Lady Scattermount's Jewels.

"Good morning, Sir James," exclaimed Lady Scattermount, as she entered her husband's study one morning after breakfast. "I hope you slept better last night?"

"Humph!" grunted Sir James, looking up suspiciously from his paper. "What do you want now?"

"How mistrustful you are, my dear!" observed his wife, placing her ample, but well-preserved figure in the nearest armchair. "What should I want? Is it not natural for me to take an interest in your health?"

"Perhaps it is; but it is far more natural for you to take an interest in my purse."

"My dear Sir James!" exclaimed her ladyship, reproachfully.

"How often do I see you, except when you want money, I should like to know?"

"Well, my dear, you are so excessively studious, and have so frequently desired that you should not be disturbed, that, of course, we do not worry you unless we are obliged to."

"Oh, yes; I dare say, you are wondeffully thoughtful of my comfort," remarked the old gentleman, satirically; "still I shall feel obliged if you will come to the point. What do you want?"

"Only a little cheque, dear," replied Lady Scattermount.

"What more money!" cried Sir James, angrily. "Certainly not."

"But, my dear——," commenced her ladyship.

"There are no 'buts,' about it," interrupted her husband. "Your extravagance is ruining me, and I will not submit to it."

"I only want a hundred pounds," pleaded her ladyship.

"Only a hundred pounds!" repeated Sir James, becoming more and more irate. "Only a hundred pounds! And what do you want that for, pray?"

"To pay Morton's bill and one or two other little accounts which are overdue."

"It's false, madam! It's false!" exclaimed the old gentleman, pulling out a solid leather-covered note-book. "Fortunately, I always keep a record of these little things, and—er—er—yes, here we are. You had a hundred and twenty pounds on the seventeenth, only three weeks ago, to pay Morton's bill and other small accounts."

"My dear Sir James, what is the use of being so particular with regard to a few pounds?" expostulated her ladyship. "You have plenty, and you cannot possibly take it with you."

"No; but I can prevent you wasting it while I live," answered Sir James, spitefully; "and by Heaven, so I will! You don't have any money from me today, madam, to pay your gambling debts."

"Lady Scattermount changed colour a little, which was visible, even through her make-up, but she did not lose her self-possession.

"And pray, how do you know that I want the money to pay gambling debts with?"

"Ah, I know," replied her husband," with a malicious chuckle; "I am getting on in years, but you needn't think I'm silly. Oh, dear no, not by any means. I know all about it."

"Well, what if you do?" retorted her ladyship, defiantly, "I must have some amusement; I can't sit reading silly old books and papers day after day all the year round, as you do."

"Well, you may make up your mind that you are not going to waste my money at the gambling table, and so I should advise you to find some less expensive amusement."

"Don't be too hard, Sir James," answered his wife, warningly. "Remember that by your harshness you have driven your only son out ofthe house. Don't compel your wife to seek refuge with strangers also."

"There is no fear of you, 'seeking a refuge with strangers,' Lady Scattermount. I only wish there was a chance of it; but you are far too clever for that," responded Sir James, with a mocking smile. "And as to my poor boy George, if you will take the trouble to recollect, it was you who caused me to turn him out—and as I have often thought since—on very insufficient evidence, for being a spendthrift and a gambler."

"Insufficient evidence, Sir James," repeated her ladyship, angrily. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that a young man who has a very small allowance may visit a money-lender to obtain an advance for other purposes besides gambling, and that possibly a young man's stepmother is not the most unprejudiced witness against him who could be found."

Lady Scattermount glared at her lord and master in silence for about a minute, and then, in a husky voice, inquired—

"Are you going to let me have this money?"

"No; I am not," replied her husband; "and you may take that as final."

"Very well, then," said her ladyship; and, clenching her teeth and compressing her lips, she quitted the room, not forgetting to bang the door after her, in the most approved method introduced by the angry woman.

It was the old, old, tale of faults on both sides. Sir James was economical even to meanness, while her ladyship was lavish even to extravagance. The old gentleman would not entertain at home, nor would he accompany her to any place of amusement; nevertheless, he would not acknowledge that he was to blame when she made friends for herself who led her into evil ways. Lady Scattermount was seated in her bedroom on the arm of the couch, biting her thumb nail and swinging one foot to and fro, as she endeavoured to think out the problem of how she was to raise sufficient money to pay the Dowager Lady Mingery the ninety-two pounds which she had lost to her the previous evening at the house of a mutual friend. One suggestion after another arose, only to be dismissed as useless or impracticable, when suddenly her wandering glance fell upon her mahogany jewel case, which was standing on the chest of drawers.

"There's enough there to raise the money on over and over again," she thought; "and I have had such bad luck lately that it must change soon, and then I could redeem them."

Jumping up she opened the jewel-case, and began to look over the contents—rings, brooches, earrings, pendants, bracelets, and necklaces of rubies, sapphires, pearls, diamonds, and other precious stones.

"Why shouldn't I?" she thought; "it's all his fault." And, as she hesitated, she happened to remember that since she had left her room the sweep had been employed there—in fact, on her return from her unsuccessful visit to her husband, she had disturbed the housemaid, who was cleaning up the grate.

Surely the Evil One must have put the idea into her head, but she seized upon it at once.

Obtaining her handbag, she transferred the whole of the contents of her jewel case, closing the lid after her, but leaving the key in the lock. Then, proceeding to the fireplace, she stretched her arm up the chimney and pressed her hand against the sooty side, carefully holding back her sleeve so that it should not be soiled. She then returned to the chest of drawers and made two or three blurred marks on the white mat on which the jewel case was standing.

Having washed her hands and emptied the basin, her ladyship descended to the drawing room, and ringing the bell ordered a cab to be fetched.

"Tell him to drive to the Marble Arch," she said to her servant as he closed the door of the vehicle.

On her arrival she paid the driver, and, waiting a few minutes, called another cab, and gave the coachman an address not far from Lincoln's-inn-fields.

"Jonas Dingle, Solicitor," was the name on the door-post, and, entering the office, Lady Scattermount inquired if Mr. Dingle was in.

"Yes, madam," replied the clerk; "what name shall I say?"

Her ladyship hesitated a few moments. What name should she give? She had been Mrs. Berger when she had previously had dealings with this man, so she gave the clerk that name.

Jonas Dingle was a human spider, but the years of money-lending, which had turned his face into a mask and his heart into stone, could not prevent his eyes sparkling with malicious pleasure when he perceived who his visitor was.

"Good morning, Mr. Dingle," said her ladyship, seating herself opposite the solicitor, "I am in a little temporary difficulty, so I have come to you to borrow some money on good security."

"Oh! it's my Lady Scattermount, is it? Well, well, I never thought I should have seen you again. You didn't treat me well, you know, considering that I found you the money to get married with! Very shabby! Very shabby! However, business is business. How much do you want, and what is the security?"

The proceedings did not occupy any length of time, for Dingle was a good judge of stones, and in a few minutes Lady Scattermount departed with a cheque for five hundred pounds, and the clerk was called in from the outer office to make an inventory of her jewels.

On her return home she found that lunch was waiting for her, and Sir James ready to commence; so, instead of going upstairs to take her things off, she removed her hat and mantle in the dining-room, and sent for her maid to take them away.

"Oh—and here, Jane," she observed, handing the woman a couple of bracelets and a brooch, "place these in my jewel-case and bring me the keys."

"What's the use of having a jewel-case unless you keep it locked I should like to know?" snarled Sir James.

"I forgot them this morning, dear," answered her ladyship, sweetly.

"Forgot! You are always forgetting something! It's lucky for you that your head is properly fastened on, or else——."

"Oh, my lady, they're all gone!" cried the maid, bursting into the room.

"All gone!" repeated Lady Scattermount, in horror-stricken tones. "Impossible!"

"The jewel case is empty, my lady, and there isn't even as much as a ring left."

Sir James dropped his knife and fork, and looked for a moment as though he was going to choke. Recovering himself with an effort, he exclaimed. "Don't sit there like a dummy, woman! You've lost the jewels through your own carelessness, and the least you can do is to try and recover them! Send to Scotland-yard at once, and inform the police."

In a little over an hour Inspector Drillett, of the C.I.D., was surveying the scene of the theft, and after due deliberation he turned to her ladyship's maid and inquired—

"Have you had the sweep here lately?"

"Yes; he swept this chimney this morning," was the reply.

"I thought so," observed the detective, pulling out his note-book, "Just oblige me with his name and address, please."

"I think we've got the party, m'lady," he continued, turning to Lady Scattermount. "But p'raps it will be as well, just for satisfaction's sake, to have a look over the house, and inspect the servants' boxes."

Amid a vast amount of only half-concealed indignation, the C.I.D. officer slowly went from one room to another, until he found himself in a small chamber at the top of the house. Here he discovered something that seemed to interest him, and he inquired—

"Whose room is this?"

"Miss Millet's," was the reply, "The young person who reads to Sir James, and writes his letters."

"Tell her I want to see her."

In a few minutes Rose Millet, a blue-eyed, golden-haired young woman of about four-and-twenty, made her appearance, not a little upset by the imperative message.

"Is this yours?" asked the detective, holding up a large gold locket, which had the Scattermount crest in enamel on the back, and the initial J. S. in rubies, surrounded by diamonds, on the front.

Miss Millet became very white, but in a low voice succeeded in answering "Yes, it is."

"Where did you get it from?" inquired the officer, with increasing severity.

"I—I—I can't tell you," replied the poor girl, now growing as fiery red as she had previously been pale.

"Then it is my painful duty to arrest you on suspicion," said the inspector. "You are my prisoner."

Lady Scattermount did not care who suffered, so long as suspicion did not rest upon her; and Sir James beyond gumbling at the inconvenience attending the loss of his amanuensis, did nothing to prevent Rose's removal, so in due course she found herself in Holloway gaol.

As soon as she had recovered from the shock she obtained writing-paper and envelopes, and indited the following epistle:—

"My own dearest George,—

"I have been locked up on suspicion of stealing Lady Scattermount's jewels, and all because the detectives found the locket you gave me in my room, and I wouldn't tell him where I got it from, because you made me promise not to. Oh, dear, George! do please come and take me out of this horrible place, or I am sure I shall go mad. With many kisses, ever your own loving Rose."

George Scattermount had read this for the third time that morning, as he sat on the high stoll facing the counter consuming his lunch at the City restaurant, when a young fellow entered, and, taking the next stool to him, observed "Hallo, Geiorge! How are you, my boy? I saw your charming stepmother yesterday. She came into our show to raise the necessary on her jewels."

"Good Heavens! you don't mean it," exclaimed George, trembling with excitement. "Tell me all about it, old fellow."

Then his friend, who was Joseph Dingle's clerk, entered into full particulars of her ladyship's visit of the previous day.

Hastily thanking him, George hurried away and jumping into a cab, drove to his father's house, taking care to dismiss the vehicle at the corner of the street out of respect for his father's economical feelings.

Sir James was at home and would see his son, so George was shown in; and, without beating about the bush, he at once enlightened his father as to the whereabouts of the family jewels.

Sir James turned as many colours as a dying dolphin, and then, holding out his hand to his son, observed—

"I have been thinking lately that perhaps I did you an injustice, George, in condemning you unheard. Now tell me, my boy, what did you want money for so badly as to compel you to seek the assistance o fa money-lender?"

"I didn't want it, father," replied George. "It was for Lady Scattermount. She begged me to help her, and I promised to say nothing about it."

"Oh, that is too much," exclaimed Sir James. "But there is one thing more which requires explanation. How did Miss Millet got hold of that locket which was your poor dear mother's I would have sworn that girl was the soul of honesty."

"So she is, father," answered George. "I gave it to her when she promised to be my wife, but as I did not want the engagement known I told her not to mention it."

"Well, well! Upon my word! You sly dog, you! Not but what you might do a great deal worse. She is a good girl, and not at all extravagant."

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Lady Scattermount no wresides at Monte Carlo, where she is a well-known habitue of the tables; while George and Rose have set up housekeeping for themselves in a little villa them periodical visits, and gives his at Richmond, where Sir James pays daughter-in-law lectures on the economical rearing of babies.

FROST ON SHOW WINDOWS.

A jeweler, who found that the frost on his show-windows interfered for some hours of the day with the inspection of his wares, by the passers-by, took a 1-4-inch pipe of brass, bored small holes in it about 1 inch apart, and after bending the pipe to fit the bottom of the window, fastened it to the sash around the lower edge of the glass. Then, attaching a flexible tube from one end to the gas fixture, he turned on the gas. The light from the little gas jets warmed up the window and the frost disappeared. The lights also served indirectly as an advertisement, and any number of people looked at the window in passing who would never have glanced that way but for the unwonted line of lights. The same object is frequently gained by having a small electric fan motor in a display window. It also serves a double purpose, keeping the air in the window in motion, and so preventing the deposit of frost on the glass and catching the eye of pedestrians by the perpetual movement of the fan blades.

SOLDIERS' BEDS.

Different Kinds That Are Used in European Armies.

The soldier's bed varies notably in the different European armies. According to Dr. Viry, the following are the principal varieties, in which, perhaps, we may see the reflection of national characteristics, says the Medical Record. In England the bed is hard; the soldier lies on a thin mattress that rests on canvas stretched over a frame. In Spain the soldier has only a straw bed, but he is allowed besides this a pillow, two sheets, two blankets, and a covered quilt, sometimes even a cover for the feet. It is almost sybaritic. In Germany and Austria he has a simple straw bed with one or two covers, neither sheet nor mattress. In Russia, until recently, the soldier slept with his clothes on, on a camp bed; but now ordinary beds begin to be used—the result of contact with more civilized countries. After this, it cannot be doubted that the French soldier's bed is the best of all, with its wooden or iron bedstead, a straw bed, a wool mattress, sheets, a brown woolen coverlet, and an extra quilt for cold weather, Thus the bed of the French soldier is the softest of all soldiers' beds, as that of the French peasant is acknowledged also to be the best of all European countries.

DEPARTMENTAL STORES.

THE BAD EFFECT THEY ARE HAVING ON COUNTRY TRADE.

Toronto and Montreal Millionaires Trying to Control the Trade of Canada—Small Store-Keepers Being Driven out of Business—Hurting Real Estate—The People Have the Remedy in Their Own Hands.

The time has arrived when people must make up their minds either to submit to a condition of affairs in which a few millionaires in Toronto and Montreal will do all the retail store trade of the Dominion of Canada, or there must be an uprising of public sentiment against the great departmental store monopolies. As it stands now the retail merchants in Toronto are being destroyed and there is not a town or village in the Province that has not had its local trade injured by the great stores in Toronto, while at the same time, and despite that reputation for cheapness which has been built up by each store at an expense of $20,000 or $30,000 a year for newspaper advertising, no corresponding benefit has been conferred upon the city of Toronto as a trade centre nor upon the people who do the buying. Like any other monopoly this octopus is in the interests of the monopolists.

Whether a man lives in Toronto, in a large town, or on a farm, he is dependent in a measure upon his neighbor. When one dies and the man who lived next door comes forward and says, "He was a good neighbor," there remains very little more to be said about the deceased in the way of praise. No higher certificate of character could very well be given. The man next door had "neighboured" with him in the back yard as well as on the front stoop and if there had been anything nasty about the late lamented gentleman the man next door would have found it out to his cost. A good neighbor is one who does not steal your wood, nor poison your dog, nor smash the fence for kindling, nor make noises in the night, nor let his hens into your flowed-beds, nor tell tales of your private affairs. A good neighbor is one with whom you are on reciprocal terms in all the courtesies of life—exchange for each other's advantage all sorts of conveniences, doing for each other many thoughtful little things.

A good neighbor does not merely stand on his own lot and refrain from doing you injury. You work each other mutual good. If your house catches fire he rushes in and warns you. He piles in with an enthusiasm equal to your own to quench the fire or to save your goods from loss.

He does this because he knows you well, likes you and has your real welfare at heart. Moreover, your welfare and his own are inseparably locked together, because if your house is burned down his own will almost undoubtedly be consumed also. Even if his house is far enough away to be out of danger, the value of his home will be reduced if your house is replaced by a cellar full of ashes and burnt timbers. The proprietor of the departmental store is not your neighbor.

Let me illustrate what I mean by a case right here in Toronto, but one which is exactly parallel with a town or village or a community of any kind anywhere in Ontario. Ten years ago there were great stretches of commons lying north, east and west of what was then the city of Toronto. Since then, these commons have been built up with residences and places of business. Take Spadina avenue north of Knox College for instance. That was open country not long ago—now it is a town of itself. Those who own property there are interested in the values of lands and houses. Those who live there are interested in the conveniences of the neighborhood. The drug store is a convenience. If a member of the family takes ill in the night, you can go there and rouse the druggist from your sleep to get you what is needed. If you wish to find anyone's address you go to the drug store to consult the city directory. You wish his telephone now and then; you buy postage stamps there. He is a member of your church near by and contributes to its support. He pays local improvement taxes and helps to make the street smooth for your carriage or your bicycle. He is your neighbor. You are useful to each other in ways you do not pause to consider.

Yet when you go to a departmental store to buy your perfumes, or soaps, or patent medicines a few cents cheaper than he offers them, you destroy the vitality of your own neighborhood. If his business declines he must reduce his expenditures; he must give less to the local church and its schemes; less to local charities; he must shut his hand. If he is forced to assign, the local butcher and baker get only 30c. on the dollar for what he owes them. Then they, too, must hedge and scrape to make up this loss. But perhaps you or your son or your brother may clerk in a downtown wholesale where that druggist had an account. That wholesale house gets only 30c. on the dollar from that druggist, and ten other druggists having similarly been forced to assign in ten other parts of the city, it follows that the wholesale house must assign also, and all its clerks and travelers be thrown out of employment. The trade cannot absorb them all. The rate of salaries is reduced by the fact that these expert applicants are trying to wedge in somewhere. One wholesale failure causes other houses to cut down expenses—they grow timid and parsimonious. They dismiss a couple of travelers. They double up work in the office and let men go. To follow through all their ramifications the consequences of these failures would be impossible, but it is safe to say this, that a tremor goes through every part of the business body of this city of Toronto.

The policy that can thus kill a drug store can kill off any other kind of local store, and the injury is almost as great. The concern that was patronized in preference to the local stores has no memory for faces. You may deal there twenty years, yet if you lose your situation and are penniless in the middle of winter you could not get a loaf of bread on credit. Whether you flourish or perish is all one to the unseen power that owns the departmental store. It recognizes only one face—the face of the Queen on coin of the realm.

Take a town fifty miles from Toronto. If you pay the local merchant ten dollars for an overcoat, perhaps he pays it to the doctor for attendance, he to the druggist for drugs, he to the butcher for meat, he to the farmer for mutton, he to a laborer for digging a well, he to another, and so that ten-dollar bill serves the purposes of trade in and around that town indefinitely. But if you send it away to a departmental store for an overcoat, that other overcoat lies on the local merchant's shelf, and that ten dollar-bill may never again enter your community.

The real value of this point lies in the fact that the profit in the sale of the overcoat goes to an institution in a distant city—an institution that has nothing in common with you—and that profit is lost to the merchant who helps to keep up your schools and churches, your sidewalks and roads, the man to whom you can appeal in an emergency to play the part of a neighbor.

In the year 1870 less than 19 per cent. of the population of Canada dwelt in cities, and in 1890 the rate had grown to nearly 29 per cent.

This change was largely due to the development of agricultural machinery no doubt, yet if rural Ontario is to be deprived of a large and ever growing percentage of its people, and if on top of this the cities are to draw away from the dwindling towns and villages an ever-increasing share of their shrinking trade; and if the cities, growing ever more populous and dominant in the trade of the whole province, are to contain only three or four mammoth stores instead of three or four hundred, have we not here all the materials for such a monopoly as the world has never seen?

The monopoly of the mercantile trade that is doing so much harm to the towns of Ontario is conferring no benefit upon Toronto, because the profits go into the hands of only two or three firms. It is doing no good to the deluded people who are giving their trade by mail to departmental stores because the towns they live in are losing vitality and they are unable to make as good a living as they used to do. No business in a town is so prosperous, no land is as valuable as it was, whether built upon or vacant. Farm property falls in value as the prosperity of the nearest town or village wanes.—Mack in Toronto Saturday Night.

BONHEUR'S CAREER.

Rosa Bonheur has just published her autobiography in Paris. It appears that before she took to painting she was apprenticed to a dressmaker. Then she began coloring kaleidoscopic views. Her first picture was a bunch of cherries. Later on she made copies in the Louvre, where her strange costumes and independent airs won for her the nickname of "The Little Hussar."

The "Little Hussar" grew rapidly. In 1853 Rosa Bonheur exhibited the "Horse Fair," which was bought by M. Gambard for 40,000 francs. It was exhibited in the United States, and brought in 300,000 francs.

"In 1858," she says, "I bought the property of By in the heart of the forest of Fontainebleau, where I still live to-day. I gave 50,000 francs for it and built a big studio. The Emperor gave me permission to hunt in the forest around my own park. I lived there happily, receiving the visits of a few intimate friends, and working as well as I could. In 1865 I was busy one afternoon with my pictures. I had upon my easel the "Stags in the Long Rocker," when I heard the cracking of a postillon's whip and the rolling of a carriage. My little maid, Olive, rushed into the apartment in a state of excitement.

"'Mademoiselle! Mademoiselle!' she exclaimed, 'Her Majesty the Empress!'

"I had just time enough to put a petticoat over my trousers and to take off my long blue blouse and replace it with a velvet jacket.

"'I have here,' said the Empress, 'a little jewel which I bring to you on the part of the Emperor. He authorizes me to announce to you your enrollment in the Legion of Honor.'

"The Empress kissed the new knight and placed the cross upon the black velvet jacket. A few days afterward I received an invitation to dine at the imperial court in Fontainebleau. On the appointed day they sent a gala carriage for me. I went to the wrong door when I arrived, and came near losing my way, when M. Mocquard came to my relief by giving me his arm. I was seated beside the Emperor, and during the entire repast he spoke to me about the intelligence of animals. Then the Empress brought me out upon the lake.

"At Fontainebleau I live like a peasant. I get up early and go to bed late. Every morning at an early hour I make a tour of the garden with my dog, and after that take a drive in my pony cart, in the forest of Fontainebleau. At 9 o'clock I am seated before my easel, and work till 11.30. Then I breakfast very simply, smoke a cigarette, and glance over the newspapers. I take my brushes again at 1 o'clock, and at 5 o'clock I make another excursion. I love to see the setting sun behind the great trees of the forest. My dinner is as modest as my breakfast. I finish the day by reading. I prefer the books on travel, hunting, and history.

"Before commencing a picture I study my subject thoroughly, preparing myself for it by an attentive and careful observation of nature. I seek the kind of sky and land suitable to my idea, and I never make a single feature before studying it. My only guide is the desire to reach truth and simplicity as closely as possible. Study and work never tire me. They are to-day, as they have been during all my life, my greatest happiness, because assiduous work is the only thing that will bring one near the solution of the problem, which is perhaps insoluble, of ever-changing nature. It is a problem which, more than any other, elevates the mind by filling it with thoughts of justice, goodness and charity."