleman was near enough to observe Desmoro's every feature; the colour of his eyes, the shape of his mouth, his well-formed nose, his broad white brow, and his glossy hair of a rich auburn hue.

And, powers of heaven, his red hand!

A cry of amazement—almost of pain—rose to the stranger's lips, but it was stifled ere it burst forth, and ended in a deep sigh.

"'Twas he, sure enough, Desmoro Desmoro, the deserted son, the legitimate child of Desmoro Symure and Anna, his late wife."

Yes, yes; that red hand of his would proclaim his identity when every voice that could do so was stifled.

"You appear to be monstrously interested in the performance," remarked the lady, yawning. "I marvel how you can listen to it! For my part, I thoroughly abhor all Shakspeare's plays, and wonder why we came hither, unless to kill the time, which hangs upon one heavier than lead when one is living in any other place than London or Paris. Do leave off paying attention to those mummers—I'm convinced none of them are worth listening to—and talk to me, else I shall fall asleep here as I sit."

But her companion paid no heed whatever to her speech, but still kept his gaze fixed on the stage, even though the heat-drop had just fallen, and shut out the mimic scene for his view.

"Well, I must say that you excel all others in gallantry," pursued the lady, very prettily. "I pray take me away. I'd rather be moped at home than here, where I am compelled to sit on a hard chair, hearkening first to drawing, then to ranting speeches, and afterwards to those horrible, screaming instruments. Do take me away, my dear."

At these words the gentleman turned his head towards the speaker, upon whom he looked with an abstracted air, as if his thoughts were all far away at the moment. He did not speak—he felt as if he had no breath to do so, and his brain was reeling round and round.

The lady, looking quite out of temper, now rose and gathered her cashmere about her.

"Eh, are you cold, Caroline?" he asked, recalling his thoughts, at the same time rising and assisting her with his shawl.

"I'm going home," pouted she.

"Not yet, surely?" The first act of the play is only just over."

"Well, and what of that, if I feel weary of the thing?" she rejoined, crossly.

"But you forget, Caroline, that the carriage was not ordered until ten o'clock."

"Provoking!" exclaimed she, throwing herself back again into her chair. "Why did you bring me to such a pitiful place as this, where I can get no amusement of any kind?" she added, commencing picking her bouquet to pieces. "It's a positive infliction being forced to remain when you refuse to talk to me, and won't even laugh at the people we see here!"

"I'm not in a humour of either talking or laughing to-night, Caroline," he answered, gloomily, passing his hand across his brow as he spoke.

She looked at him in some surprise. "What ails you?" she inquired. "Does your head ache? If it does, it's the vile air of this stifling place. Phew! I shall have a headache myself very soon; I feel one coming on."

"I am not in any pain whatever, Caroline," was his calm response. "I am simply in a silent mood, that is all, my dear."

"Silent mood!" repeated she. "Disagreeable mood, you should have said," she haughtily added.

"Probably so; I am sorry to be in such," he answered, with an inward moan.

And shading his eyes with his hand, he fell into a train of sad, aching thoughts, which carried him back into the past—to a period when a sunny-haired maid had stood with him at the altar, and solemnly pledged to him her troth.

Then his imagination pictured to him a bright young girl, reclining on his breast, and loving eyes gazing tenderly and trustfully into his, while gentle and musical syllables were being trilled into his enraptured ears.

"Oh, Anna, Anna!" he inwardly moaned, "my poor, dead darling! how I have lived to miss your sweet smiles, your affectionate accents, and all your four caresses! And how I have wronged your memory, and the sacred trust which you left behind you!"

Of course you have recognised the man whose heart had uttered the above regretful words; you know that you are in company with the unprincipled Desmoro Symure, the father of our hero.

rich in its practised imitations, rose and sank in impassioned declamation.

What was he to do? How could he snatch his own offspring son from such a humiliating position?

This son of his was handsome as Apollo, and had the bearing of a prince. Colonel Symure would be proud indeed to own him, and take him to his heart; for this had much softened this man's breast, which had nothing to fill it now—nothing, save sorrowful memories of, and repinings for, the past.

Every pulse in Colonel Symure's body was throbbing fast and painfully, and he was longing to spring upon the stage, and fold the youth to his bosom (that he had not owned a different woman for his wife, he might, perhaps, have followed his inclinations, and revealed to her the existence of his son; as it was, he was almost distracted, and knew not how to act).

The hand of heaven seemed to have directed him to this place, in order to show him the trust he had so cruelly neglected—the child he dared not claim as his.

Not a single doubt of the youth's identity intruded itself upon the colonel's mind. The name of Desmoro Desmoro, and the young stroller's red hand, were facts which at once established his relationship to that gentleman.

Never in all his life had Colonel Symure suffered such mental anguish as he was now suffering. But the all-end would not be here: he would probably be made to endure still more torture. Indeed, how could it possibly be otherwise with him, seeing that he was not the master of his own actions, that he was completely under the controul of his vixenish wife.

Colonel Symure was truly thankful when the hour of ten arrived, and Mrs. Symure rose to depart. He helped her on with her shawl in utter silence, gave her his arm, and conducted her out of the theatre; at the door of which was their waiting carriage, into which he assisted her without speaking a word.

"Caroline," he said, pausing at the door of the vehicle, "I—don't feel exactly myself to-night; I think I'd rather walk home, if you have no objection to my doing so."

"No objection to my doing so, indeed!" repeated she. "And what's to become of me all the while you are from my side. Why, I'm to be moped in this close carriage, without a soul to exchange a syllable with. Not that you have been at all communicative this evening—a mouse could not have been more silent than yourself. I wonder what's the matter with you."

"I—I am not myself, Caroline."

"You said that before."

"I know I did; and I say it again and again."

"You're mysterious, Colonel Symure," she suspiciously rejoined. "You may well say you're not like yourself to-night."

"I shall be better after I've had a brisk walk, and a few mouthfuls of fresh air."

"Whoever heard of night air doing a person any good? I'm certain I never did!"

But Colonel Symure was gone, and Mrs. Symure was compelled to return home wholly alone.

The gentleman strode along to the end of the street, until the equipage containing his wife was quite out of sight; then he sauntered back again into the theatre, and resumed his seat in the box he had just vacated.

But the tragedy was over, and Desmoro Desmoro was no longer to be seen.

Colonel Symure was very uneasy, and very unhappy, likewise, and he was thankful to be alone for awhile with his thoughts, which were harassing him as thoughts had seldom harassed him before.

Soon he left the theatre, and sauntered down a sort of alley, at the end of which was the stage-entrance, a dingy doorway guarded by a lame man, whom the townspeople called "Hopping Pidgeon," a singular character, whose aspect was repulsive in the extreme.

Colonel Symure peeped through the open doorway into a murky room of narrow dimensions, and glanced at its sole occupant, a wizened man, apparently old, but in reality not so,—crooning over the dying embers in a rusty, battered grate. There was a crazy table, on which a lamp was burning, and a pile of old playbills, disturbed by the draught from the open door, was fluttering on the blackened and cobwebbed wall opposite.

That was all the gentleman could see.

He drew his cloak around him, in order to hide his scarlet coat, pulled the military hat deep over his brow, and still lingered on the threshold, unable to make his mind what to do; whether to enter there or to let it alone.

The figure hanging over the fire coughed once or twice, and rubbed its skinny hands together.

Colonel Symure watched and watched, until he was weary of watching, then he passed through the doorway, and stood in the presence of the Cerberus of the place, Hopping Pidgeon, who had started from his seat at the creaking of the stranger's boots.

"The gentleman draw back and shuddered before the crooked form presented to his view. "Well, what dun yo want?" was the not over courteous interrogatory made by the Cerberus.

This question, so bluntly put, perplexed the gentleman for a second or two.

Pidgeon, whose little eyes looked in two separate directions, was narrowly scanning the appearance of the now-comer, examining him from head to foot.

"Can I do anything fur yo, sur?" he further demanded, in cracked and discordant accents, and with a strong Yorkshire dialect.

"I really don't know," stammered the Colonel. "I want to be informed where Mr. Desmoro Desmoro lives," he added, his tongue clinging to the roof of his mouth as he uttered the name.

"Oh, whereabouts Maister Desmoro Desmoro lives, yo wants to know?" repeated Pidgeon, with a cunning grin, all the while peering into the querist's face. "What can a soger-officer want we a play-actor lad like him, um? Maybe, yo wants to him to goo an' list for a soger?" he added, he eagerly.

"Perhaps I do?" half-laughed the Colonel. "Such a fine fellow as he would be a credit to any regiment in the world!"

"Fine feller?" mumbled the man. "Theer it be; alus yo foim follers! I'd bot a penny yo'd not tak' me fur a soger!"

"No, I don't think I should!" was the dry and haughty rejoinder.

"Noe, in coorse yo wouldn't! Dang it, why beant one mon's back an' limbs as straight as another's? Why should I be a Hoppin' Pidgeon,

CHAPTER IX.

Sixteen years have gone by since last we saw Colonel Symure. He was a young man then; now he is in the meridian of life, the indifferent husband of an affected, mindless, shrewish, selfish woman, who brought him wealth and unhappiness as well. He has no children; he has nothing under his roof save his frivolous wife, who is no companion to him, and wears his patience night and day.

Many and many a time has he regretted the loss of his child; but never once has he dared to dream of claiming it. The secret of his first marriage he must endeavour to conceal for ever. In order to preserve some little tranquillity on his domestic hearth, he is compelled to preserve that secret inviolate.

He has groaned often to think of the mask which he is forced to wear, without ever having the courage to pluck that mask off. He is entirely under the thrall of his rich wife, with whom he has no confidence whatever.

And he is now sitting here, in a paltry little theatre, belonging to an obscure country town, witnessing the performance of a troupe of strolling players, his own lawfully-begotten son being one of the principal members of that troupe.

Colonel Symure gnashed his teeth as he reflected on all this; and the colour forsook his cheeks and lips as Desmoro's deep-toned voice,

fur everybody to mak' game on, an' this lad, Desmore, so pratty that all that sees him mun...

"No, no; I merely wish to be informed where the young gentleman lives — nothing more."

"Young gentleman!" echoed the man, with a scornful laugh. "Why, he sticks up th' play-bills on th' street walls, runs a uranda, clean the stage, lights the gas, an' does a sch or a other old jobs! Gentleman, indeed! I shouldn't wonder but what you'll be fur callin' m' a gentleman!"

"I should not make such an egregious mistake, be assured," answered the Colonel, nodding, and feeling inclined to knock the insolent Pidgeons on the head.

Colonel Symure put his hand into his pocket, and drawing forth a crown-piece, threw it on the table before him, saying, "There, perhaps that may put a curb upon your too familiar tongue, and induce you to civilly answer my question relative to the abode of the young man I have before alluded to."

Pidgeons snatched up the coin, and immediately thrust it into the depths of his patched corduroys.

"We never tells nobody's address here; it be agin Maister Jellicoe's orders," he said, coolly, limping back to the fireside, and resuming his seat there.

The Colonel stamped his feet impatiently. "Has Mr. Desmore left the theatre?" he next demanded.

"Maybe he hev, and maybe he hev'nt — it aint fur me to say."

"You won't tell me?"

"You don't want me to go agin my orders, an' so be shoved out on my place, do you?" asked the man.

"No, no; certainly not."

"Then don't ax me any moor on yer questions," returned Pidgeons, in the same rude manner as before. "It be eleven o'clock, an' an' agoin' to mak' my porridge, so as you aint' like the small on it, you'd better goo yer ways whomever."

Colonel Symure paused, not knowing what to do.

"Look here, don't be obstinate, my man!" he said, approaching the crouching figure. "I'll make it well worth your while to serve me in this business. I want to see and speak to this young man, and if you will but instruct me where I may be likely to find him, I'll give you a piece of gold."

Pidgeons started at the mention of "gold;" then, with his elbows on his knees, and his chin supported in his palms, he sat reflecting a few moments.

"Din you want him for a sojer, say yes or no?" he asked, suddenly jumping up.

"Well, honestly, no!" responded the Colonel. "I seek him only for his advantage, be assured on that point."

"His advantage!" slowly repeated Pidgeons, a dark frown puckering up his narrow brow. "Weel, you mun coom here agin to-morrow, at this hour, an' then, mayhap, I'll tell 'en summat about him. Good night, maister, I mun mak' my porridge now."

Colonel Symure, full of disappointment and anger, now left the man, and found his way into the alley, and thence into the street once more.

Slowly he proceeded homeward, his heart heavy and sad within his breast.

He was recalling the particulars of the scene which had just taken place between the stage-door-keeper and himself, and bitterly reflecting on all he had heard concerning Desmore's humiliating position.

from your present erratic way of life up to high fortune and the London boards!"

The young man's ears tingled at these pleasing and encouraging words entered them. Dared he believe that he would one day become known to fame, and hold an honourable and proud position in the world?

He would like to do so, not for his own sake, but for that of dear Comfort.

Desmore was longing for the world's admiration and applause, and that all tongues should speak of him. But, although he was full of ambitious yearnings, he had not an atom of selfishness in his nature; for generous, honest, noble, and good he was in all things.

Now, Mrs. Polderbrant, eccentric as she undoubtedly was, was a shrewd reader of character. She understood Desmore's thoroughly, and understanding it, she could not help admiring and appreciating it. She had a rugged heart in her bosom; but he, the parentless one, was fairly inside it, filling its every corner.

But she did not make any affectionate professions to the lad, over whom she now felt a positive joy in watching. She did not tell him that she was learning to love him with almost the same sort of tenderness as she had loved her own son—that son whose head she had caressed so long since he had passed away.

Quite elated, Desmore sought Comfort's presence; and together the young teacher and his pupil poured over their newly-acquired treasure. The girl's face wore a puzzled, vexed expression, while that of her companion was filled with interest and gratification.

To speak the truth, Comfort was perplexed over the volume's contents, but she did not like to say so; she did not like to confess that they were as mysterious to her as the Greek alphabet; so she went on listening to Desmore as he read and read, with her pure, girlish features full of wonderment and awe, hearing every word he repeated, but failing to comprehend their proper meaning.

Desmore saw that he had brought a work far above the understanding of his pupil, and he resolved never to commit such a mistake again. He was disappointed certainly, for he had expected to produce a great effect on Comfort's mind, he had been hoping that she would derive vast benefit in the perusal of such a learned and thought-fraught production, and that she, like himself, would be yearning for others similar to it.

"You don't like this book, Comfort," he said, suddenly closing its pages.

"If it had been history, I should have liked it immensely, Desmore," she replied, almost at a loss what to say, and fearful of offending him in any way. "But I am not clever enough to receive the meaning of these treatises, which only make my head ache, and vex my heart."

"I forgot, Comfort; I forgot that woman's tastes, in nine cases out of ten, differ from those of men."

"We cannot help our nature, Desmore!"

"No more than we can help ours."

"I wonder whether they would take back the book, and give us another in lieu of it?" spoke he. "You'd like Goldsmith's 'History of England,' if I could get it, wouldn't you?" he inquired.

"Oh, yes, if you could get it, Desmore!" answered she. "But we must not dream of being able to procure a peep at that work for many and many a year to come; so let us make ourselves as contented as we can without it. We must not further impose upon Mrs. Polderbrant's good nature, for she like ourselves, has nothing but what she works hard for!"

Desmore shook his head sceptically.

"You think otherwise, eh?" queried she.

"I do, Comfort!" he replied. "I fancy she's quite rich."

"Rich, Desmore?" exclaimed his companion. "How can she possibly be so? She has always been a country actress; and report says that she had an idle husband, and an extravagant and worthless son, for both of whom she secretly laboured night and day. I know that she belongs to an excellent family, but I do not imagine the members of it ever assist her in any way. How then, as I said before, can she be rich?"

"She offered to buy me any book I wished; which offer she would surely not have made unless she had had the means of keeping her word."

"Offered to buy you any book you wished, Desmore! I fancy she must be a little mad, I really do, Desmore!" laughed the maiden.

ro's abiding-place, and that I will pay you well for such information? And, surely, that is all you ought to know about the matter, all you should expect to learn concerning it," the gentleman continued, very haughtily.

Pidgeons rubbed his knotted hands together, showed his yellow teeth, and, turning his back upon the speaker, limped back to the fireplace, where he stood, the flickering light from the burning coals dancing over his repulsive visage, showing all its ugly lines, its red-rimmed eyes, its broad, flat nose, its receding chin, and all its other hideous deformities.

Pidgeons was cogitating; and his thoughts were just as ill-favoured as his countenance.

Losing patience with the man, Colonel Symure now turned to the door, on the threshold of which his steps were arrested by the Cerberus's hoarse tones.

"Look'e 'ere, sur," he said; "as I told you afore, I can't go to risk the losin' of my place by tellin' yer where a nybody lives; but if you'll write a letter to the young lad, I'll deliver it to him. I can't go fur to say any fairer nor that, can I, sur?"

The Colonel reflected for a few moments before he answered.

Perhaps it would be better to write to Desmore, requesting an interview with him, than to break upon him unexpectedly.

Yes, yes, he would make up his mind to send him a letter—just a few carefully-penned lines—nothing more.

"I will take your advice," spoke the gentleman. "In a few minutes hence I will return with a note for Mr. Desmore."

And, so saying, the Colonel disappeared through the narrow doorway, and was lost in the darkness beyond, in the mist and vapour of the drizzling night.

Darting into an adjoining inn, he asked for writing implements, and being furnished with such, he hastily indited the following words:—

"Thursday night.

"A gentleman who knew Desmore's father, wishes to see and speak to his son. At ten o'clock, to-morrow morning, the writer of this will be in waiting at the first turnpike on the Manchester road."

The sheet containing these lines was then folded, sealed up, and directed to "Mr. Desmore Desmore."

Presently, the Colonel was again at the stage entrance, before his misshapen guard.

"There's the letter," said the gentleman, hurriedly, "and there's a guinea for you," he added, thrusting the missive and the coin into Pidgeons' hand. "You'll be sure to deliver the note to him to-night?"

"Oh, yes, surtin sure, sur!" growled the man, his eyes fixed greedily on the golden piece, slinking in the middle of his not-over-cleanly palm.

"Thank you, and good-night!" returned Colonel Symure, in a grateful voice.

"Good-night, sur!" answered the man, as the officer drew his cloak closer about him, and prepared to depart.

"Mind!" added he, pausing in the doorway; "when I find that that commission has been delivered according to its address, I will fur remember you!"

At this Pidgeons pulled at one of his rough locks, and the Colonel was gone.

Pidgeons did not move for some seconds, but kept his gaze fastened on the space through which his visitor had just vanished, listening till his receding footsteps died away. The money and the missive were both in his hands.

"Well, well, it's all right now!" returned she. "There's the twopenny I promised you. Don't spend it all at once. A pint of ale might make you tipsy."

"Thank ye, marm—much obliged to ye," he said, receiving the coppers with a seemingly grateful air.

Then Mrs. Polderbrant left the theatre, and wended her way to her humble lodgings, which were in the neighbourhood close by.

Scarcely was she out of sight, when Pidgeons, giving vent to a shrill whistle, flung the pennies up in the air, caught them again, and looked disdainfully upon them.

"The stinky thing!" he exclaimed, muttering. "As if I cared fur hur pultry pence! She dinno want I've gotten in my pocket, nor I don't mean to tell hur, nor nobody else! I've put off these old clothes now, and buy myself some new ones—blue new ones. Not sicken as she sells at the pawnshop, I wonders if she hev gotten anny moor of those five-penny notes? If I thought she had, I'd mak' free to borrow them on her; for what dum sicken a ould witch as hur want wee money, I should like to know?"

And as he spoke, he seated himself on the stool on the hearth, and mechanically taking up the poker, began to stir the fire.

"I've found the sojer-officer's letter, an' there's a end of that piece of business, I reckon! I made short work on it—I did so!" proceeded Pidgeons, chuckling heartily. "I suppose he'll be fur e m' agin a trouble of me! But I've hev some decent duds on my back by that time, an' I shall be a bit bolder than a war afore. Wait until to-morrow, and Comfort Sh yins'll not know me, speeded out as I shall be in some fresh corduroys."

And with his elbows on his knees, his chin supported in the palms of his hands, he mused on, cunningly, maliciously, and darkly.

His mind being equally as deformed as his body, he was ready for any sort of mischief—any sort of wrong-doing. He had cast his wicked eyes on the delicate and dainty Co. fort Shavings, and he had learned to hate one who he perceived had found favour in her sight. And more than once he had contemplated setting the theatre on fire during the dead of night, in order to destroy our hero.

Pidgeons slept in the same dingy apartment that he daily occupied, for he was supposed to be the guardian of the stage-door both by night and by day, and but rarely quitted the building.

Early on the following morning, Colonel Symure, whose regiment was quartered in this town, left his home, and directed his steps towards the Manchester Road. The gentleman walked with uncertain steps, and looked pale and haggard, as if he had passed a sleepless night, and was suffering some pain in consequence thereof.

Colonel Symure had a loveless wife, and, as you may well imagine, his home was far from being an abode of happiness or comfort.

Woman can create either sunshine or storms beneath her husband's roof. Mrs. Symure created only storms beneath that of hers.

This lack of all home attentions had created a vast void in the bosom of the Colonel, which void he was wanting to fill up—to fill up in a proper and honourable way, if he could but succeed in so doing. He was wishing to claim his newly-found son, whom (if ever he dared do as much) he purpose acknowledging before the whole world.

He had done a grievous wrong; but as it was not yet too late to repair that wrong, he did not despair. He had been pleased with Desmore's face—which was a faithful reflexion of his own—with his voice and manners also, and he felt proud to reflect that the youth belonged to him, and that the blood of the Symures ran in his veins.

The father looked upwards, wondering whether the spirit of his dead wife—of the wife whom he had never acknowledged, and whose memory he had grievously ignored—could look down from her bright abode, and read his changed feelings—changed for the better, far?

Could she penetrate into the depths of his soul, and view the flood of paternal emotions just awakened there?

How softened and tender towards everything around him he seemed to have suddenly become! All things—whether animate or inanimate—appeared to have a brighter and fairer aspect in his eyes; every object he now looked upon was gilded with the beams of that sunshine which was dancing so warmly in his own heart.

And what a thrill was pervading his frame—a thrill novel and pleasurable as well! The blood was tingling through all his veins and arteries with accelerated speed, and with accelerated warmth, likewise.

In short, Colonel Symure was experiencing an entirely new existence.

He reached the turnpike gate; and pausing there, looked wistfully up and down the road in search of him whom he expected.

But, far as is sight would reach, he could see nothing of Desmore Desmore.

The husband's face paled, and his lips twitched nervously.

"Caroline," he replied, unsteadily, "don't ask me any further questions about this trifling absence of mine. I have told you before that a man cannot be completely tied to his wife's apron-string!"

"Oh, indeed, Colonel Symure?" sneered she, her eyes fastened upon his changing features, noticing their every passing shade. "I know that no sort of military business took you out, and knowing that much, I am desirous of being informed what you did."

He hesitated in some confusion. Altho' Mrs. Symure had had her husband completely under her government, and she could not understand that he should ever do anything without her knowledge and entire approval.

Now, although he had felt her harsh control, and had often writhed under it, he had never once attempted to obey her will and pleasure, whatsoever such might happen to be.

The case was different now; her queries, so full of authority, struck his ear like so many heavy blows, and his spirit rebelled against his usurped dominion over him.

"Do you choose to answer me, or do you not, Colonel Symure?" she sternly interrogated, her countenance growing purple with suppressed rage.

Not a word returned he. He was standing before her, motionless and white, dreading to give her curled feelings vent.

For the first time in his life he felt inclined to resort, to reply to her in her own language, to give bitter answers to her bitter questions.

He felt weary of hearing that vituperative tongue of hers; now, more than ever, was it hateful to his ear. "Oh, for freedom from such a thrall!" he inwardly exclaimed, as her discordant accents vibrated through the room.

There's some mystery at work, Colonel," she proceeded,—"some mystery, which I will soon fathom, never fear! I'll set a watch upon all your actions; so take heed of what you do for the future—for even the lifting of your fingers will be known to me!"

Colonel Symure's eyes flashed at these words. Was he this woman's spaniel or her slave, that she should threaten him after this sort of fashion?

He knew that Caroline would keep her word, that she would carry her menace into execution; and, knowing this much, he began to quake. For his was a pacific nature, and he would submit to almost anything rather than run the risk of provoking an open rupture with his wife.

As you perceive, Colonel Symure did not own a very brave spirit. He might not have been a coward on the field of battle, but he was certainly such under his own domestic roof.

He was earnestly wishing he could open his bosom, and reveal to her all that was there agitating it. Yes, he wished that he could do this, we say; but he was far from entertaining a notion of carrying those wishes into effect.

Surely, never before was man so trampled as he—never was man in such a painful dilemma placed.

So, at least, he thought.

But he made no demur—he suffered silently. Mrs. Symure watched her husband narrowly. Her intense suspicions being fully aroused, she had become a very tigress towards the object of them.

She did not like this mute endurance of his. She would have preferred a war of words between them, to have vented all her bitter indignation on him.

Caroline was what people term a "horn and bred lady"—that is to say, her parents were rich, and came of an ancient race. But such weak facts as those had not been sufficient to render their eldest daughter amiable and good—for Nature's fashionings are beyond all human control; for neither birth, nor money, nor title, can make a true gentlemanman of her on whom Heaven has refused to set His beautifying marks.

The luncheon hour arrived, and Colonel Symure and his spouse sat down to the meal in perfect silence. The lady's brow was knit into a sullen frown, which seemed to forbid his speech on any subject.

After the luncheon was over, the gentleman inquired what letters the morning post had brought for him.

"Ah, to be sure, you went out before the postman had been!" returned Caroline, with great sarcasm. "I had forgotten that fact! Yes, there are three epistles for you—one of which is from Captain Smith, another from Lieutenant Bligh, and another—a most elegant effusion—from your brother Percy. You will find them all on your desk!" she added, walking out of the room as she spoke.

[To be continued.]

Ersl Russell is about to publish a volume of "Essays on the Rise and Progress of the Christian Religion in the West of Europe, from the Reign of Tiberius to the end of the Council of Trent."

EMPTY.

BY EDGAR FAWCETT.

Your cosy crib is in the corner yet; I sit and watch it, just as day is dead.

You cannot reach plump arms to get my kiss, Or dart about with rosy, naked feet.

Empty the home where, frolicsome and fair, Your precious presence made so bright a part;

BEATEN PATHS.

I suppose there are few people accustomed to think at all who have not been occasionally struck with the remarkable tendency to uniformity which seems to pervade in a manner the whole domain of human action.

The world runs in ruts, under the weight of habit, the habit which has ground the ruts so deep; and men fear to quit the rut and get on the rail of new discovery in whatever department of thought or action.

Things have their way from year to year, from generation to generation, and from century to century; and the record of uniformity is such a monotony that the irrevocable doggedness of routine seems to have put on the aspect of fate.

When the nations of the earth are ripe for rupture and revolution—when old things have had their way too long—when changes, political, social, national, begin to ring out their fatal peals of alarm—these also are destined to

have their way. When the hour comes the man is never far distant. The Luthers, the Cromwells, the Napoleons, the Washingtons, the Shakespeares, the Shakespeares, the Shakespeares.

This clinging to the old ruts—this passionate adherence to prescription and the things that have had their day—what is it? Surely it is as much an entity and a fact in the moral world as anything that can be named—even the highest mountain.

It is a providence and a guardian angel, restricting their function to what they understand, compelling them both to do what they can do and to leave unattempted what they cannot do.

The bad side of prescription or routine is no less obvious than the good. It renders men slaves to custom and precedent; it fosters prejudice and a blind confidence in the wisdom of the past.

If there be the lights and shadows, the doctor and creditor aspects of old use and wont, it is clear that some discrimination may be needed to strike a balance between them, and to put it plainly, that it is not an easy thing to do.

GRATIFYING SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION.—If there is anything that we like in a scientific work it is clearness. When, therefore, we read recently, in medical volume, that "the thalamio-optic are the essentials of the sensory tract, as the corpora striata are of the motor."

PERSONS AFFLICTED, however slightly, with any weakness of the Chest or Throat, involving either the Larynx, Trachea, Bronchial Tubes, or the Lungs themselves, should, on the first symptom, commence with Keller's Compound Syrup of Hypophosphites.

WE SAY THEY ARE GOOD.—The Shoshone Pills are manufactured with the utmost care, accuracy, and exactness, from the very active principles, doubly refined and purified, of such of the choicest remedial agents of the vegetable kingdom as to possess them of properties that only meet in harmony the exigencies of every ingredient entering into the composition of the Shoshone Remedy.

SCIENTIFIC ITEMS.

The use of red light in photography has been found to hasten impressions, and increase their sharpness.

M. HENRISS proposes the introduction of a platinum-bronze for the manufacture of cooking utensils. It is said to be entirely inexhaustible. The proportions are, nickel 100, this platinum 16.

To Preserve Wood from Decay.—M. Siebener says that he has found a solution of glue, until a very thin portion of the glue remains on the surface; then point with a thicker solution of glue; a mixture of oil and turpentine, and a solution of sulphate of iron, is afterwards applied with a dederer, the ingredients having been first separately pulverized and thoroughly mixed.

A French chemist has discovered a new useful art—permanently coloring wool. This process consists simply in plunging the material into two baths, the first consisting of iodate of potassium and the second of bichloride of mercury.

Experiments were recently made in Berlin to ascertain the effect of gas on the roots of trees. It was found that the roots of trees which were planted in a soil in which two lime-trees and a maple were planted.

CAUSE OF STURV.—M. Laven, being in charge of one of the hospitals of Paris during the siege, made a study of scurvy, and concludes that it is not produced by a want of vegetables, nor are vegetables and hygienic conditions in those who contract it.

EROSION OF HAIR.—The form and substance of human hair is different in different races, and may be described, in its structure, as cylindrical oval and centrally flattened.

FARM ITEMS.

A CORRESPONDENT of the Ohio Farmer writes that the result of twenty years' experience in keeping apples says that the following are the best words, viz.: Keep them dry, cool, and entirely shielded from the external air.

A CORRESPONDENT of the Country Gentleman writes that the most profitable feed for cows giving milk during the winter is made of nearly all the best dairies producing milk for market.

BARRE & Co. of Worms, recommend the use of soluble glass in washing wool. The operation is conducted as follows: Forty parts of water are mixed with one of soluble glass at a temperature of 50°.

A SERIES of experiments instituted to test the average loss in weight by drying, show that corn loses one-fifth and wheat one-fourteenth by the process. From this it is seen that the farmer who dries his corn more by selling unshelled corn in the fall at seventy-five cents than the following summer at \$1 a bushel.

SPEAKS FOR AGRICULTURISTS.—A correspondent of the Rural News Yorker suggests that the name "Agric." and that all that attend the part of "Agriculture" and that all attend the part of "Agriculture" and that all attend the part of "Agriculture."

FILTERING CIDER.—We have never found it necessary to use other than the common straw filter, in and at cider mills; but we have seen it recommended to pass cider before fermentation, through a filter of fine and charcoal mixed.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

FRANCIS HASSAN, eldest son of the Khedive of Egypt, who has finished his Oxford course, will soon depart on a three years' tour round the world.

EXAMINED as a witness, and productive of great unhappiness to those indulging in it, the French Society for the Protection of Animals has suggested the propriety and humanity of restricting dog work.

It has happened not unfrequently that witnesses (sometimes in very important cases) have been disqualified from giving their evidence by reason of their belief upon matters pertaining to religion.

for philanthropic and charitable purposes is frequently applied, is furnished by recent proceedings of the London School Board. That body, it appears, was given extraordinary powers in putting into operation a compulsory system of education.

A GOWN LOCK.—In a recent sermon the Rev. Henry W. Beecher suggested that every house should be fitted with a fire extinguishing apparatus. A communication received by the editor in the details of the idea, and explains that a water pipe might be carried up inside the rain spout to the roof.

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS.

HASHED MUTTON.—First slice off the ends of the mutton, then wash it in cold water, and rub it with a little salt and vinegar.

PEAS PUDDING.—Put a pint of split peas into a cloth; don't do it up too tight, but leave room for the peas to swell; fill slowly till tender, it will be done in three hours.

APPLE SHORT CAKE.—To one quart of sifted flour add two tablespoonfuls of cream tartar and one of soda, half a teaspoonful of salt, quarter of a pound of butter.

FARMER'S FURRY CAKE.—Three cups of dried apples, wash and cut each piece into three pieces, then boil in a cup of water, till the sugar is dissolved.

TO BONE "CUREY."—Plum artichoke boiling is apt to produce a yellowish, one-looking chicken. Before cooking, the bird should always be well washed in tepid water and lemon juice, and, to insure whiteness, delicacy, and succulence, should be boiled in a paste made of flower and water, and, after being put into the boiling water, should be allowed to simmer slowly.

CUP PUDDING.—The following is an excellent recipe for cup puddings. The weight of two eggs in the shell is about one ounce, and of flour, three ounces.

APPLE DIXIE.—The following is not a new one, but is a very delicious way of dressing apples, and is not very well known. Peel and core about thirty good baking apples, and slice them into little cold water.

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GEMS OF THOUGHT.

KNOWLEDGE and timber shouldn't be much used till they are seasoned.

GREY is the gold in the mine; talent is the miner who works and brings it out.

There is nobody who has not some cherished romance which gives a tinge of fancy to his life.

Our repentance is not so much a regret for the evil we have done, as a fear of what may be the consequences.

Old men delight in uttering good precepts to console themselves for being no longer in a condition to act bad examples.

Every heavy burden of sorrow seems like a stone hung round the neck of a man; and it is often only like the stone used by pearl divers, which enable them to reach their prize and to rise enriched.

A house without pictures is like a stem short of its fair flowers. If you would make a room look neat, cheerful, and homelike, first, and above all else, rob it of its staring, naked walls, by covering them up with modest and refined pictures.

What a glorious world this would be, if all its inhabitants could say with Shakspeare's shepherd, "I owe no man hate; envy no man's happiness; glad of other men's good, content with my farm!"

The way to wealth is as plain as the way to martyrdom; it depends chiefly on two words—industry and frugality; that is, waste neither time nor money, but make the best use of both. Without industry and frugality nothing will do; and with them everything.

To gain a name of worth, a man must have an aim, a purpose for which he lives; not merely a bubble upon the stream, tossed to and fro by each passing wave; not merely the plinking of fate, but a being of determination, who looks to some harbor where he wills his boat shall anchor, and in willing conquers circumstances, and is not their slave.

ILL-NATURED deeds are very rare when compared with ill-natured words; in short, the proportion of the deeds to the words is as Plato's pennyweight of gold to his monstrous quantity of sack. It would be a shrewdly good bargain for the world to agree that ill-natured deeds should be multiplied by ten, if only the ill-natured words were to be diminished by one-half; for though the deed may be a much larger and more potent thing than the word, it often does not give nearly as much pain. Dependents would gain very much by this bargain, for they seldom consider themselves very good-natured fellows.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A WESTERN paper says: "The favorite fan at Kansas City is made of a tumbler and two straws."

AS Alabama editor mildly alludes to his rival as a "prosperous of fashion and an aqueduct of mendacity."

The following prophetic warning is posted over a butcher's table in Stamford, Ky.: "Any Man or Boy that takes One Apple Without Leave is a full Roze in his harte."

MR. LEWIS recently bailed out of the Danville, Kentucky, jail, and has resumed his old occupation of stealing horses. The authorities say when they give Lopez bail again he'll know it.

A DEMOCRAT politician, who was a candidate for office at the late election, is about to publish a book containing a list of the various positions that were made to him during his time of candidature.

IT IS said that a young lady who is awaiting preparation to making her debut as a vocalist. The *Soc.* speaks of the circumstance, and adds: "Those who live in her neighborhood have put weather-strips around their doors and windows to keep out the melody."

AN absent-minded man entered a Toy shoe store the other day, and wanted his boy measured for a pair of shoes. "But where's the boy?" said the dealer. "Thunder!" said the man, "I've left the boy at home. I'll go and bring him," and off he started for his house, six blocks away.

LEGISLATION IN ITALY.—Some very amusing things were written during the session of the Italian Legislature held in the winter of 1871. Among them this is worthy of recollection:

A certain lady having become weary of the consequences of a drunken husband, thought she might obtain a divorce in a shorter and cheaper way than by applying to the courts. Some friends of hers, members of the Legislature, accordingly drafted a bill, and presented it to the consideration of the House.

"Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I am summoned to attend a meeting of one of the committees of this honorable body, of which I am chairman. I have a wife at home of whom I am very fond. I beg the House not to discuss my wife's character on this floor."

HEARTHSTONE SPINX.

THE FOLLOWING four words will form a square: My first is a trouble, my second is superficial contents; my third is thin; and my fourth is a narrow road.

27. DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

- 1. A King, whose army in one night / Was left to rot in the cold night.
- 2. A Judge, who'er would to the right / His mind bestow.
- 3. A Lawyer, whose power of old / Was in his pocket.
- 4. A Soldier, who's been in the field / And has been shot.
- 5. A Farmer, who's been in the field / And has been shot.
- 6. A Youth, to those that Athens deemed / In battle good.
- 7. She, who doth grace an emperor's throne / In ancient state.
- 8. A Gentleman, who's well in story known / Of early date.
- 9. The Garden, where our parents dwell / Ere sin was known; / And the foul serpent's trail was left / Ere sin was known; / Read this aright, I pray, and you will find / Two faithful painters of the human mind.

28. CHARADE.

In the croquet-ground of even, / Came my first across the way, / From a green-haired maid singing— / "Haste thee where the waters live: / Yonder palace's foundations, / E'erlasting crystal grows, / And I'll show thee unold wonders, / Mortal eye hath never seen: / Where the blazing light of jewels, / Shines through many a lofty dome, / And a thousand sparkling pillars, / Lift the ceiling of my home. / There, beside the perfumed fountain— / Fountaine, everlast, fountains red, / Fountains of the rainbow, / Falling from their sculptured head / Sit my child in kindly glory / High upon his coral throne, / The gold fish and his ring, / Threading 'er the dulse-bleak'd lawn / Then so told the world the secrets— / If my first revealed can tell / Of its richest, rarest pearls / In my child's bright coral shell."

29. ENIGMA.

The friend of man, the foe of beasts, / My days an earth I spend; / My life from man's own hand I take, / Though oft he dreads my end.

Sometimes I'm much admired, / Sometimes an ugly gnome, / Sometimes I hiss, and roar, and fright / A family from their home.

What this earth would be without me, / No man can ever tell; / For the best of man I'm all in all, / And an attribute of hell.

ANSWERS TO CHARADES, &c., IN No. 47.

26.—CHARADES.—1. Sunshine; 2. Court-house; 3. Gentleman; 4. Law-suit.

27.—WORD PUZZLES.—1. An understanding and over-covering mind; 2. A man; 3. There is an overwhelming difference between vice and virtue.

28.—ARITHMETICAL PUZZLES.—1.

Take the middle one in the numerals XIX away, and it leaves XX (twenty.)

II. 6 1 8 / 7 5 3 / 2 9 4

III. 0710 / XIX=10=XIX=90.

IV. The difference is 2, thus— / XIX=XIX / XIX=XXI.

V. The number is 20, thus— / 2x12=8 / 2x12=96 / 20=8x12 / 12x8=96

271.—RIDDLE-MA-RIE.—The one is askew, the other a skewer.

272.—THE LETTER L.

273.—DECIPHERATIONS.—1. Clump-lamp-map. 2. Fall-rail-all. 3. Score-core-ore. 4. Trito-rilo-tiro. 5. Sword-word-rod. 6. Seal-lead. 7. Classical. 8. Sarcophagical. 9. Kewee. 10. Sorcerer-thus. 11. Saraphon. 12. Orontes. 13. Calphurn. 14. Rabrius. 15. Alcibiades; 16. Tigranes; 17. Epiphras; 18. Semiramis.

CONTRAST.

The exquisite charm of spring's first ringing laughter, We measure only by the winter's gloom; The wailing winds, the whirling snows, make room...

A MARRIAGE NOTICE.

At her father's death, everything devolved on Margaret. Her mother was perfectly overcome by the shock; and, far from affording the young girl the least support, was but another burden on her hands.

The funeral over, came the inevitable discussion of affairs. Mr. Leighton's income had been good, but the greater part of it had been squandered on his dissipated pleasures.

But then there were her mother; the children, who were still to be educated, brought forward to an age when they could care for themselves.

It was just six months since she had engaged herself to Philip Hearn. How entirely happy had been the first days of that engagement.

She had not expected that Philip would acquiesce, quietly, in this arrangement, but she was hardly prepared for such determined opposition.

"I will wait, then," he said; "and you yourself shall fix the limit. How long will it be before you are at liberty?"

"That is not an answer to my question," he returned. "Helen is eight, and Grace ten; you can see it is hopeless."

"Not at all. Six or seven years will surely be sufficient; and I will wait ten, if you say I must. Anything, rather than give you up."

"And you leave unconsidered all the fortune chances," he continued. "Your mother may regain her health, and be able to guide her own house and the children.

"It was hard for Margaret to resist the temptation. But, no! she would not hold him, all through his youth, to an engagement that promised so little to his advantage.

"No, mamma," he said. "I have not the least desire to do so." "I don't trust you. I believe you would like to pass a sort of five mile act, forbidding me to come near any city, village, or fortified town that contained you."

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Philip. If she had been, she could not have given him up so readily. I never could have done it; but then, Margaret isn't like me.

"I hope, mamma, you do not disapprove what I have done?" said Margaret anxiously. "Disapprove? Oh, no, dear! I think it was all for the best, if you could do it."

"Very well, dear; you know best what suits you. I must speak to the doctor about my drops, the next time he comes. They are affecting my appetite; and yet I don't know how I am to rest without them."

"I am, mamma," she answered, kissing the pale, pretty cheek. Mrs. Leighton had been beautiful in youth, and still retained many traces of her charms.

"I believe I could sleep now," she said. "Draw down the blind, please, and throw a shawl over my feet. I'll not keep you any longer; and don't trouble yourself to come up. I will ring if I need anything."

"Very well," said Margaret; "go on." "But she heard—oh, Margaret! I hope it isn't true; I don't believe it can be—that he was attentive to a young lady there, and people thought they would be married very soon."

"Only a little—about the girl. That she was very pretty and accomplished, and very young; only just left school. I shouldn't think Philip would want any one like that."

"There is no harm in being young, surely?" "No; but—no matter. Her father is very well off, it seems, and she is the only daughter; so that people said it would be a good thing for Philip."

"There is no reason why it should not be true," said Margaret, slowly, balancing the probabilities in her own mind.

She had told herself, many a time, that this was what she had to expect. And yet—oh, how foolish she had been! she had hoped on, trusting in Philip's love for her.

From her brothers she heard often. Robert had taken kindly to the change in his prospects, and wrote in buoyant strain of all he meant to do, ere long, to advance his own and the family fortunes.

"My dearest sister," Robert wrote, "I don't know how this will affect you. Without talking much of the matter, Philip always gave me to understand that he considered himself engaged to you, and should urge you to marry him."

"I wonder what he has sent this for?" exclaimed Grace, opening it, as Margaret read the letter. "It must be something special. Oh, here is a marked paragraph."

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Philip. If she had been, she could not have given him up so readily. I never could have done it; but then, Margaret isn't like me.

"I hope, mamma, you do not disapprove what I have done?" said Margaret anxiously. "Disapprove? Oh, no, dear! I think it was all for the best, if you could do it."

"Very well, dear; you know best what suits you. I must speak to the doctor about my drops, the next time he comes. They are affecting my appetite; and yet I don't know how I am to rest without them."

"I am, mamma," she answered, kissing the pale, pretty cheek. Mrs. Leighton had been beautiful in youth, and still retained many traces of her charms.

"I believe I could sleep now," she said. "Draw down the blind, please, and throw a shawl over my feet. I'll not keep you any longer; and don't trouble yourself to come up. I will ring if I need anything."

"Very well," said Margaret; "go on." "But she heard—oh, Margaret! I hope it isn't true; I don't believe it can be—that he was attentive to a young lady there, and people thought they would be married very soon."

"Only a little—about the girl. That she was very pretty and accomplished, and very young; only just left school. I shouldn't think Philip would want any one like that."

"There is no harm in being young, surely?" "No; but—no matter. Her father is very well off, it seems, and she is the only daughter; so that people said it would be a good thing for Philip."

"There is no reason why it should not be true," said Margaret, slowly, balancing the probabilities in her own mind.

She had told herself, many a time, that this was what she had to expect. And yet—oh, how foolish she had been! she had hoped on, trusting in Philip's love for her.

From her brothers she heard often. Robert had taken kindly to the change in his prospects, and wrote in buoyant strain of all he meant to do, ere long, to advance his own and the family fortunes.

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"Quite well," she replied, trying to be natural and at ease. "Have you been in Guildford long?"

"Only an hour or two, as you might have guessed," he said smiling. "I am never here very long without making you aware of it."

And he could speak thus as if nothing had happened! It was quite time, Margaret thought, to remind him of their altered relations.

"Mrs. Hearn is with you, I suppose?" she asked, in a voice which she strove to render perfectly calm and steady.

"Excuse me," said Philip, perplexed; "I don't understand."

She repeated the question. "Margaret?" he cried, excitedly, rising and standing before her; "what do you mean?"

"We saw it in the newspaper," she explained, rather confusedly, "and I thought you would not be here alone."

Philip put his hands behind him, and looked at her with a bitter smile.

"Yes, you saw it in the newspaper! and that was enough, of course. If you had seen that I committed forgery, or murder, it would never have occurred to you to doubt it. Being printed, it must be true!"

"Oh, Philip, you know we would not! But this is so different."

"Different? Yes! But you ought to have felt the impossibility even more. Is this all your faith in me, Margaret? all I deserved of you after these years of constancy?"

"Don't be angry," she entreated. "Then it isn't true?"

"It is true that a Philip Hearn was married in Canterbury. I don't know him, but he is a very good fellow, I believe. Once or twice we have received each other's letters. I read the notice myself, and thought that by-and-by—"

"Certainly, I could not have dreamed that any friend of mine would suspect me of being the person. Robert, too," he added; "he has not answered my last letter. I suppose he saw the paper, also."

"Yes," Margaret admitted. "Don't blame us too severely. There was your name, your residence—what could we think?"

"You ought to have thought anything, rather than have credited an impossibility."

"I am very sorry," she said humbly, holding out her hand.

And she was sincere in saying so; she regretted to displease him. But it was a sorrow so light in comparison with what she had been enduring, that it seemed very like happiness.

Philip was propitiated, in time; but would accord his full forgiveness only upon one consideration—Margaret must consent to marry him as soon as the necessary conditions could be made.

He should never trust her out of his sight again, for any length of time, since it was impossible to foresee what dreadful things she might be imagining against him. It was quite requisite he should be close at hand, and ready to explain away any suspicious circumstances that arose.

Margaret laughed at this reasoning, and suggested numerous objections to the plan, but Philip overruled them all. She should arrange as she chooses; leave her mother and sisters, or take them into her own home, or provide another for them, near at hand.

Only, one thing was settled—she could not be allowed such dangerous liberty no longer. And Margaret protested against such despotism, but submitted; and then, of course, there was another Marriage Notice.

DRESS HINTS FROM PARIS. The Paris correspondent of the Queen gives the following hints on the latest fashions which may be found acceptable: The following is a charming black velvet costume for a young married lady.

blue; the narrow grosgrain ribbon is used, and both colours are very pale. Other bows are made in two shades of flame colour, and in two shades of rose. Purple velvet bows have steel ornaments, and black velvet bows are studded with what have the effect of gold and silver nails; there is no limit, in fact, in the variety of hair bows.

MARKET REPORT. HEARTHSTONE OFFICE.

Dec. 6, 1872. The local flour market was again quiet, but without decided change in prices. The demand is regulated by the actual requirements of the city trade, and sales are, therefore, light.

Table with 12 columns: Flour, Meal, Oats, etc. Prices listed in various currencies and units.

Flour—Superior Extra, nominal, \$6.00 to \$6.00; Extra, \$5.90 to \$7.10; Family, \$3.85 to \$4.40; Fresh Supers (Western Wheat) \$5.00 to \$6.00; Ordinary Supers, (Canadian Wheat) \$5.90 to \$6.00; Strong Bakers, \$6.15 to \$6.40; Supers from Western Wheat (Welland Canal) (fresh ground) \$6.00 to \$6.00; Supers City brands (Western Wheat) \$6.00 to \$6.00; Canada Supers, No. 2, \$5.70 to \$5.75; Western States, \$4.00 to \$4.20; Polandia, \$2.25 to \$3.00; 100 lb. bag, delivered, \$3.05 to \$6.00.

WHEAT—Quiet and nominal. OATS—Quiet. Holders ask 55c to 57c. CORN—Quiet. Holders ask 55c to 57c. BARLEY—Steady; asking rates are 45c to 60c.

Butter, per lb.—Dull. Nominal quotations are: Store-packed Western, 8c to 10c; Choice 1st Western, 12c to 13c; good to choice do, 15c to 18c. CHEESE, 1c lb.—Quiet. Factory fine 11c to 11 1/2c; finest now 12c to 12 1/2c.

PORK, per cwt.—Market dull; New Mess, \$16.50 to \$16.75. Thin Mess, \$15.50. LARD—Quiet at 10c to 11c per pound.

AGENTS WANTED.—\$150 per month.—To sell the "FINKER," the most useful Household article ever invented. Address H. K. ANDERSON, P. O. Box 388, Montreal, P. Q.

WONDERFUL!—"Dominion" Parlor Steam Engine, \$100; "Little Ottawa" Turb, \$150; "Brittania" Steamboat, \$200. All rail working steam models. Sent, carriage paid, on receipt of price. Address McIntosh & Co., Wholesale Dealers in Novelties, Brockville, Ont.

WHEELER'S ELIXIR OF PHOSPHATES and CALISAYA.—After having used your Compound Elixir of Phosphates and Calisaya for over two years in my daily practice, I must give it my unqualified approbation.

TELESCOPES. The \$300 Lord Brougham Telescope will distinguish the time by a Church clock five, a flag staff ten, and so on, twenty miles distant; and will define the Satellites of Jupiter, &c., &c. This extraordinary cheap and powerful instrument is of the best make and possesses achromatic lenses, and is equal to one costing \$200. No Tourist or Rifleman should be without it. Sent free by Post in any part of the Dominion of Canada on receipt of \$300.

MICROSCOPES. The new Microscope. This highly finished instrument is warranted to show animals in water, cells in paste &c., &c., magnifying several hundred times, has a compound body with achromatic lenses. Test object: Forams, Spores, Glass, &c., &c. In a polished Mahogany Case, complete, with 1000 count free. J. SANDERS, Optician, &c. 120 St. James Street, Montreal. (Send one Cent Stamp for Catalogue.)

WANTED.—TEN YOUNG MEN AND FIVE YOUNG LADIES to qualify as Telegraph Operators. Situations found for those who study and receive a certificate of proficiency. For full particulars apply at once to Professor HENRY, DOMINION TELEGRAPH INSTITUTE, 75 Grand St. James Street, Montreal. JAMES VAUGHAN MORGAN, Proprietor.

LADIES' GENTLEMEN'S & CHILDREN'S Hair and other Hats cleaned, dyed and blocked in the latest style and fashion at GEO. E. SIEGARS, successor to G. W. KETCHUM, 600 Craig Street.

GRAY'S SYRUP OF RED SPRUCE GUM. In Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, and Asthma, it will give almost immediate relief. It is also highly recommended for restoring the tone of the Vocal Organ. The virtues of Red Spruce Gum are well known. In the Syrup the Gum is held in complete solution. For sale at all Drug Stores. Price 25 cents per bottle, and Wholesale and Retail by the Proprietor. HENRY B. GRAY, Chemist, 144 St. Lawrence Street, Montreal.

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