A Legend.

A lovely woman in an eastern land
Once swayed a kingdom with her slender hand;
Her burdens heavy grew and weighed her down,
Upon her brow there pressed a jewelled crown.

Too cumbersome for its tender resting place,
The golden weight adorned a weary face;
She cried: "I have grown tired of my power,
It seemeth more unbearable each hour.

"Let some one come that I may crown him king
Within his hand he must a guerdon bring
That shall by far my boundless wealth exceed.
So, having it, I'll feel no other need."

Her wish was known, and lo! from far and near
There thronged around her poet, prince and peer,
With offerings of dazzling beauty wrought
In wondrous shapes and with deep meanings fraught.

They laid their gifts down humbly at her feet.
She sighed: "Alas! I find them incomplete.
Within these sparkling stones no solace lies;
I dream of wealth revealed in human eyes."

Morn after morn a suppliant went away
Until there came unto her throne one day
A man with empty hands, yet noble face
And form of matchless mold and peerless grace

The queen looked up and asked: "What gift hast thou
To tender for the crown upon my brow?"
He gazed within her eyes and naught replied.
She crowned him, saying: "I am satisfied."

SHIRLEY ROSS:

A Story of Woman's Faithfulness.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Lee Park—Lord Lee's estate of Adinbrooke—presented a scene of unusual animation on that winter morning when Sir Frederic Oliphant drove his daughter and Jack Ross past the school-house over the hill; for the weather, though bitterly cold, was bright, and the sun was shining on the lake, on which a crowd of skaters were disporting themselves. Lee Park was not so remarkable for its extent as for the beauty of its situation. It lay in a valley with hills on three sides of it, while the mansion itself was built on the rising ground at the back. The lake lay quite in the hollow, and the sun glinted through the tall skeleton trees, on which the hoar-frost glittered and sparkled like diamonds. The ice was perfectly safe, and a quaint, little chalet on the banks of the lake afforded accommodation to the chaperons and lookers-on. Bright fires were blazing in the two little rooms, and refreshments were provided for the skaters, who, numbering fully fifty, were enjoying themselves thoroughly.

It was a bright, animated, pretty sight, and sufficiently unfamiliar to Jack Ross to have an additional charm in his eyes. The bright faces, the ladies' pretty skating-costumes, the snow-covered hills around, the ruddy light thrown from the fires in the chalet over the frozen lake, the glimpses of vivid color here and there from a bright hued shawl, or wrap or rug, thrown upon the hard ground, the merry voices and laughter, all contributed to make the scene one of unusual interest and brightness in Jack's sight.

But there was another reason for everything looking *couleur de rose* in Mr. Ross' sight on that fine sunshiny morning. The few words he had exchanged with Guy Stuart on the terrace at Erindale had cheered him wonderfully. He had fallen in love with Madge almost at first sight; the little tricks of speech and manner which the young girl had quite unconsciously acquired during her intimacy with Shirley gave her an additional charm for Jack; and, before many days had elapsed of his vistit at Cotsford, where he had met her, he was irretrievably in love. At first he had given himself up to his happiness without a thought; but then it struck him that Sir Frederic Oliphant's only daughter and heiress might justly aspire to a wealthier and more highly placed husband. After all, he had but little to offer a woman whom he loved; his income, handsome though it was, depended a great deal on his residence in India; and how could he expect that Sir Frederic and Lady Oliphant would allow their darling to accompany him thither, even if Madge loved him enough to risk the perils of a voyage and to give up all her dear ones for his sake?

He had been very heavy-hearted when Sir Frederic and his daughter had left Cotsford, and he had been undecided as to the prudence of accepting the invitation to Erindale which Sir Frederic had given him with unusual cordiality, and which Madge had seemed to second with a glance from her sweet eyes. At first he had concluded that it was better to refuse; then he decided that, cost what it might, he would not deprive himself of the happiness a few days more of her society would give him; and, since the danger only touched himself, the happiness was worth the risk.

And, when he saw Madge in her own home, he loved her all the more deeply. When he saw her with her father, so bright and sweet and frank, and with her mother, so tender and careful and loving, the affection he had already conceived for her grew deeper and more intense; and he felt that there could be no happiness for him on earth if she did not share his life.

Jack's early manhood had been a solitary one, for although he had made many acquaintances in India, he had made no friends; and for many a long month after he had left England he had been weighed down by a sense of remorse and shame for the wrong he had committed, and which had caused his sister such bitter woe. He had not known the real extent of the misery which her visit to Dumfife had wrought for Shirley; but he had seen how terribly she had suffered at the thought of his disgrace, and in many a solitary hour during his voyage out to India he had dwelt with shame and horror on the depth of sinfulness into which he had fallen, and from which poor Shirley had rescued him at such a cost to herself; and he made a firm resolve to keep in the narrow path of honor for the future.

He had left England for his post at Calcutta just before the time fixed for his sister's marriage, and, knowing that she was betrothed to and professed a passionate love for Major Stuart, he was not a little surprised to receive a few lines from his uncle, Sir Gilbert, telling him that Shirley was now Lady Glynn. The note gave him no particulars, and he had to fill in all the details for himself. He fancied that there was no difficulty in doing this, for he had seen Sir Hugh's evident devotion to his sister, and he remembered his own expressed regret at her engagement to Major Stuart. Shirley was very young, he thought, and like many other girls before her, she had accepted the first offer made to her, and, repenting afterward of having done so, Guy Stuart had released her from her promise. Jack thought the marriage had taken place rather too soon perhaps; but, after all, Shirley was not very happy at Fairholme Court.

Shirley had been married some few months before she wrote to her brother, and then she said nothing about the circumstances of her marriage, nor did she say much, Jack noticed, about her domestic happiness. He knew that her husband was wealthy and most indulgent, and on several occasions Sir Hugh himself had written a few cordial lines asking him to return home even for a time; but Jack resisted the invitation all the more easily because Shirley did not second it warmly. Sometimes he had seen his sister's name in the papers as being present at some stately entertainment or in a list of distinguished guests at a country house, and he had had some undefined idea that she was not very happy; but in her letters to him she had never hinted at any unhappiness, and he had not asked her any questions.

Sir Hugh's death, the news of which reached him not only from private correspondents, but through the medium of the press, had startled and shocked him terribly, and he had read with mingled indignation, horror, and wonder the account of Guy's trial for the murder of the friend who had betrayed him. At the time, he was making preparations to return to England; but the illness of his senior partner had detained him, so that he arrived in England only to find that his sister had disappeared and that every search had been completely unavailing.

Jack's anguish at these tidings was acute and bitter; and, when he heard from Oswald Fairholme the circumstances of Shirley's marriage, his remorse was great. All the suffering which she had endured had been caused by him—the brother who loved her, and to whom she was so tenderly attached. He had at once confessed to Guy the motive of Shirley's presence at Dumfife, and Guy's gray eyes had flashed at the thought of how cruelly poor Shirley had been betrayed.

"If I had known that," he said, in a low, deep tone of pain, "I should have found it much harder to forgive him even than I had already. Heaven knows," he added, brokenly, "if I did not murder him in deed, I had slain him in my heart more than once."

Between Jack Ross and Major Stuart a warm friendship had arisen. It had begun, as was natural, in their great mutual attachment to Shirley and their ceaseless anxiety about her welfare, and it had increased as they grew to know each other better and discovered the noble and endearing qualities each possessed. Another great bond of union between them was their loneliness, which drew them daily closer together. Every one of the few who had maintained their friendship for Guy had other ties; Oswald Fairholme had his wife and children and the superintendence of his estate, for Sir Gilbert had died in the winter, and his son had taken possession of Fairholme; while his mother and two younger girls had removed to London. And, although Jack would have been made welcome by his aunt, he felt that there was [illegible] diality between them; and he was happier when with Guy.

It was a strange and touching bond which existed between them; and, although they never mentioned Shirley except when they were alone, she was constantly in their thoughts. Jack was inclined to despair sometimes, and say that she must be dead, or she would not leave them in such cruel suspense; but Guy, remembering a look in her eyes when they had parted, and those few heart-broken lines she had written, felt that surely "Heaven would be merciful, and let them meet again."

But Jack was not thinking of his sister on that bright winter day when he knelt at Madge Oliphant's feet to put on her skates. For once Shirley was forgotten, with all the misery of the past and the wretched uncertainty of the present. Guy's words had lifted a load from the young man's heart, and he felt unusually cheerful and light-hearted. Something, too, in Madge Oliphant's manner, in the look in her blue eyes, made him hope that he was not quite indifferent to her, and it was a bright as well as a handsome face which looked up at hers with such significance in the earnest tender eyes. Jack Ross was feeling what the quaint old song so well expresses:

"To-day, to-day, where'er I pass,
A glory lightens through the grass;
A glory weights the flower;
A glory lies on the shining grass.
A glory crowns the burnished flower.

"To-day, to-day, where'er I look,
Soft laughter dimples o'er the brook;
Glad smiles break on the air;
Light laughter shines o'er the wimpling brook,
And smiles shine out in the sunny air."

Never had scenery looked so lovely to Jack as that of Lee Park, never had there been such a delightful piece of ice to skate upon as the lake; never had there been such a bright sky; and, above all, never had man had a sweeter companion to skate with than Madge Oliphant! It was not that she was a very graceful and capable skater; Madge, like many other English girls, was only sufficiently adept to glide smoothly over the lake, and she was, moreover, rather timid. It was very delightful to Jack—himself as accomplished a skater as any Canadian could be—to feel the little hands tightening over his arm, and to meet the sweet alarmed blue eyes as they looked up confidingly into his, and Madge had never had so careful and expert and tender a teacher as she found in him; while Sir Frederic, having satisfied himself that his daughter was in good hands, sauntered off with Lord Lee to the house for a quiet talk.

"You are getting on famously, Miss Oliphant," said Jack, as they rested for a few moments. "If the ice continues for a few days more you will have mastered the outside edge!"

"Thank you!" cried Madge, brightly. "I am afraid I must be a terrible bore, Mr. Ross. You cannot possibly enjoy yourself towing me about like this."

"Can't I?" Jack said, smiling into the demure blue eyes. "At any rate, I manage to bear the infliction with equanimity."

"That is so considerate of you," Madge rejoined, lightly. "Confess, though, that you would much prefer gliding off by yourself."

"Why should I confess to what certainly would not be true, Miss Oliphant?"

"Would it not? It is really very good of you to help me!"

"It is very good of you to let me do so," Jack answered, with an involuntary pressure of the little hand which still lay in his, "I see scores of envious individuals looking after us."

"Young ladies envying me your assistance," Madge replied, demurely, looking at him for a moment.

"No; young men envying me the happiness of assisting you," he answered earnestly; and the sweet saucy blue eyes dropped under his earnest glance.

"Shall we go on, Mr. Ross?" she said, a little abruptly.

"If you have rested," he answered, rather regretfully.

"Oh, I have quite rested! But perhaps you are tired of being a 'support.'"

"You know that I am not," he replied; and they glided away together, many eyes, as he had said, following them with envious or admiring looks, for Miss Oliphant, both as beauty and heiress, had a little train of admirers who usually followed her and danced attendance upon her; and some of the young ladies of the neighborhood would not have been averse from a flirtation with the handsome, fair-haired, bronzed stranger who seemed to have eyes for no one but Madge.

After one or two rounds of the lake, Madge sat down on a safety apparatus of peculiar construction in which Lord Lee had great faith, but which had not had a chance of proving its utility; and Jack, standing beside her, looked down on the pretty flushed face and graceful figure with a world of longing and love in his blue eyes.

"Do you know that you look like Balzac's *femme peinte par elle meme!*" he said, smiling, after a minute's silence.

"Do I?" she answered, laughing, and putting up her hands to her face with the prettiest, shyest gesture possible.

"Ah, I know, that rouge won't come off," he said, lightly. "I am glad to see that you are not very tired."

"I am not a bit tired," she answered, gayly. "But I am wondering what has become of mamma and Guy."

"Perhaps Lady Oliphant was tired, and preferred to go back."

"I should not be a bit surprised. Will you not sit down, Mr. Ross?"

"Thank you," Jack answered, and took the offered seat by her side; then Madge's roses deepened and Mr. Ross's blue eyes looked as if nothing could induce them to leave her face.

For a few minutes neither spoke; a sudden fit of dumbness seemed to have fallen on the pretty chatterbox by Jack's side, and he himself was at no time a great talker. Still it was he who broke this silence first.

"Miss Oliphant," he said, rather unsteadily, "may I tell you an episode of my past life?"

Madge started, and the pretty roses faded a little.

"It is something that I want you to know," he said, very gently; "for, although our acquaintance has not been a long one, I should like you to know the worst of me at once."

"The worst!" Madge said, looking startled.

"[illegible] my poor sister's story—do you not?"

Madge hesitated.

"I know that she was engaged to poor Guy, and that she married Sir Hugh Glynn," she said, gently; "but that is all—and that she was very unhappy."

"Her life was spoiled through my fault," said Jack, gravely. "Had I been an honest man, Shirley would have been a happy woman now."

"An honest man!" Madge repeated, gently, not shrinking from him as he had expected her to do.

"Yes. Let me tell you," he said, eagerly; "and, when I have related it to you, you will know why I wished you to hear the story."

He told her gravely and earnestly, without trying to excuse or palliate his own wrong-doing, of the folish and guilty action which had so nearly been his ruin, and which indirectly had caused all poor Shirley's misery; and Madge listened with a touched, sorrowful expression on her face and a deep sympathy in the blue eyes which, so bright when he began, were dim and misty when he ended. It was a painful story; and the revelation of her own feelings toward Jack which had come to her that morning made her feel for the suffering Shirley had ended, and helped her perhaps to understand it better than she could otherwise have done.

"Ah, poor thing, poor thing," she said brokenly. "How terrible for her, loving one man to be married to another."

"Yes, and married by a fraud, by a—He is dead—I would not speak in anger now," Jack said, checking himself suddenly. "And you see it was all my fault, Miss Oliphant."

"Yes," Madge said very softly; "but, however great a fault, it is never too great for repentance, if you repented it sorely."

"My repentance could not give Shirley back her lost happiness," he exclaimed gloomily. "When I think," he added, with sudden passion, "of the lives blighted by my sin, it—"

"Hush, hush!" Madge said gently. "You must not talk so. You must try to forget it. Your sister suffered in silence, that this burden of remorse might not be laid upon you; is it right of you, or grateful toward her, to go on burning all your days for a sin which you have so repented?"

"And she—Heaven bless her!—so atoned for," he ejaculated bitterly; and they were silent for a space, during which Madge's heart, in her pity for the pain on his handsome face, stole out of her keeping and passed into his forever.

"Must I tell you the reason for making this confession to you, Miss Oliphant," he said tremulously then, "or have you guessed that only to the woman whom I loved with all my heart I wished to make my wife, should I confess that episode of my life? Is it presumption to tell you that, unworthy, utterly unworthy as I am, I love you, that I shall never love any but yourself? Nay, do not answer me yet; I know," he continued hurriedly, "that you cannot love me yet; but may I try to win you? I think Sir Frederic would not object; if you give me leave I will speak to him—and—Madge"—his voice was broken and unsteady now in the great earnestness—"I think the hope of winning you—only the hope—would make a new man. I think I could forget in a measure the misery of my past. I could take my stand among my fellows without feeling shamed and humiliated. Do you think—ah, do not answer me hastily!—that at any future time your feelings toward me will alter sufficiently to let me hope?"

The roses had deepened and faded, the sweet red lips were quivering a little as she listened, and the girl's warm heart was beating fast.

"No," she said softly; "I do not think they will."

Poor Jack turned white to the lips at the prompt and unexpected answer.

"Forgive me," he said tremulously, as soon as he could command his voice sufficiently to speak at all. "I was very wrong. I had no right—and—"

Madge turned to him with a little wonder in her eyes, and, seeing his agitation, guessed its cause. The color which had ebbed away came stealing back to her cheeks as she said softly—

"You ask me if my feelings will ever change toward you, and answer that I do not think they will; but—but—" She leaned toward him now, and her little hand stole into his; "Madcap" Madge had disappeared, and a gentle, tender, true-hearted woman was there in her stead, who said, in the sweetest words which had ever fallen upon Jack Ross's ear—"But why should you wish them to do so, since—since I love you, Jack?"

CHAPTER XLVII.

White as death, trembling in every limb, and with a world of startling horror in her eyes, Shirley looked up into the grave, tender, compassionate face bending over her, the face of the man whom she loved, and from whom, for that love's sake, she had fled—the man who was now, she believed, betrothed to Madge Oliphant; and, almost as pale, but less unnerved, he stood looking down upon her, noting with intense sorrow the changes which a year had wrought in her face. For a few moments he dared not trust his voice to speak; he was afraid he should break down, and he knew that she had already been dreadfully agitated and tried; and he mastered his own emotion out of pity for her.

"I did not think to find you here—and thus," he said gently; and the horror in the great hazel eyes grew even more intense as she answered him.

"And it would have been less hard to die than to see you here."

The words came slowly, one by one, from the parched livid lips, and each one fell upon Guy Stuart's heart painfully.

"Those are bitter words to hear," he said, in a voice of pain.

"Do you think they are not still more bitter to speak?" she asked, in the same slow fashion. "But they are true."

"True!" he repeated earnestly, a great sorrow in his gray eyes. "True from you to me, Shirley?"

"Yes."

He stooped over her, and tried to take the little trembling hands; but she shrunk back from him and rose to her feet, moving away from him backward, with her hands outstretched toward him, as if to keep him from her.

"No," she cried, in a shrill, unnatural voice. "Do not touch me—do not touch me!"

He stopped immediately, looking at her with unfeigned surprise and alarm. What strange reception was this from the woman who, when they had last met, had parted from him with her arms about his neck and her lips to his? What madness was this? Often, in the time of trouble which had followed her disappearance, he had wondered if his brain were giving away under the weight of anguish; and now, as he pushed his hair from his forehead with a troubled gesture of pain, he thought that he must be losing his senses.

"Why did you come?" she said brokenly. "Why did you not leave me alone?"

"Leave you alone!" he repeated after her. "Shirley, do you not know that for all these long weary months I have been doing my utmost to discover your whereabouts?"

"And yet you knew that I had come away to escape from you—to escape from you!"

She was standing by the wall now, leaning against it, and still holding out her hands with the same gesture of abhorrence, the same expression of horror in her eyes. Guy stood still by the table, resting his hand upon it, a great sorrow and pity upon his face and wonder deepening in the gray eyes.

(To be continued.)

A Good Suggestion.

The police authorities on the American side of the Niagara River have received orders to arrest all persons who may hereafter go there for the purpose of performing daring feats at the Falls. Now let our Provincial Government issue similar instructions, and an end will be put to the tragic follies which have been perpetrated by cranks who are not fit to take care of themselves. Like precautions need to be taken in connection with circus shows and certain industrial exhibitions.—*St. Thomas Times.*

Objectionable Features.

Brown—How do you like your new house?

Smith—Well, there are some objectionable features about it.

Brown—What are they?

Smith—The landlord's.

Taking No Chances.

Groom (to bride; they are waiting for the minister)—Hadn't I better skip out and see what is the matter, my dear? The minister should have been here twenty minutes ago.

Bride—No, George; you stay right where you are.—*Harper's Bazar.*

Napoleon as a Deserter.

When the first Napoleon, having abandoned Moscow, arrived at the ferry on the river Nieman, he asked the ferryman, who did not know him, if many French deserters had crossed over.

"No," was the reply, "you are the first."

At the Club.

Jack Hardup (who always forgets to repay)—I say, old fellow, lend me a dollar, will you? I have nothing but a large bill in my pocket.

Friend (who has been caught before)—Whose is it, your tailor's?

DAY FIREWORKS.

Novelties in Pyrotechnics—Some Costly Display Pieces.

The Japanese day fireworks are coming into greater favor this year, says the New York *Mail.* Shells containing figures of animals, birds, fishes, dragons, caricatures of men and women and beautifully colored smoke effects are thrown from a mortar high into the air. Some of these figures are very odd. One shown the reporter represented a great red vase, the upper part of which contained a hideous face. Another was a monkey holding a big globe. Another was a Japanese woman dressed in a yellow gown and kneeling in great terror. Upon her head was a large rat. There was a figure made up of a big fish with a cat on its back, the cat holding reins run through the fish's mouth. A man riding a turtle and another riding a fish were odd figures, as were also elephants whose faces resembled the caricatures of Gen. Butler. The remarkable ingenuity of the Japanese in this kind of work was shown in other figures, such as the flags of all nations, groups of scorpions upheld by parasols, dice boxes, lamp-posts, an American Goddess of Liberty with a Japanese cast of countenance, figures of savage-looking Japanese officers, sailors in boats and like designs.

One of the oddest pieces is a colored "gallopade." It consists of a long drum, which turns on its centre with great rapidity, driving with much force wide spreading bursts and trails of brilliant fire, and forming a circle of dazzling effect. Within this circle of fire revolve, in contra directions, two wheels with illuminated centres of variegated colors, and which throw out jets of fire. The "Man in the Moon" is a novelty. It shows a large, round, laughing face, illuminated from behind with brilliant fire, showers of brilliant sparks being thrown from it in six directions. Other new designs for this season among the large exhibition pieces are "Boss Tweed's Diamond," a peacock's tail, Italian rosette, Egyptian pyramid, Chinese spider, Gothic cross, a revolving snowbake, a jewelled star, baskets of jewels, emerald jewels, Saxon pyramid, a puzzle wheel, "Star of America," "Cross of Honor," Egyptian mirage, Don Quixote's mill, "Shield of Iris," fairy dance, whirligig polka and G. A. R. mottc.

The larger of these exhibition pieces cost from $60 to $150 each; the smaller from $10 to $50. Exhibition cases of fireworks, containing an assortment of pieces and bombs, rockets, Roman candles, etc., cost from $7.50 to $200 each. "Water fireworks" are an attractive novelty. They are made for use in water only, and consist of "diving devils," flying fish, "floating illuminators," Roman floaters, water volcanoes, spray fountains, jewelled fountains and water wheels.

A Dog Puzzled by Dress.

A cattle man from Arizona, William Wilson by name, has just come down to the city and brought with him a dog that would have delighted the heart of the author of "Sartor Resartus," for the animal flaunts a true Carlylean contempt for the flipperies of civilization and the useless adornment of clothes. Mr. Wilson sent Nugget, the dog, to board with a dog-fancier in a canine boarding-house, and then went to a clothing store and exchanged his cowboy's rig for new clothes of the latest cut. The next day he called on Nugget, but Nugget would have none of him. The master whistled to the dog, petted him and made every effort to make him understand that affection was not changed, even though clothes had been. The dog looked up at the silk hat which had taken the place of the broad-rimmed slouch to which he had been accustomed, sniffed at the dude-like cane, and surveyed the light trousers from several points of view, and then walked off to the corner of the room, lay down and gave a long, mournful howl. Mr. Wilson tried to coax him out of the corner, but could not. Nugget would look up at him with a knowing expression in his eye, and occasionally give the feeblest little wag to the end of his tail, but he could not be induced to reconsider his evident determination not to recognize his master in any such ridiculous attire as that. Mr. Wilson went to his hotel, donned his cowboy's rig again and then returned to Nugget's quarters. The instant the dog saw him he was almost wild with joy, and his delight at seeing his master again clothed as he thought a man ought to be was almost unbounded.—*N. O. Times-Democrat.*

He Wanted Noise.

Jinks—Are you going to Oconomowoc this summer, Jones, as you did last?

Jones—Heaven forbid, that place is too quiet.

Jinks—Too quiet. Why, I thought this was one of its principal attractions.

Jones—So it is for some families; but you never heard my wife scold. I am going to Niagara Falls where the roar of the waters is so loud that it drowns every other noise.

Jinks, who is contemplating matrimony, begins to whistle in a low tone, and the expression in his eyes has a far-away look that is painful.—*Peck's Sun.*

Expected Too Much.

Indignant Customer—I sent my little girl to your store an hour ago, sir, for twenty-five cents worth of carbolic acid, diluted four-fifths with water, and here is what you sent me. There isn't five cents' worth of the acid in this mixture.

Druggist—Did you want twenty-five cents worth of carbolic acid itself, sir, with four times its bulk in water added?

Customer—That is exactly what I wanted, sir.

Druggist—Then you should have sent $1.25. Do you suppose I get my water for nothing?—*Chicago Tribune.*

Marriage customs in India are to be reformed. The bride and groom hereafter must have attained the ages of 14 and 19 respectively. The families will not spend so much in festivities.

A Pittsburg man has invented a glass conduit which he thinks solves the problem of underground electric wires. Plates of glass are grooved on the upper surface, and the wires are laid in the grooves and cemented there with pitch. Then other plates of glass are laid over the first, and wires put upon them in the same way. When all the wires are laid the whole is inclosed in a wooden box and embedded in cement.