AS GOOD AS GOLD.

CHAPTER XX—Continued.

Her considerate and willing disposition became a pitfall to her now. Whenever she took upon herself any domestic duty that the servants could have done—which she often did—he set it down to her faults of breeding. She would go to the kitchen instead of ringing, 'Not to make Pheobe come up twice;' she went down on her knees, shovel in hand, when the cattle overturned the coal-scuttle; moreover, she would persistently thank the parlour-maid for everything, till one day, as soon as the girl was gone from the room, Henchard broke out with "Good G—,why dostn't leave off thanking that girl as if she were a goddess-born! Don't I pay her a dozen pound a year to do things for 'ee?" Elizabeth shrank so visibly at the exclamation that he became sorry a few minutes after, and said that he did not mean to be so rough.

But the most terrible ordeal was to come. Elizabeth had latterly been accustomed of an afternoon to take out a cup of cider or ale and bread-and-cheese to Nance Mockridge, who worked in the yard, wimbling hay-bonds. Nance accepted this offering thankfully at first; afterwards as a matter of course. On a day when Henchard was on the premises he saw his stepdaughter enter the hay-barn on this errand; and, as there was no clear spot on which to deposit the provisions, she at once set to work arranging two trusses of hay as a table, Mockridge meanwhile standing with her hands on her hips, easefully looking at the preparations on her behalf.

"Elizabeth come here!" said Henchard; and she obeyed.

"Why do you lower yourself so confoundedly?" he said with suppressed passion. "Haven't I told you o't fifty times? Hey? Making yourself a drudge for a common workwoman of such a character as hers! Why, ye'll disgrace me to the dust?"

No wthese words were uttered loud enough to reach Nance inside the barn door who fired up immediately at the slur upon her personal character. Coming to the door, she cried, regardless of consequences, "Come to that, Mr. Michael Henchard; I can let 'ee know she've waited on worse!"

"Then she must have had more charity than sense," said Henchard.

"Oh no, she hadn't. 'Twere not for charity but for hire; and at a public-house in this town."

"It is not true," cried Henchard indignantly.

"Just ask her," said Nance, folding her naked arms in such a manner that she could comfortably scratch her elbows.

Henchard glanced at Elizabeth-Jane, whose complexion, now pink and white from confinement, lost nearly all of the former colour. "What does this mean?" he said to her. "Anything or nothing?"

"It is true," said Elizabeth-Jane. "But it was only—"

"Did you do it, or didn't you? Where was it?"

"At the King of Prussia; one evening for a little while, when we were staying there."

Nance glanced triumphantly at Henchard, and sailed into the barn; for, assuming that she was to be discharged on the instant, she had resolved to make the most of her victory. Henchard, however, said nothing about discharging her. Unduly sensitive on such points by reason of his own past, he had the look of one completely ground down to the last indignity. Elizabeth followed him to the house like a culprit; but when she got inside she could not see him. Nor did she see him again that day.

Convinced of the scathing damage to his local repute and position that must have been caused by such a fact, though it had never before reached his own ears, Henchard showed a positive distaste for the presence of this girl not his own whenever he encountered her. She read and took notes incessantly, mastering facts with painful laboriousness, but never flinching from her self-imposed task. She began the study of Latin, incited by the Roman characteristics of the town she lived in. "If I am not well-informed it shall be by no fault of my own," she would say to herself through the tears that would occasionally glide down her peachy cheeks when she was fairly baffled by the portentous obscurity of many of these educational works.

Thus she lived on, a dumb, deep-feeling, great-eyed creature construed by not a single contiguous being; quenching with patient fortitude her incipient interest in Farfrae, because it seemed to be one-sided, unmaidenly, and unwise. True, that for reasons best known to sal, shifted her quarters from the back room affording a view of the yard herself, she had, since Farfrae's dismis- (which she had occupied with such zest) to a front chamber overlooking the street; but as for the young man, whenever he passed the house he seldom or never turned his head.

Winter had almost come, and unsettled weather made her still more dependent upon indoor resources. But there were certain early winter days in Casterbridge—days of firmamental exhaustion which followed angry south-westerly tempests—when, if the sun shone, the air was like velvet. She seized on these days for her periodical visits to the spot where her mother lay buried—the still-used burial-ground of the old Roman-British city, whose curious feature was this its continuity as a place of sepulture. Mrs. Henchard's dust mingled with the dust of women who lay ornamented with glass hair-pins and amber necklaces, and men who held in their mouths coins of Hadrian, Posthumus, and the Constantines.

Half-past ten in the morning was about her hour for seeking this spot—a time when the promenades were deserted as the pillared avenues of Karnac. Business had long since passed down them into its daily cells, and Leisure had not arrived there. So Elizabeth-Jane walked and read, or looked over the edge of the book to think, and thus reached the churchyard.

There, approaching her mother's grave, she saw a solitary dark figure in the middle of the gravel-walk. This figure, too, was reading; but not from a book; the words which engrossed it being the inscription on Mrs. Henchard's tombstone. The personage was in mourning like herself, was about her age and size, and might have been her wraith or double, but for the fact that it was a lady much more beautifully dressed than she. Indeed, comparatively indifferent as Elizabeth-Jane was to dress, unless for some temporary whim or purpose, her eyes were arrested by the artistic perfection of the lady's appearance. Her gait, too, had a flexuousness about it, which seemed to avoid angularity of movement less from choice than from predisposition. It was a revelation to Elizabeth that human beings could reach this stage of external development—she had never suspected it. She felt all the freshness and grace to be stolen from herself on the instant by the neighborhood of such a stranger. And this was in face of the fact that Elizabeth could now have been writ handsome while the young lady was simply pretty.

The stranger presently moved from the tombstone of Mrs. Henchard, and vanished behind the corner of the wall.

Interesting as things had been for Elizabeth out of doors, at home it turned out to be one of her bad days. Henchard, whose two years' mayoralty was ending, had been made aware that he was not to be chosen to fill a vacancy of the list of aldermen; and that Farfrae was likely to become one of the Council. This caused the unfortunate discovery that she had played the waiting-maid in the town of which he was Mayor to rankle in his mind yet more poisonously.

Ever since the evening of his wife's arrival with her daughter there had been something in the air which had changed his luck. That dinner at the Golden Crown with his friends had been Henchard's Austerlitz: he had had his successes since, but his course had not been upward. He was not to be numbered among the aldermen—that Peerage of burghers—as he had expected to be, and the consciousness of this soured him to-day.

"Well, where have you been?" he said to her, with offhand laconism.

"I've been strolling in the Walks and churchyard, father, till I feel quite leery." She clapped her hand to her mouth, but too late.

This was just enough to incense Henchard after the other crosses of the day. "I won't have you to talk like that!" he thundered. "'Leery,' indeed. One would think you worked upon a farm. One day I learn that you lend a hand in public-houses. Then I hear you talk like a clod-hopper. I'm burned, if it goes on, this house can't hold us two."

Meanwhile Henchard was sitting up, thinking over his jealous folly in forbidding Farfrae to pay his addresses to this girl who did not belong to him, when if he had allowed them to go on he might not have been encumbered with her. At last he said to himself with satisfaction as he jumped up and went to the writing table, "Ah!—he'll think it means peace, and a marriage portion—not that I don't want my house to be troubled with her, and no portion at all." He wrote as follows:—

"Sir—On consideration, I don't wish to interfere with your courtship of Elizabeth-Jane, if you care for her. I therefore withdraw my objection; excepting in this—that the business be not carried on in my house.—Yours,

Mr. Farfrae. M. Henchard.

The morrow, being fairly fine, found Elizabeth-Jane again in the churchyard; but while looking for the lady she was startled by the apparition of Farfrae, who passed outside the gate. He glanced up for a moment from a pocketbook in which he appeared to be making figures as he went; whether or not he saw her he took no notice, and disappeared.

Unduly depressed by a sense of her own superfluity she thought he probably scorned her; and quite broken in spirit sat down on a bench. She fell into painful thought on her position, which ended with her saying quite loud, "Oh, I wish I was dead with dear mother!"

Behind the bench was a little promenade under the wall where people sometimes walked instead of on the gravel. The bench seemed to be touched by something; she looked around, and a face was bending over her, veiled, but still distinct, the face of the young woman she had seen yesterday.

Elizabeth-Jane looked confounded for a moment, knowing she had been overheard, though there was pleasure in her confusion. "Yes, I heard you," said the lady, in a vivacious voice, answering her look. "What can have happened?"

"I don't—I can't tell you," said Elizabeth, putting her hand to her face to hide a quick flush that had come.

There was no movement or word for a few seconds; then the girl felt that the young lady was sitting down beside her.

"I guess how it is with you," said the latter. "That was your mother." She waved her hand towards the tombstone. Elizabeth looked up at her as if inquiring of herself whether there should be confidence. The lady's manner was so desirous, so anxious, that the girl decided there should be confidence. "It was my mother," she said, "my only friend."

"But your father, Mr. Henchard. He is living?"

"Yes, he is living," said Elizabeth-Jane.

"Is he not kind to you?"

"I've no wish to complain of him."

"There has been a disagreement?"

"A little."

"Perhaps you were to blame," suggested the stranger.

"I was—in many ways," sighed the meek Elizabeth. "I swept up the coals when the servant ought to have done it; and I said I was leery; and he was angry with me."

The lady seemed to warm towards her for that reply, "Do you know the impression your words give me?" she said ingenuously. "That he is a hot-tempered man—a little proud—perhaps ambitious; but not a bad man." Her anxiety not to condemn Henchard, while siding with Elizabeth was curious.

"Oh no; vcertainly not bad," agreed the honest girl. "And he had not even been unkind to me till lately—since mother died. But it has been very much to bear while it has lasted. All is owing to my defects, I dare say; and my defects are owing to my history."

"What is your history?"

Elizabeth-Jane looked wistfully at her questioner; found that her questioner was looking at her; turned his eyes down; and then seemed compelled to look back again. "My history is not gay nor attractive," she said. "And yet I can tell if you really want to know."

The lady assured her that she did want to know; whereupon Elizabeth-Jane told the tale of her life as she understood it, which was in general the true one, except that the sale at the fair had no part therein.

"I don't know how to return," she murmured. "I think of going away. But what can I do? Where can I go?"

"Perhaps it will be better soon," said her friend gently. "So I would not go far. Now what do you think of this: I shall soon want somebody to live in my house, partly as housekeeper, partly as companion; would you mind coming to me? But perhaps—"

"Oh yes," cried Elizabeth, with tears in her eyes. "I would, indeed—I would do anything to be independent; for then perhaps my father might get to love me. But, ah!"

"What?"

"I am no accomplished person. And a companion to you, dear madam, must be that."

"Oh, not necessarily."

"Not? But I can't help using rural words sometimes, when I don't mean to."

"Never mind. I shall like to know them."

"And—oh, I know I sha'n't do!"—she cried with a distressful laugh. "I accidentally learned to write round-hand instead of ladies'-hand. And, of course,"

"Well, no."

"eWll, no."

"What, not necessary to write ladies'-hand?" cried the joyous Elizabeth.

"Not at all."

"But where do you live, Madam?"

"In Casterbridge, or rather I shall be living here after twelve o'clock to-day."

Elizabeth expressed her astonishment.

"I have been staying at Budmouth for a few days while my house was getting ready. The house I am going into is that one they call High Street Hall—the old stone one overlooking the Market. Two or three rooms are fit for occupation, though not all: I sleep there to-night for the first time. Now will you think over my proposal, and meet me here the first fine day next week, and say if you are still in the same mind?"

Elizabeth, her eyes shining at this prospect of a change from an unbearable position joyfully assented; and the two parted at the gate of the churchyard.

CHAPTER XXI.

As a maxim glibly repeated from childhood remains practically unmarked till some mature experience enforces it, so did this High Street Hall now for the first time really show itself to Elizabeth-Jane, though her ears had heard its name on a hundred occasions.

Her mind dwelt upon nothing else but the lady, and the house, and her own chance of living there, all the rest of the day.

Elizabeth-Jane could, however, add a capping touch to information so new to her in the bulk. The lady, she said, har arrived that day.

When the lamps were lighted, and it was yet not so dark as to render chimneys, attics, and roofs invisible, Elizabeth, almost with a lover's feeling, thought she would like to look at the outside of High Street Hall. She went up the street in that direction.

The Hall, with its gray facade and parapet, was the only residence of its sort so near the center of the town. It had, in the first place, the characteristics of a country mansion—bird's-nests in its chimneys, damp nooks where fungi grew, and irregularities of surface direct from Nature's trowel.

Yet as regards the enjoying it, the stranger would have been wrong, for until this very evening, when the new lady had arrived, the house had been empty for a year or two, while before that interval its occupancy had been irregular. The reason of its unpopularity was soon made manifest. Its rooms overlooked the market-place; and such a prospect from such a house was not considered desirable or seemly by its would-be occupiers.

Elizabeth's eyes sought the upper rooms, and saw lights there. The lady had obviously arrived. The impression that this woman of comparatively practised manner had made upon the studious girl's mind was so deep that she enjoyed standing under an opposite archway merely to think that the charming lady was inside the confronting walls, and to wonder what she was was doing. Her admiration for the architecture of that front was entirely on account of the inmate it screened. Though for that matter the architecture deserved admiration, or at least study, on its own account. It was Palladian, and, like all architecture erected since the Gothic age, was a compilation rather than a design. But its reasonableness made it impressive.

Men had till quite recently been going in and out with parcels and packing-cases, rendering the door and hall within like a public thoroughfare. Elizabeth trotted through the open door in the dusk, but becoming alarmed at her own temerity, she went quickly out again by another which stood open in the lofty wall of the back court. To her surprise she found herself in one of the little-used blind alleys of the town. Looking round at the door which had given her egress, by the light of the solitary lamp fixed in the alley, she saw that it was arched and old—older even than the house itself. The door was studded, and the keystone of the arch was a mask. Originally the mask had exhibited a comic leer, as could still be discerned; but generations of Casterbridge boys had thrown stones at the mask, aiming at its open mouth; and the blows thereof had chipped off the lips and jaws as if they had been eaten away by disease. The appearance was so ghastly by the weakly lamp glimmer that she could not bear to look at it—the first unpleasant feature of her visit.

Had she watched she would have been surprised. She would have seen that the pedestrian on coming up made straight for the arched doorway; that as she paused with his hand upon the latch the lamplight fell upon the face of Henchard.

But Elizabeth-Jane clung so closely to her nook that she discerned nothing of this.

Henchard's chiding, by begetting in her a nervous fear of doing anything definable as unlady-like, had operated thus curiously in keeping them unknown to each other at a critical moment. Much might have resulted from recognition—at the least a query on either side in one and the self-same form: What could he or she possibly be doing there?

Henchard, whatever his business at the lady's house, reached his own home only a few minutes later than Elizabeth-Jane. Her plan was to broach the question of leaving his roof this evening, the events of the day had urged her to the course.

"Father, have you any objection to my going away? she asked.

"Going away? No—none whatever. Where are you going?"

She thought it undesirable and unnecessary to say anything at present about her destination to one who took so little interest in her. He would know that soon enough. "I have heard of an opportunity of getting more cultivated and finished, and being less idle," she answered, with hesitation. "A chance of a place in a household where I can earn my living, and have advantages of study, and seeing refined life."

"Then make the best of it, in Heaven's name—if you can't get cultivated where you are."

"You don't object?"

"Object—I? Ho—no! Not at all." After a pause he said, "But you won't have enough money for this lively scheme without help, you know? If you like I should be willing to make you an allowance, so that you be not bound to live upon the starvation wages refined folk are likely to pay 'ee."

She thanked him for this offer.

(To be continued.)

ABOUT TRAIL CREEK.

What an American Journal Has to Say About the Rossland District.

The fast issue of the Miner Bet Electrician, of Spokane, Wash., devotes a great deal of space to Trail Creek, and it speaks of it in the highest terms of praise. The utterances of our bright and newsy contemporaries in Rossland might naturally be deemed somewhat enthusiastic in writing up the position and prospects of their own town—one naturally believes in one's own selection. But when a distant magazine, of the character and weight of the Miner, speaks in such glowing terms of a camp in another and, to some extent a rival, locality, it means much. And added weight is given when it is remembered that this praise comes from an American paper writing about a Canadian enterprise—and we do not often meet with flattery in such a case! The opinions of the Miner may therefore be taken as being those which their proper appreciation of Rossland has led them to utter.

We quote a few sentences:—

"It has come to pass that prospects, which was not over a year or so ago were deemed worthless, and were called or thought to be 'wild cats,' are now regular shippers, and in some instances dividend payers.

"The principal mines of Trail Creek are situated in the vicinity of the town of Rossland, and from 5 to 10 miles north of the International boundary. The region is most

FAVORABLE FOR MINING.

Sufficient timber and plenty of water; and mining is generally done by tunnelling."

"The district taken as a whole is wonderful. It seems as if some supreme power, as a compensation for the apparently valueless grant mountains bestowed them with wealth untold. During the past six months nearly the entire country has been located, and considerable development has been done in many of the nearer locations, the results obtained prove that with development, this district will have some of the biggest shipping mines in the world."

"Spokane, up to the present, we might say has developed Trail Creek, and demonstrated to the world at large that what is wanted is capital and experienced mining men to manage the development. The present development and results have proved beyond a possible doubt that investing capital will be gloriously rewarded; but it takes such an enormous amount to open up the properties, that people were not inclined at first to take any stock in the district. This fact has been a handicap to the district, and has had effect upon the progress of development. But now Trail Creek is widely known, and there is not a questionable doubt about its future. Rossland is now compared with all the great mining camps of the world, and the anticipations and expectations of many are that in a few years it will be the

GREATEST GOLD MINING CAMP

the world has ever known. The camp is yet young, and with the developments will be more than fulfilled;"

"Surrounded by a vast area, that embraces a wonderfully rich region, unequalled in any other part of the globe, Rossland stands to-day a most promising city."

"For a railroad centre, Rossland has a great future, and is destined to become most important."

"At present—considering the developments in progress and the returns to date—we have reason to believe that next year the mines in the Trail Creek mining district will be considered the greatest in the world, and in fact will be the mining sensation for a few years at least."

"There is no limit set to the opportunities offered by Rossland and British Columbia. A visit to the camp will convince any skeptical man that an investment in the mines of Rossland is sure to bring results."

The above extracts are sufficient to show that an independent outsider, competent to judge, and certainly not prejudiced in favor of Rossland, believes that it has a magnificent future before it. Surely when our American friends thinks so highly of our natural wealth, we Canadians ought to believe in it also.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

Sunday school teacher—Can you tell me the story of the prodigal son?

Street Arab (recently gathered in)—He wuz de bloke what blew in all his dust an' den went home an' laid down on de old man.

ELECTRICITY FROM A WINDMILL.

Mr. Feely's Plant for Lighting His House Said to be the Only One of the Kind.

After experiments extending over two years, Joseph J. Feely of Walpole, Mass., has succeeded in installing an electric plant run by a windmill, by means of which his house, stables, and grounds are lighted by electricity. It is said to be the first and only really successful windmill electric lighting plant constructed at a reasonable cost.

In the development of this plant the main obstacle, from an electrical point of view, was the variability of the wind and the resulting erratic fluctuations of the electric pressures, which rendered their utilization impossible, and also subjected the ordinary mechanical connections to excessive and fatal strains. To overcome this, there were devised a self-regulating constant voltage dynamo and a so-called speed equalizer. The windmill shaft is connected with the speed equalizer, which has means for mechanically storing energy and for overcoming the frequent temporary subsidings of the wind. The wind power, after having been converted into electric energy, is conveyed to a system of storage batteries, from which in turn the electric service is drawn. An ingenious controlling device prevents the reaction of the storage batteries upon the dynamo and a resulting fatal reversal of the whole process.

The owner, Mr. Feely, has tabulated wind statistics, both from the United States Weather Bureau and from continuous personal observations made under his direction, and finds that the actual wind available for his equipment is far in excess of the requirements of his own or other like residences, the storage capacity being ample to bridge him over any possible period of calm. This plant has been so nicely adjusted that it is possible to utilize a very much lower rate of wind speed than has ever been attempted before.

Another feature of this plant is that it could be duplicated for about seven or eight hundred dollars, and as it can be run for a dozen or fifteen years with practically no expense, other than for lubricants and occasional cleaning, it could be brought within the reach of a very large number of people. Mr. Feely's early experiments taught him that a plant of this kind cound not be operated, even with the primary generating energy free of cost, if constant personal supervision was necessary, and this system has been so arranged that it is entirely automatic, and need not be looked after oftener than once or twice in a fortnight.

One of the things that strike the average observer in an examination of the plant is the absolute and unvarying uniformity of the lights, even in the midst of the most fitful and changing winds, which do not seem to have any effect whatever upon the lamps. This system has been in operation now for several months, and has been subjected to almost every possible test, and seems to be equal to any contingency that can probably develop.

VICTORIAN WARS.

The Number of Wars Which Have Marked the Queen's Reign.

The Army and Navy Gazette calls attention to a remarkable feature of the Queen's reign, the enormous number of wars, "little and big," that have marked its progress. Scarcely a twelvemonth of this period has passed, indeed, without finding England at war in some part of the world. Here is a list of the principal campaigns and expeditions: Afghan war, 1838-40; first China war, 1841; Sikh war, 1845-46; Kaffir war, 1846; second war with China, second Afghan war, 1849; second Sikh war, 1848-49; Burmese war, 1850; second Kaffir war, 1851-52; second Burmese war, 1852-53; Crimea, 1854; third war with China, 1856-58; Indian mutiny, 1857; Maori war, 1860-61; more wars with China, 1860 and 1862; second Maori war, 1863-66; Ashanti war, 1864; war in Bhootan, 1864; Abyssinian war, 1867-68; war with the Bazotees, 1868; third Maori war, 1868-69; war with Looshais, 1871; second Ashanti war, 1873-74; third Kaffir war, 1877; Zulu war, 1878-79; third Afghan war, 1878-80; war in Basutoland, 1879-81; Transvaal war, 1879-81; Egyptian war, 1882; Soudan, 1884-85-89; third Burma war, 1885-92; Zanzibar, 1890; India, 1890; Matabele wars, 1894 and 1896; Chitral campaign, 1895; third Ashanti campaign, 1896; second Soudan campaign, 1896. The same paper gives an account of hardships during the present Soudan campaign.

The Second Birgade was ordered to march from Suarda to Sadin Fanti, twenty-one miles distant across the desert, instead of following the river. The heat was intense; the men were in heavy marching order, water was short. There were twenty-nine cases of sunstroke, of which two were instantly fatal. Numbers fell out and soldiers were in the most exhausted condition.

The First Brigade fared still worse. They were ordered to set out one afternoon for a march of thirty-seven miles across the desert, each man carrying his rifle, his kit, two days' rations and a hundred rounds. The storm that was threatening when they left came upon them before they reached the first watering place. Nearly three hundred men fell out, of whom nine died, and before they arrived at Sadin Fanti one thousand seven hundred men had fallen out, and of one battalion of seven hundred men only sixty marched into their quarters.

AN ANIMAL CENSUS.

The latest enumeration of the animals known to science includes no less than 386,000 recognized species. The real number is believed to be very much larger. It has been estimated that of insects alone the earth harbors, 2,000,000 species, but the late Professor Riley regarded even that estimate as far too low. According to his opinion 10,000,000 would be a moderate estimate of the number of insect species! The number of individuals is, of course, incalculable.