AS GOOD AS GOLD.

CHAPTER XLI.—Continued.

"Good morning, good morning," said the stranger with profuse heartiness. "Is it Mr. Henchard I am talking to?"

"My name is Henchard."

'Then I caught ye at home—that's right. Morning's the time for business, says I. Can I have a few words with you?"

"By all means," Henchard answered, showing the way in.

"You may remember me?" said his visitor, seating himself.

Henchard observed him indifferently, and shook his head.

"Well—perhaps you may not. My name is Newson."

Henchard's face and eyes seemed to die. The other did not notice it "I know the name well," Henchard said at last, looking on the floor.

"I make no doubt of that. Well, the fact is, I've been looking for ye this fortnight past. I went through Casterbridge on my way to Weydon Priors, and when I got there, they told me you had some years before been living at Casterbridge. Back came I again, and by long and by late I got here by coach, ten minutes ago. "He lives down by the mill," says they. So here I am. Now—that transaction between us some twenty years agone—'tis that I've called about. 'Twas a curious business. I was younger then than I am now, and perhaps the less said about it, in one sense, the better."

"Curious business? 'Twas worse than curious. I cannot even allow that I'm the man you met there. I was not in my senses, and a man's senses are himself."

"We were young and thoughtless," said Newson. "However, I've come to mend matters rather than open arguments. Poor Susan—her's was a strange experience."

"It was."

"She was a warm-hearted, homespun woman. She was not what they call shrewd or sharp at all—better she had been."

"She was not."

"As you in all likelihood know, she was simple-minded enough to think that the sale was binding. She was as guiltless o' wrong-doing in that particular as a saint in the clouds."

"I know it, I know it. I found it out directly," said Henchard, still with averted eyes. "There lay the sting o't to me. If she had known the truth she would never have left me. Never! But how should she be expected to to know? What advantages had she? None. She could write her own name and no more."

"Well, it was not in my heart to undeceive her when the deed was done," said the sailor of former days. "I thought, and there was not much vanity in thinking it, that she would be happier with me. She was fairly happy, and I never would have undeceived her till the day of her death. Your child died; she had another, and all went well. But a time came—mark me, a time always does come. A time came—it was some while after she and I and the child returned from America—when somebody she had confided her history to told her my claim to her was a mockery, and made jest of her belief in my right. After than she was never happy with me. She pined and pined, and socked and sighed. She said she must leave me, and then came the question of our child. Then a man advised me what to do, and I did it, for I thought it was best. I left her at Falmouth, and went off to sea. When I got to the other side of the Atlantic there was a storm, and it was supposed that a lot of us, including myself, had been washed overboard. I got ashore at Newfoundland, and then I asked myself what I should do. "Since I'm here, here I'll bide," I thought to myself; "twill be most kindness to her, now she's taken against me, to let her believe me lost; for,' I thought, 'while she supposes us both alive she'll be miserable; but if she thinks me dead she'll go back to him, and the child will have a home.' I've never returned to this country till a month ago, and I found that, as I had supposed, she went to you, and my daughter with her. They told me in Falmouth that Susan was dead. But Elizabeth-Jane—where is she?"

"Dead likewise," said Henchard doggedly. "Surely you learnt that too?"

The sailor started up, and took an enervated pace or two down the room "Dead!" he said, in a low voice. "Then what's the use of my money to me?"

Henchard, without answering, shook his head, as if that were rather a question for Newson himself than for him.

"Where is she buried?" the traveller inquired.

"Beside her mother," said Henchard, in the same stolid tones.

"When did she die?"

"A year ago, and more," replied the other without hesitation.

The sailor continued standing. Henchard never looked up from the floor. At last Newson said, "My journey hither has been for nothing. I may as well go as I came! It has served me right. I'll trouble you no longer."

Henchard heard the retreating footsteps of Newson upon the sanded floor. Newson's shadow passed the window. He was gone.

Then Henchard, scarcely believing the evidence of his senses, rose from his seat, amazed at what he had done. It had been the impulse of a moment. He hastily put on his hat, and went out in the direction that Newson had taken. Newson's back was soon visible up the road. Henchard followed; and saw his visitor stop at the Golden Crown, where the morning coach which had brought him waited half-an-hour for another coach which crossed there. The coach Newson had come by was about to move again. Newson mounted; his luggage was put in, and in a few minutes the vehicle disappeared with him.

He had not so much as turned his head. It was an act of simple faith in Henchard's words—faith so simple as to be almost sublime. The young sailor who had taken Susan Henchard on the spur of the moment, and on the faith of a glance at her face, more than twenty years before, was still living and acting under the form of the grizzled traveller who had taken Henchard's words on trust so absolute as to shame him as he stood.

Was Elizabeth-Jane to remain his by virtue of this hardy invention of a moment? "Perhaps not for long," said he. Newson might converse with his fellow-travellers, some of whom might be Casterbridge people; and the trick would be discovered.

He watched the distant highway, expecting to see Newson return on foot, enlightened and indignant, to claim his child. But no figure appeared.

He returned to the house half expecting that she would have vanished. No; there she was—just coming out from the inner room, the marks of sleep upon her eyelids, and exhibiting a generally refreshed air.

"Oh, father," she said smiling. "I had no sooner lain down than I napped. though I did not mean to! I wonder I did not dream about poor Mrs. Farfrae, after thinking of her so; but I did not. How strange it is that we do not often dream of latest events, absorbing as they may be."

"I am glad you have been able to sleep," he said, taking her hand with anxious proprietorship—an act which gave her a pleasant surprise.

"Father," she said, as soon as she recalled herself to the outspread meal, "it is so kind of you to get this nice breakfast with your own hands, and I idly asleep the while."

"I do it every day," he replied. "You have left me; everybody has left me; how should I live but by my own hands?"

"You are very lonely, are you not?"

"Ah, child—to a degree that you know nothing of. It is my own fault. You are the only one who has been near me for weeks. And you will come no more."

"Why do you say that? Indeed I will, if you would like to see me."

Henchard signified dubiousness. Though he had so lately hoped that Elizabeth-Jane might again live in his house as daughter, he would not ask her to do so now.

When they had breakfasted his stepdaughter still lingered, till the moment arrived at which Henchard was accustomed to go to his daily work. Then she arose, and with assurance of coming again soon went up the hill in the morning sunlight.

"At this moment her heart is as warm towards me as mine is towards her; she would live with me here in this humble cottage for the asking! Yet before the evening probably he will have come; and then she will despise me."

This reflection, constantly repeated by Henchard to himself, accompanied him everywhere through the day.

To the east of Casterbridge lay moors and meadows, through which much water flowed. The wanderer in this direction, who should stand still for a few moments on a quiet night, might hear singular symphonies from these waters, as from a lampless orchestra, all playing in their sundry tones, from near and far parts of the moor.

Henchard, however, leaving the town by the east road, proceeded to the second, or stone bridge, and thence struck into this path of solitude, following its course beside the stream till the dark shapes of the Ten-Hatches cut the sheen thrown upon the river by the weak lustre that still lingered in the west. In a second or two he stood beside the weir-hole where the water was at its deepest. He looked backwards and forwards, and no creature appeared in view. He then took off his coat and hat, and stood on the brink of the stream with his hands clasped in front of him.

While his eyes were bent on the water beneath there slowly became visible a something floating in the circular pool formed by the wash of centuries; the pool he was intending to make his death-bed. At first it was indistinct, by reason of the shadow from the bank; but it emerged thence, and took shape, which was that of a human body, lying stiff and stark upon the surface of the stream.

The sense of the supernatural was strong in this unhappy man, and he turned away as one might have done in the actual presence of an appalling miracle. He covered his eyes and bowed his head. Without looking again into the stream he took his coat and hat, and went slowly away.

Presently he found himself by the door of his own dwelling. To this surprise, Elizabeth-Jane was standing there. Newson, then, had not even yet returned.

"I thought you seemed very sad this morning," she said, "so I have come again to see you. Not that I am anything but sad myself. But everybody and everything seem against you so; and I know you must be suffering."

He said to her, "Are miracles still worked, do ye think, Elizabeth? I am not a read man. I don't know so much as I could wish. I have tried to peruse and learn all my life; but the more I try to know the more ignorant I seem."

"I don't quite think there are any miracles nowadays," she said.

"No interference in the case of desperate intentions, for instance? Well, perhaps not, in a direct way. Perhaps not. But will you come and walk with me, and I will show you what I mean."

She agreed willingly, and he took her over the highway, and by the lonely path to Ten-Hatches. When they got near the weir he stood still, and asked her to go forward and look into the pool, and tell him what she saw.

She went, and soon returned to him. "Nothing," she said.

"Go again," said Henchard, "and look narrowly."

She proceeded to the river brink a second time. On her return, after some delay, she told him that she saw something floating there; but what it was she could not discern. It seemed to be a bundle of old clothes.

"Are they like mine?" asked Henchard.

"Well—they are. Dear me—I wonder if— Father, let us go away."

"Go and look once more; and then we will get home."

She went back, and he could see her stoop till her head was close to the margin of the pool. She started up, and hastened back to his side.

"Well," said Henchard; "what do you say now?"

"Let us go home."

"But tell me—do—what is it floating there?"

"The effigy," she answered hastily. "They must have thrown it into the river, higher up amongst the willows, to get rid of it in their alarm at discovery; and it must have floated down here."

"Ah—to be sure—the image o' me! But where is the other? Why that one only?... That performance of theirs killed her, but saved me alive!"

Elizabeth-Jane thought and thought of these words, "saved me alive," as they slowly retraced their way to the town; and at length guessed their meaning. "Father!—I will not leave you alone like this!" she cried. "May I live with you, and tend upon you as I used to do? I do not mind your being poor. I would have agreed to come this morning, but you did not ask me."

"May you come to me?" he cried bitterly. "Elizabeth, don't mock me! If you only would come!"

"I will," said she.

"How will you forgive all my roughness in former days? You cannot!"

"I have forgotten it. Talk of that no more."

The next morning the fact turned out to be as Elizabeth-Jane had stated; the effigy was discovered by a cowherd, and that of Lucetta a little higher up in the same stream. But as little as possible was said of the matter, and the figures were privately destroyed.

Despite this natural solution of the mystery, Henchard no less regarded it as an intervention that the figure should have been floating there. Elizabeth-Jane heard him say, "Who is such a reprobate as I! And yet it seems that even I am in Somebody's hand!"

CHAPTER XLII.

But the emotional conviction that he was in Somebody's hand began to die out of Henchard's breast as time slowly removed into distance the event which had given that feeling birth. The apparition of Newson haunted him. He would surely return.

Yet Newson did not arrive. Lucetta had been borne along the churchyard path; Casterbridge had for the last time turned its regard upon her, before proceeding to its work as if she had never lived. But Elizabeth remained undisturbed in the belief of her relationship to Henchard, and now shared his home.

In due time the bereaved Farfrae had learnt the at least proximate cause of Lucetta's illness and death; and his first impulse was naturally enough to wreak vengeance in the name of the law upon the perpetrators of the mischief. Lucetta had confessed everything to him before her death, and it was not altogether desirable to make much ado about her history, alike for her sake, for Henchard's, and for his own.

Henchard and himself mutually forebore to meet. For Elizabeth's sake the former had fettered his pride sufficiently to accept the small seed business which some of the Town Council, headed by Farfrae, had purchased, to afford him a new opening.

Here they settled themselves; and on each day of their lives Henchard anticipated her every wish with a watchfulness in which paternal regard was heightened by a burning, jealous dread of rivalry.

Thus they lived on in the shop overlooking the churchyard, and nothing occurred to mark their days during the remainder of the year. Going out but seldom, and never on a market-day, they saw Donald Farfrae only at rarest intervals, and then mostly as a transitory object in the distance of the street.

"Time, in his own gray style," taught Farfrae how to estimate his experience of Lucetta—all that it was, and all that it was not. He could not but perceive that by the death of Lucetta he had exchanged a looming misery for a simple sorrow. After that revelation of her history, which must have come sooner or later in any circumstances, it was hard to believe that life with her would have been productive of further happiness.

By the end of a year Henchard's little retail seed and grain shop, not much larger than a cupboard, had developed its trade considerably, and the stepfather and daughter enjoyed much serenity in the pleasant, sunny corner in which it stood. The quiet bearing of one who brimmed with an inner activity characterised Elizabeth-Jane at this period.

She had her own way in everything now. In going and coming, in buying and selling, her word was law.

"You have got a new muff, Elizabeth," he said to her one day quite humbly.

"Yes; I bought it," she said.

"Rather costly, I suppose, my dear, was it not?" he hazarded.

"It was rather above my figure," she said quietly. "But it is not showy."

"Oh, no," said the nettled lion, anxious not to pique her in the least.

Some little time after, when the year had advanced into another spring, he paused opposite her empty bedroom in passing it. The present room was much humbler, but what struck him about it was the abundance of books lying everywhere. For the first time he felt a little hurt by what he thought her extravagance, and resolved to say a word to her about it. But, before he had found the courage to speak, an event happened which set his thoughts flying in quite another direction.

Henchard, contrary to his wont, went out one Saturday afternoon towards the market-place, from a curious feeling that he would like to pass a few minutes on the spot of his former triumphs. Farfrae stood a few steps below the Corn Exchange door, and he appeared lost in thought about something he was looking at a little way off.

Henchard's eyes followed Farfrae's, and he saw that the object of his gaze was no sample-showing farmer, but his own stepdaughter, who had just come out of a shop over the way. She, on her part, was quite unconscious of his attention.

Henchard went away, thinking that perhaps there was nothing significant after all in Frafrae's look at Elizabeth-Jane at that juncture.

But the mere thought of separation fevered his spirit much, and in the evening he said, with the stillness of suspense, "Have you seen Mr. Farfrae to-day, Elizabeth?"

Elizabeth-Jane started at the question; and it was with some confusion that she replied "No."

"Oh—that's right—that's right.... It was only that I saw him in the street when we both were there." He was wondering if her embarrassment justified him in a new suspicion—that the long walks which she had latterly been taking had anything to do with the young man.

There was nothing secret in Elizabeth-Jane's movements beyond what habitual reserve induced; and it may at once be owned on her account that she was guilty of occasional conversations with Donald when they chanced to meet. Henchard became aware of this by going to the Ring, and, screened by its enclosure, keeping his eye upon the road till he saw them meet. His face assumed an expression of extreme anguish.

"Of her, too, he means to rob me!" he whispered. "But he has the right. I do not wish to interfere."

Could he have heard such conversation as passed he would have been enlightened thus much:—

He.—"You like walking this way, Miss Henchard—is it not so?"

She.—"Oh yes. I have chosen this road latterly. I have a reason for it."

He.—"And that may make a reason for others."

She (reddening).—"I don't know that. My reason, however, is that I wish to get a glimpse of the sea every day."

He.—"Is it a secret why?"

She (reluctantly).—"Yes."

He.—"Ah, I doubt there will be any good in secrets! A secret cast a deep shadow over my life. And well you know what it was."

Elizabeth admitted that she did, but she refrained from confessing why the sea attracted her.

Henchard vowed that he would leave them to their own devices, put nothing in the way of their courses, whatever they might mean. If he were doomed to be bereft of her, so it must be.

With such a possibility impending he could not help watchfulness. The meetings seemed to become matters of course with them no special days of the week.

Once he was standing behind a wall close to the place at which Farfrae encountered her, and he thought he heard the young man address her as "Dearest Elizabeth-Jane."

Had she lost her heart to any other man in the world than the one he had rivalled, cursed, wrestled with for life in days before his spirit was broken, Henchard would have said, "I am content." But content with the prospect as now depicted was hard to acquire.

There is an outer chamber of the brain in which thoughts unowned, unsolicited, and of noxious kind are sometimes allowed to wander for a moment prior to being sent off whence they came. One of these thoughts sailed into Henchard's ken now.

Suppose he were to communicate to Farfrae the fact that his betrothed was not the child of Michael Henchard at all—legally, nobody's child; how would that correct and leading townsman receive the information? He might possibly forsake Elizabeth-Jane, and then she would be her step-sire's own again.

Henchard shuddered, and exclaimed, "God forbid such a thing! Why should I still be subject to these visitation of the Devil, when I try so hard to keep him away?"

(To be Continued.)

KATE GREENAWAY.

Every one has heard the name of Kate Greenaway, the talented English artist, who has done more to revolutionize children's dress than any other living woman. No woman is better known in England and in America than she, and yet no woman's personal life and habits are less known and talked of than hers. The reason of this lies in the fact that she regards her private life as something sacred to herself and her friends, and has never allowed any one to interview her, and refrains from accepting attentions and entertainments that would bring her into a conspicuous position. She lives, however, in an old and picturesque house, in the neighbourhood of Hampstead Heath, and has her studio here on the top floor, a large, well-lighted and cosy room. Its long windows open out into a balcony, where Miss Greenaway loves to sit on pleasant days. She is most industrious, and to her hard work, originality, and love for children, is attributed her great success. Like every other successful man and woman, Kate Greenaway toiled long and earnestly before fame smiled upon her. First she studied at the art school in South Kensington, and next at the life classes at Heatherley's another famous London studio, and at the Slade school. When her first pictures were exhibited at the Dudley gallery they attracted some attention and much praise, and it was after this that Miss Greenaway devoted herself to illustrating children's books, and to designing Christmas, birthday, and dinner cards, menus, and all kinds of pretty and artistic novelties. A collection of pretty colored sketches of children dressed in the quaint, old-fashioned gowns of a century ago, published under the title of, "Under the Window," brought her fame. This was not only confined to the artistic brotherhood, but fashion quickly recognised the charm and style of these picturesque costumes and adopted them. Until then children had been overdressed or unattractively dressed, and the beautiful and numerous fashions in dainty gowns and cloaks and hats, which combine sensible comfort and warmth with aesthetic taste in color and form, all date from Miss Kate Greenaway's efforts fifteen years ago.

MME. CALVE.

Calve, the Carmen of the century, superb Calve, is a boxer of no mean ability. She can "hit, step and get away" after the most approved fashion. In her personal luggage she always carries a stout inflatable bag, with the hooks and elastic straps, by which at a moment's notice, it may be put in position. Instead of sanding up before a live antagonist, which might be dangerous, she consens herself with punching a noncompative but active bag. Just half an hour after her cup of coffee, Calve gets into a heavy sweater and a short skirt and merrily proceeds with her warfare until she is in a sort of perspiration which she considers death to adipose. Then after a cold bath she breakfasts and further exercises on a bicycle, of which she is a devoted advocate.

ROUND THE WHOLE WORLD.

WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE GLOBE.

Old and New World Events of Interest Chronicled Briefly—Interesting Happenings of Recent Date.

Nansen is to receive the degree of doctor of science from Cambridge University this month.

Canon Owen, the newly appointed Bishop of St. David's, is a Welsh speaking Welshman.

English Government ordnance and geological survey maps are to be sold hereafter at all Post Offices.

Messrs. Thorneycroft's 30 knot torpedo boat destroyer Fame [illegible] an average of 30,155 knots o[illegible] official trial.

The Star, torpedo boat destroyer, built by the Palmers, made an average of 31.05 knots on her three-hour trial.

Marseilles had a riot in the Grand Theatre the other day because a number of women refused to take off their big hats.

Gen. Cadorna, who commanded the Italian troops when they took possession of Rome in 1870, died recently at the age of 82 years.

Mr. Bancroft, the retired English actor, has made over $15,000 for English hospitals this season by reading Dickens's Christian Carol.

"Madame Tussaud" paid Dr. Nansen $5,000 for the blubber-soaked suit he wore when he met Mr. Jackson on the ice of Franz Josef Land.

Mr. Escomb, the new Premier of Natal, is a London Jew who started as a ready made clothing dealer. After going into bankruptcy, he concluded tha the would be more successful as a lawyer.

An attempt to acclimatize ostriches in South Russia has proved successful. The ostriches born in Russia are much less sensitive to cold than the imported ones, and their plumes are equally good.

Rome's Heralds' College has discovered that the Marchese di Rudini, the Italian Premier, has no right to his title, which belongs to another branch of his family. He is properly only Signor Antonio Starabba.

Two London Italians recently had a bicycle wedding in a Leicester square church. The bride and groom rode on a "sociable" to the church, followed by the guests on twelve sociables and sixteen single bicycles.

Livingstone's tree at old Chitambo, which shaded the spot where his heart is buried, has nearly fallen to pieces. A recent traveller asks that some lasting mark be placed over the spot where the great explorer died.

Sir Richard Burton's book on "Human Sacrifices Among the Sephardim," the Spanish Jews, is about to be published soon in London. It is a thorough investigation of the legend about the killing of Christian children for Jewish religious rites.

Lord Brassey, Governor of South Australia and owner of the "Sunbeam," was thrown from his horse recently, breaking his collar bone and sustaining severe injuries in the chest. He was pitched on his head and the horse rolled over him.

Medical service in the British army seems to be very unpopular. At a recent examination for thirty-five vacancies only thirty-one candidates appeared, though the rule forbidding a man from trying after having failed twice, was suspended.

M. Wilson, the son-in-law of Jules Grevy, who by his corrupt practices caused the retirement of his father-in-law and came near putting an end to the Presidency, now threatens to publish his revelations. They will cause more scandal than even the Panama affair.

Hebrew is springing up again as a living literary language in Eastern Europe. A monthly review is now published at Berlin in the Hebrew language, while Masperò's "Ancient History of the Peoples of the East" has been published in Hebrew by a Warsaw publisher.

Pope Leo's pontifical medals which, according to custom, are struck every two years, are now ready. On one side is the Pope's profile, on the other the figure of Our Lady of the Rosary sitting on a throne with the Christ child on her arm and with the right hand giving a rosary to St. Dominick.

England does not mean that France shall get ahead of her in Negus Menelek's favor without an effort. She has just sent an expedition of army officers to Abyssinia, which includes among its members the Queen's distant relative Count Gleichen, and a son of Lord Salisbury. None of the officers is under six feet tall; one is 6 feet 7 inches, two 6 feet 4, and one 6 feet 3.

True manna has been found on a blue grass in Queensland. It appears on the nodes of the stems in masses as large as marbles. It is sweet, and nearly three parts of it consist of mannite, which, though sweet, is not a sugar. It also contains a ferment which has the power to decompose cane sugar without evolving carbonic acid or any king of gas. The grass is not only indigenous in Australia, but it is found also in tropical Asia and Africa.

A GREAT WEDDING DAY.

Ten thousand one hundred and one weddings were once celebrated simultaneously at Susa, which at one time was the metropolis of the Persian Empire. Alexander the Great, having conquered Persia, wished to unite victors and vanquished by the strongest ties possible, and therefore decreed these weddings. Alexander himself married Statira, the daughter of Darius; 100 of his chief officers were united in wedlock to ladies from the noblest Persian families, while 10,000 of the Greek soldiers were married to 9,000 Persian women.

FRISIAN LEGENDS.

The North Frisians are very unmerciful to people who don't marry. One of their legends says that after death old maids are doomed to cut stars out of the sun when it has sunk below the horizon, and the ghosts of the old bachelors must fix them up in the sky, running, like lamplighters, up and down a ladder all night.