

MARY THE MAID OF THE INN... A Story of English Life.

By JOSEPH HATTON.

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

Morley had gone to the inn. The people at the "Hark-to-Rover" had come round to Mrs. Meadows to beg her for good neighbor's sake to be present while they "cut the cheese," one of the trifling customs of the place, and in memory of Jack, who had always joined their humble board; and they had pressed her so warmly, vowing she should not be away for many minutes, that she was induced to put her shawl over her head and go with them. Her brother was sitting before the fire, smoking a pipe, and nursing a gouty foot, and Mary was lying half asleep on the sofa, in the chimney corner.

When Mrs. Meadows returned her brother was fast asleep in his chair, and Mary was nowhere to be seen.

The widow searched for her, called her by name, then grew alarmed, and went back to her neighbors.

They left their cheese and posset, their smoking ale and currant cake, to join in the search for Mary.

It would not have been odd to have missed her in the daytime; but there was something alarming in the notion that she should be wandering abroad on a cold icy night, and that night—of all others—Christmas Eve, when, according to Kirkstall in those days, the world was more or less peopled with apparitions, good, as a rule, it was thought—angels hovering over the land to whisper glad messages to forlorn souls.

The night was bright and starlight, the sign of Bethlehem shining in the blue heavens, the very star that had been the harbinger of peace and goodwill to man. The snow had ceased to fall; but hill and dale, tree and roadway, were white with their winter clothes.

It was what they called then, and what we call now, when we get it, an old-fashioned Christmas.

The good people of "Hark-to-Rover" spread themselves about the district, and they were still searching for Mary when Mr. Taylor and a native brought old Morley home in time to hear the Christmas bells ring out their joyful message.

Informed of what had occurred they drove along the road to the abbey (carefully avoiding the gressome tree by the plantation), and met Mrs. Meadows and some others, but without Mary. It had not occurred to them to look for the poor maids where she was found the next morning.

On the previous day a cloud of carrion crows had hovered around the gibbet, finally resting upon the tree, the figure in chains hanging immovable in its icy bonds.

It might be that these evil birds had more than an earthly reputation of villainess.

Superstitious natives of Kirkstall who saw them, believing they were evil spirits, noted them as of curiously dragged plumage, with fierce beaks, and making strange and hideous cries. It might have been, they thought, in their imaginative blindness—or with an inspired vision—who shall say?—that the hosts of heaven were driving the carrion crows out of the land, and that they had clung to the gibbet as their rightful resting place.

There are no bounds to the Divine mercy, and the last appeal of a good and pure woman is known to be full of saving grace.

CHAPTER XVI.

The moon was shining bright and clear; the stars had gone to rest, leaving sentinel over the sleeping constellations that one diamond-shaped planet the Kirkstall folk had looked upon as the star of Bethlehem, when Mary Lockwood laid herself at the foot of the awful tree and fell asleep.

Had her cruel destiny in its natural sequence of events led her there? Had the inspiration of her love brought her, in pathetic sympathy, to the feet of him at whose grim altar she should complete her moral sacrifice? Was it a pagan sacrifice? Or was it the outcome of the Divine love that was above all love, the Divine mercy which had received the penitent words of the sinner in those last moments of York jail, and selected this gracious time to give them a sign of His Fatherly sympathy and mercy? May it not be that under this celestial inspiration His angels—seeking a supreme opportunity to signalize the blessed eve—had interceded for both the loved and the lost, and, purifying the grim sign of man's stern justice, scattering the evil birds of hell, had brought poor Mary where they had found her, to transform that wretched symbol of man's unforgiving creed into a ladder of angel gold upon which she passed in their sublime company to the sunny land of everlasting peace.

It was in some such strain that the parson preached on Christmas eve, seeking to enforce the Christian doctrine, that even for such as he, whose body was a black and stained thing, there might be salvation; and perhaps through the unconscious intercession of their poor, distraught sister, who had called the heavenly hosts to that modern crucifixion of the modern thief, in a blind hope that, as Christ had opened the gates of heaven to the penitent thief on the cross, so in His infinite goodness might He open them to herself and her betrayer—to him by reason of her love for him; to her by reason of her sufferings and her life.

all pure and true until he had crossed her path. If the preacher drew a long draft on their imaginations and hopes and enforced his text with flights of religious fancy that may seem out of place in these prosaic days, it is still permitted for us to hope that the angels did take the place of the birds of evil strain and bear the suffering Mary to that other world, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

Years rolled on.

The law had given a companion to the gibbet by the plantation near the abbey. The man Foster had ventured to return to England, and, being condemned for some petty offense, was taken sick in prison. Under the impression that he was dying he confessed to the murder of Squire Bellingham, and related the circumstances of the crime exactly as they had occurred. Whether it was a malignant and avenging fate that had preyed upon his fears to bring him to this position, and then to restore him to health, it is not for the historian to say; he has simply to chronicle events as he finds them in the evidence before him.

Foster confessed to the jail chaplain that it was he who shot Bellingham, and he also narrated the details of the tragedy to the warder. As if the load off his mind gave his physical nature a fillip, he began to recover, and in due course he was arraigned at York assizes (on his own confession), upon the charge of highway robbery and murder, his confession being fully supported by such evidence as could be got together.

He died, as he had lived, a coward, struggling with his fate to the last, calling himself a fool, swearing he had been tricked by the jail doctor into a fear of death, and at the last moment denying his guilt and having to be supported to the scaffold, a miserable exhibition of judicial strangulation; but he was quiet enough when they made a sign of him near the rattling chains of his fellow criminal, the remainder of whose wretched body had almost disappeared between the assaults of the wind and the rain, and the birds of prey and the human relic hunters.

One calm autumn evening many a year afterwards, there came an old man to the Star and Garter.

He was tanned by wind and weather, wrinkled with age and travel, his hair sparse and of an iron-grey. He had bright blue eyes, white teeth, strong, bony hands, carried a staff like an alpen stock, and wore a straggling beard.

He arrived by coach with a pair of great brown leather trunks, covered with curious marks and letterings, as if they had seen a marvelous amount of service. He settled down at the Star and Garter, ordered a sitting room, commanded a fire, spoke in calm but very decisive tones, and asked many questions about men and women who had been dead and gone for years and years: the Meadowses, for instance; old Morley, and Mary, the Maid of the Inn.

There was nothing odd in his inquiring about Mary, because she had, as it were, become everybody's property. A famous poet had made a ballad about her, and it was a common thing for folk that were gifted that way to recite it. Other less illustrious ballad mongers had done the story of Mary's night in the abbey into verse, and the chapmen at the fairs had long been selling the "last dying speeches and confessions of Richard Parker," "copies of verses written upon his last interview with Mary," and other literary reminiscences of the tragedy.

It was, therefore, as I have said, not surprising to have a stranger ask about Mary; but this particular stranger asked all kinds of curious questions, and vouchsafed now and then pieces of curious information about events they had heard of at the Star and Garter from their fathers and grandfathers, matters which seemed to them now to be parts of stories in books, or things that belonged to the age of "once upon a time," or incidents that the newspapers reprinted from old chronicles.

The stranger became a particularly interesting person when he obtained permission at his own expense to erect a special gravestone to Mary Lockwood's memory, and people touched their hats to him all over the place when it was known that it was through his influence the two gibbets had suddenly been removed, such of the rags and tatters of the poor wretches who had been hung in chains being buried decently, and a few Christian words of hope said over them.

The old man was fond of rambling about the abbey. He set up a distant branch of the Meadows family in the "Hark-to-Rover," and often called and smoked a pipe with Jack Meadows and his wife at the farm—the young Meadows, who had inherited from the son of the Mrs. Meadows, who was the mother of that Jack Meadows who left Kirkstall and was drowned at sea or worse, because Mary, the maid of the inn, would not have him, preferring the highwayman in disguise, who came to the gallows.

It was noted that the old man was particularly fond of these people, and that he liked to walk with Jack and have him tell the story of the Maid of the Inn, and the sermon the parson preached about the angels driving away the evil spirits, and making a

golden ladder for Mary up to heaven. They had no idea who the old man was; but they grew to love him, he was so generous with his money, had seen so much, could tell such wonderful stories; and he brought to them on morning such a grand recommendation from the bankers of Leeds, not to mention a solicitor there, that when he hinted at a desire to live with the young people at the farm, and he accompanied this with a present of a pair of the finest cart horses that Wakefield market could show, and when he said he had neither child nor child, and was tired of traveling, they gave him the bedroom he said he liked; and he became one of the household living as such, a pleasant companion and friend to host and hostess, a grandfather in his actions towards the children.

One calm summer's morning they thought he had slept too long, and went to call him; he smiled at the children so peacefully that they did not like to disturb him. And nobody could or did disturb him again. They found his last will and testament in a conspicuous place on a table near the bed. It was a generous will for more than the Meadows family, as several Yorkshire institutions of charity could be cited to prove; and on a slip of paper he had written, evidently on the morning of his death, "Thank you for letting me sleep in the room where I was happy, as a boy. Jack Meadows." (The End.)

THE DEATH VALLEY BORAX.

Lucky Discovery Changed Lives of a Settler and His Wife.

In 1880 Aaron Winters lived with his wife, Rosie, in a gulch known as Ash Meadows, not far from the mouth of Death Valley. He was so fond of his wife that he would not allow her to be long absent from him, although their little hut on the side of the mountain was 100 miles from the nearest neighbor, in a wild, rugged, forsaken country.

One day a desert tramp came along and spent the night at the Winters home. He told the hunter about the borax deposits of Nevada. When he went away Winters thought that he had seen deposits of the same kind on his explorations into Death Valley.

Accordingly he and his wife went together to make the search, having previously provided themselves with certain test chemicals, which, when combined with borax and ignited, would produce a green flame.

Having procured a piece of the substance which he believed to be borax, Winters and his wife waited for nightfall to make the test. How would it burn?

For years they had lived like Plutus on the desert, entirely without luxuries and often wanting for the very necessities of life. Would the match change all that?

Winters held the blaze to the substance with a trembling hand, then shouted at the top of his voice: "She burns green, Rosie! We're rich! We're rich!"

They had found borax. The mine was sold for \$20,000, and Winters took his Rosie to a ranch in Nevada.—Chicago Tribune.

Embarrassed Royalty.

On a recent occasion King Christian of Denmark, while out for a walk, met one of his courtiers who was renowned for his stinginess. As it happened, on a previous occasion the King had "treated" him, but his majesty, finding that he had no money, the courtier had to pay for the "treat," and it had come to the royal ears that the courtier had not yet finished grumbling at having been "biked." Full of desire to repair the past, the King rushed up to his subject: "Now, my dear count, I am really going to stand treat on this occasion." Then, lo and behold, as usual on searching for money, the King found none! Luckily, at that moment he saw through the open door the Crown Prince and his entourage riding by. The king rushed out and called to his son: "For goodness' sake, lend me some cash. I've stood treat to Count So-and-so again, and if he finds himself done for the second time he will raise a rebellion." The situation was saved, but the court has not yet finished its laugh.—Candid Friend.

An Old Explanation.

A man in Ness county got into print the other day with the boast that he possessed the most ancient almanac in Kansas, the date of his book being 1819. And now comes a man in Smith county with a whole library of more ancient almanacs. For example, he has six consecutive annual issues of an almanac bearing the title, "An Astronomical Diary or Almanack," an American publication, the first of the six having the date of 1769. The owner of these ancient publications is Mr. A. C. Coolidge, who appears to be quite a collector. He has many old newspapers and books, and of one of them, "The Smith County Pioneer" says: "Mr. Coolidge has a book of psalms and hymns published in 1815 under the title 'Musica Sacra.' Did you ever wonder why it is that song books have the soprano placed above the other parts? The reason given in this book is: 'As female voices are, in general, more numerous, the air in this work is uniformly placed uppermost in the brace.'—The Kansas City Journal.

Over 4,000 sheep were taken recently from Montana to Lansing, Mich., to be fed there on sugar beet refuse.

Knife wounds heal quicker than those caused by a caustic tongue.

All the roads of life lead to the dust-mills of silence.

The police of Aurora arrested two intoxicated boys, who said they had secured the liquor in Hanks' saloon. The saloonkeeper was fined \$50 and costs.

After being Mrs. Charles Hendren for one week, Miss Frances March resumed her school duties at a Bloomington college and Charles Hendren returned to life on his farm near McLean. Their parents opposed the union, both on account of their youth and also the relationship. The father of the bride had his new son-in-law arrested on a charge of marrying his first cousin and of falsifying to the ages in the license. Within an hour Judge Myers issued a decree of divorce.

The Sangamon county Democratic committee met and decided on March 15 as the date for holding the spring primary. The county convention will be held three days later.

At Chester, Judge Hartsell denied an application for a writ of habeas corpus to secure the release of James French, a prisoner in the southern Illinois penitentiary. This case, like several similar ones recently tried, was heard on technicalities arising from the workings of the Illinois convict parole law.

One of the most important discoveries of mastodon remains that has been made in many years seems to have been unearthed on the farm of John Bamford, seventeen miles northeast of Morris. On his farm is a spring which, in the summer time, is very swampy and marshy. Recently Bamford and his neighbors began digging in the frozen ground, and took out a large ivory tusk which is five feet long and has a diameter of eighteen inches.

Judge Anthony Thornton of Shelbyville is said to be the only surviving member of the Illinois state constitutional convention of 1847.

H. P. Reavis, aged 75 years, brother of James Reavis, deputy county clerk, died Friday at Smith Center.

The board of directors of the Mattoon free street fair have decided that the next street fair should be held on October 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.

The coremakers of Quincy have organized a union, electing Chris Nebe president and Arthur Humby secretary.

Henry Griffin, colored, who imposed on the associated charities and then stole a pair of trousers, has been given a six months' sentence in the Quincy house of correction.

The Alton retail merchants will call upon the citizens of Alton to assist them in entertaining the delegates to the state convention of retail merchants, which will meet there next year. It is expected there will be 400 delegates in attendance.

An interstate spelling match has been arranged between some of the best spellers on Missouri "point" and some of the Alton people. The Missouri "point" people have said that they can spell down the Alton people's best spellers.

Ida May Dennis, who was acquitted at Quincy of the charge of murdering her husband on the grounds of insanity, will be sent to the asylum at Jacksonville, as there seems to be no provision made for taking care of women in the asylum for criminals at Chester.

The Alton city officials have been notified that the tax assessment of the city of Alton, representing all the taxable property in the city, is \$2,137,302. This is an increase of about \$200,000 over last year.

The Quincy Street Car company has decided to extend its tracks to Walton Heights and also to make a loop through the grounds of the state soldiers' home. Work will be commenced at the opening of the spring season.

W. W. Ward, aged 55 years, a farmer who lived a few miles south of Quincy and who was gored by a bull several months ago, died from his injuries.

A certificate announcing an increase of capital stock from \$300,000 to \$400,000 by the State Saving, Loan and Trust company of Quincy has been filed in the Adams county recorder's office.

Adj. Gen. Reece has issued an order appointing Rev. John H. Acton of Chicago as chaplain of the first ship's crew, naval militia, of Illinois.

In the United States Circuit court at Springfield in the suit of Benjamin F. Hargis of Kansas City, against Sheriff John Kichham of St. Clair county and his sureties, a jury awarded Hargis damages in the sum of \$10,000 as the amount due him for corn which had been deposited in the Columbia Elevator company's elevator at East St. Louis, and seized by Sheriff Kichham on an attachment.

Elder Stotler, pastor of the Christian church at Centralia, has announced his resignation as pastor, to take effect March 1.

The death of Mrs. Indiana Vall, aged 90 years, occurred at her home in Carlyle, where she had lived for over half a century.

At Galesburg John Wesley Adams, an old Chicago, Burlington & Quincy conductor, was found in a dying condition in the railroad yards and soon passed away. There are suspicions of foul play.

Rev. R. M. Tinnon, who has been pastor of the First Cumberland Presbyterian church in Lincoln for ten years, has offered his resignation, to take effect April 1.

John T. Houser, aged 75 years, father of Sheriff Houser, is dead. He had been a resident of Olney for forty years.

At Springfield the suit of Joseph Edwards, guardian of Charles Zimmerman, against the Loyal Americans, for recovery on a policy held in the order by Mary Zimmerman, deceased, resulted in a verdict against the society for the amount claimed to be due.

The Illinois Terminal railroad was compelled recently to suspend business over its entire road from Alton to Edwardsville because of a series of accidents to its three locomotives.

Drury McMillen sustained a fracture of his left shoulder while coasting on a hill in Blair's pasture, near Alton. A sled that had been left in the way was struck by the sled upon which the boy was riding and was wrecked.

Capt. G. W. Hill of Alton has tendered his resignation as agent for the Eagle Packet company at Alton, which position he has held for nearly twenty-five years.

In addition to the magnificent brick and stone depot to be erected by the Chicago and Eastern Illinois railway at Mount Vernon the Third National bank will build a handsome three-story block.

A movement is on foot at Salem for the building of a large reservoir just north of town, and to the fund the Illinois Southern railway company has subscribed \$1,000. The reservoir will cover forty-five acres and the cost is estimated at \$5,000.

According to the records in the office of County Clerk Ackerman, there were thirty-four births and fourteen deaths in Clinton county during the month of January.

Professors J. A. Kennedy and C. Spruitt of the Illinois School for the Deaf have been elected to membership in the National Geographical society at Washington.

The conservator of Nathan Walter, who is in an insane asylum in South Africa, has been paid \$2,325, which has been in the hands of the county treasurer at Decatur for a number of years.

The question whether or not Macoupin creek is a navigable stream has delayed work on the bridge across that stream, in which the counties of Greene, Jersey and Calhoun are interested. The matter is being considered by the War Department. If the stream is considered navigable a draw bridge will be built.

A farmers' telephone company has been organized in Calhoun county, with headquarters at Belleview.

Z. D. Stambro, a pioneer settler of Henry county, committed suicide north of Kewanee by tying a handkerchief around his neck and then twisting it with a short stick. He had been in poor health.

The Forest City telephone company has been incorporated with a capital of \$2,500.

The Long Point Mutual Telephone company of Wapello has been licensed by the secretary of state.

Adin Baber, one of the widest-known farmers and stockmen of Edgar county, died of pneumonia.

Selbott Reents, a wealthy farmer, mine owner and merchant, died at Kramm's Station, aged 59 years.

Ross Boyd of Robinson was found on the road unconscious. The horse that he was riding was near by and the supposition is that the horse stumbled and threw Boyd, producing concussion of the brain.

Ray Evans, aged 24 years, was killed near Frankfort by a falling tree.

Mrs. Mary Hough, aged 90 years, died Monday at Effingham of paralysis. She was the mother of Senator Hough, for twenty-five years a conductor on the Vandallia line.

John W. Lionberger, a pioneer of Hancock county, is dead at his home at Lacrosse, aged 75.

Frank Dudley is dead at Bloomington, aged 48. He was in the employ of the Standard Oil company, traveling through Illinois, Indiana and Missouri.

The construction of the Decatur and Springfield extension of the Indiana, Decatur and Western railway will bring into existence a new town just east of Springfield. The place will be called Keyston. The railroad company has purchased 600 acres of coal rights from the farmers living in the vicinity, and the new town will be the location of extensive coal mines.

At a meeting of the State Horticultural society at Springfield Dr. B. Stuve was elected president; John Amos, vice president, and Lewis Smith, secretary and treasurer.

The business men of Hamburg are attempting to organize a company to build a canning factory at that place.

Prof. M. E. Churchill of Illinois college, who went to California in search of health, has been engaged to take the place of dean in Pomona college, Claremont, Cal., for the remainder of the year.

R. J. Graham of Belleville, Ont., owner of the Hardin evaporating plant, desires to dispose of the plant to a company composed of Calhoun county fruit growers. An effort will be made to organize a company.

In the United States District court at Springfield S. S. Tilden, postmaster at Raymond, pleaded guilty to embezzlement from postoffice funds and was fined \$1,050, the amount of the embezzlement and sentenced to six months in the Chester penitentiary, the imposition of the sentence to be suspended in case he pays the fine within ten days.

Charles Yiede has been indicted for forty-year information furnished by Fred Ostermier, Jr., of New Berlin. Ostermier says Yiede forged his name to a check for \$150 and secured the money thereon.

Gov. Yates has granted a reprieve of two weeks to Joseph Ellsworth Hinkle, who was to have been executed in the county jail at Ferris for the murder of his wife last summer. Sheriff Kinsey had created the scandal and had arranged all the details when the governor's private secretary arrived with the official notice of reprieve.

The auditor of public accounts has issued a permit to organize the First City Bank of Princeton with a capital stock of \$50,000. The organizers are Albert N. Stevenson, Thomas Cecil, Matthew H. Blackburn, Shelby L. Smith, Nelson W. Isaacson, Charles G. White, Ira C. Gibbons and Jacob F. Waggoner.

The state board of health has received a report of a serious outbreak of smallpox at Benton, Franklin county, in the railroad camp of James Ward & Co., contractors, on the Illinois Central railroad. Mr. Ward has notified the board of health that the quarantine is being enforced at the point of shotguns, and that he is unable to secure supplies for his men and stock. Dr. Egan, secretary of the board, has notified the mayor of Benton to permit the delivery of supplies.

Russell Battles, son of J. H. Battles, a prominent merchant of Carlinville, was killed in a rear-end collision on the Baltimore & Ohio railroad near Garrett, Ind. The engine crashed into the caboose, killing him and a companion instantly. The deceased was 23 years of age, and leaves a bride of only a few weeks.

Efforts to organize so-called investment companies and incorporate them under the Illinois laws are causing much annoyance in the corporation department of the secretary of state's office. Secretary Ross has declared against the incorporation of these concerns, and a number of promoters are now engaged in a studied effort to circumvent the decision by securing under false pretenses authority to do business in the state.

The Morgan county medical society met at Jacksonville with a full attendance of members. The general theme of discussion was "pneumonia," with papers by Dr. D. W. Reid and Dr. T. J. Fitcher of Jacksonville, Dr. W. J. Crane of Sinclair and Dr. J. F. Harvey of Griggsville.

James B. Smith, aged 83 years, died at Springfield from an attack of pneumonia. He was born in Maryland and had resided in Springfield for the past thirty years.

James Duncan of the Duncan Foundry and Machine company of Alton has brought suit in the circuit court against the Alton and Auburn Coal company for \$680, the value of thirty coal cars, which the plaintiff alleges he sold the company and for which he has not been paid.

Benjamin M. Abbey of Croppsey, McLean county, has filed a voluntary petition in bankruptcy in the United States district court. His liabilities are placed at \$10,000; assets, \$2,891.

Some months ago Springfield gambling houses were closed by the police and all remained closed until recently. Within two or three weeks, on the supposition that the short session of the grand jury at this term would give them immunity for some time to come, several places have been reopened.

In the condemnation proceeding of the St. Louis & Chicago railway against James B. M. Kehler in the United States circuit court at Springfield the jury awarded \$10,000 damages against the defendant in the sum of \$2,187 as compensation for the land, which is located in the city of Litchfield. The case has been pending for several years. The road is now a part of the Illinois Central line to St. Louis.

Minnie Anteman of Bensington, is seeking to recover five turkeys from James M. Higgins on a writ of replevin. Some time ago Higgins missed some turkeys and claimed to have located them in Mrs. Anteman's possession. The Anti-Horse Thief association took the matter up and recovered the turkeys. Mrs. Anteman, in a suit before a justice of the peace, got back the turkeys, but Higgins appealed the case to the county court and the matter is being fought out there.

Pilas German, a negro, sustained a peculiar but serious accident while at work in the coal mine of the Republic Iron and Steel company, north of Springfield. A large cable used in hauling coal out of the mine broke and one end struck German over the head, rendering him unconscious.

Dale Bannister, who secured small sums of money at Quincy on some worthless checks, was sentenced to the house of correction for 178 days.

At Metropolis fire destroyed an old building in which Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, when a young man, taught school. It was constructed of heavy cedar logs.

Defiance Starch, 15 ounces, 10 cents.

Memorial services were held in the Supreme court at Springfield in honor of the late Judge Damon George Trenchard, who died at his home in Macomb, Ill., December 29, 1901, at the age of 72 years.

John Moore, 18 years of age, was killed in the Green Ridge coal shaft, north of Carlinville, by a large mass of slate falling on him. He was a driver in the mines. His wife is away, knocking out one of the front teeth.

Bernest Best has sold his 100-acre farm near White to J. H. Weller for \$4,000.