A LEGAL SECRET.

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Pilkington's wife sank back in her chair, deeply perplexed, with the packet still clasped in her hands. How could the awakening of distrust in her husband bring happiness to her? She had married him when she was barely seven-and-twenty, and he was then past the prime of life—sixty or more. But his love for her—she had always felt that—was one of genuine devotion If he had a fault it was one which most women will condone; he was jealous of every look or word she bestowed on others. But in his constant effort to conquer this weakness—the only weakness in his character—he had gained her admiration.

After a moment's silence, while looking thoughtfully at the packet, she spoke in a low voice. "Let these letters be destroyed," said she, casting a glance at the fire. "I feel that to read them would be to raise some barrier between us. I have had one great trouble; I could not bear another."

The lawyer made no reply; but a quaint expression passed over his face, as if his wife's words had touched him more deeply than was intended.

"I could not bear," she resumed, "to believe you distressed with the thought that in keeping one secret from me you had lessened my affection for you. Let me imagine—whether right or wrong—that your motive was a good one. It must have been! Few men have keener judgment. In your wisdom and supreme knowledge of the world, you decided to do what you have done; you have kept this one deed—whatever it may be—hidden from me. Let it be forgotten." And as she spoke she rose from her chair, and stepping quickly towards the hearth, knelt down before the fire and dropped the packet into the blaze. "There!" said she. "It is forgotten. There is no secret that divides us now."

Mr. Pilkington in his motionless attitude watches the flames. The red tape which binds the packet grows black and breaks asunder; and then the scorched letters partially unfold themselves, and expose to view detached sentences and syllables as they curl into grotesque shapes. He never takes his eyes off the fire, but sits there lost in thought, even when every flimsy particle has sunk among the red-hot coals and vanished.

Took's Court, Chancery Lane, has not a very sunny outlook even on the brightest of days; it is shut in on all sides, except at the narrow entrance, by tall antique houses with dusty shelves over their doorways and dusty stone steps below. The open window-shutters, begrimed with many coatings of London smoke, are fastened by rusty hooks against the walls. A dull wintry patch of sky hangs overhead; and from there a twilight falls upon hurrying figures—with their echoing footsteps and flitting shadows—passing in and out of this old courtyard. When the evening becomes still more gloomy, and the patch of sky is a mere patch of black, a dismal street lamp in the centre of the Court throws a glimmer through its dusty panes upon the houses on each side; and where the blinds are not yet drawn, and there is no stronger light to oppose it, this modest gleam enters a room quite boldly. There is one room in particular, in which a young girl is seated over a cheerless fire, where this ghost of a light looks in; and it only seems to add to the cheerless surroundings. For the room is small, dingy, and threadbare in appearance. The carpet is worn in places almost to the boards; and there are splashes of ink on the floor, and even on the walls, as if a shower of writing fluid had recently fallen.

Although simply dressed in a dark serge, the girl appears out of place in the midst of such obvious poverty. There is little in her look and manner to suggest contentment, or even submission. The knitted brow, the curl of the pretty lips, the expressive pressure of the fingers against the dark hair, indicate a self-willed and sensitive nature; and so absorbed is she in her own thoughts, that neither the sound of a peculiar step in the courtyard, nor even the rattling of a latchkey in the door attracts her attention. It is only when a lean, shabby-looking man with a xwizened face comes in that the girl starts and glances up. She tries bravely to hide her dejection with a little laugh as she holds out her hand to welcome him to a place beside her on the hearth.

"Dreaming again, Rosa?"—and while speaking, the man sat down before the fire and began to warm his hands. "Dreaming again?" His tone, although reproachful, was not wanting in affection.

"I was wondering," said she, while stroking a large black cat on the hearthrug at her feet, "whether the impressions of my childhood—the time seems so distant—could be mere fancy? How old was I dad, when you first took me in?"

The man regarded Rosa thoughtfully. "How old? Between five and six.—But I can't fix a date, my dear," he added; "that's impossible. Your birthday, you know, wasn't spoken of." Pausing a moment to tap a little wooden box, he extracted a pinch of snuff and then resumed, as though speaking to himself; "No; he was a reticent party, he was" —and he shook his head at the recollection—"a very reticent party indeed."

"Twelve years ago," said Rosa—"twelve years to-day?"

"This very day. Twelve years this afternoon, my dear, since he left you under our care. And that's why," he added, "we call this your birthday."

And now, as he shifted his seat to the table and leant over a portable desk with his back to the window, it became apparent that he and this little parlor must have grown inky and threadbare together. The man's face was sallow and creased like parchment that has been kept in the dusty corner or a lawyer's office for years;. and his scanty hair was of a gray dingy color that might have belonged to a dusty corner too. And yet the man's appearance could scarcely have failed to awaken sympathy. It was kindly in expression, and there was something irresistibly pathetic in the gray watery eyes.

"Then I am seventeen to-day," said the girl— "or am I eighteen? I think I must be eighteen, dad," she went on in a thoughtful mood, "for some of my dreams as you call them, seem like reality.—What was the gentleman like?"

"The party was keen-featured." Then he added musingly: "I shouldf know him again among a thousand."

"He never told you my name?"

"Why, no. You told us that," said the man. "Mother asked you as soon as he was gone. "Rosa," says you.—But as to your surname, we never could make that out."

"Ah! If we only knew my name," said the girl in a low voice, "you would have found out long ago whether the home which I have so often told you about was really mine; and whether that beautiful face—a face bending over my pillow at night—was the face of my own mother. It sometimes seems to me as if it must have been true," she added, with a look of discontent returning to her face. "Is it not a shame, if my parents are rich that I should live in such poverty as this?"

The old man looked troubled. He took a quill pen from behind his ear and began to stroke his chin agitatedly, and looked at the girl and then at his desk. "Rosa," said he, presently breaking the silence, "what is the use, my dear, of thinking so much about the past? It leads to no good; it only makes one wretched.—Not that I've any right to expect," he added in an almost humble tone, that removed any suspicion of irony, "that a young lady born in the lap of luxury—if I may so express myself—could easily lead herself to take a much brighter view of this life. Before we came to town—before mother died—there were fields to run about in, and you were younger. But there's a bit of garden in New Square, just across Chancery Lane; and there's Lincoln's Inn Fields hard by; and when one listens to the sparrows, though it ain't much of a song, it makes one fancy, as the birds must do, that the spring ain't very far off now."

The brightening hopeful look on the careworn features which accompanied these words brought a smile to Rosa's lips. She left her seat and went and laid her hand tenderly on the man's shoulder. "Daddy," said she, with a repentant look, "I will try to be more reasonable; I will try to think less about my sunny childhood. I always get dreaming more on my birthday, as we call it, than any other time. Don't I?"

The man nodded and smiled.

"But, daddy, I was not thinking altogether about myself," she went on, "though I know I'm very selfish; I was thinking, if I could find my beautiful mother, that I could tell her what a father you had been to me; and she would make you rich and happy."

"Would she? Ah, my dear," said the man shaking his head incredulously, "you don't know the world.—But I'm forgetting," he suddenly added, with a glance towards the window. "I'm expecting a visitor; he may be here at any moment!"

"A visitor?"

"I've been calling, as I was advised, at Pilkington's," the man explained, "and"—

"Pilkington?" She spoke scarcely above a whisper. "How that name reminds me of my old home."

"And," the man continued, scarcely heeding the interruption, "the junior partner, Mr. Trench, being too busy to see me, sent out a message to say that as soon as he was disengaged he would step over and have a talk about the work. There's a vacancy in the office; and it looks very much as if I should get the post."

This was good news. For the last few weeks the poor clerk had been out of employment, and his slender savings were exhausted. He had confessed to Rosa only yesterday that the last shilling had been changed, and that unless he got work they would have to face a serious situation. But he did not lose heart; he assured her that it was better to laugh over their trouble—even though it might mean starvation—than break down in tears as she had done.

Rosa thought of his words now, as she stood at the window and looked out into the dismal Court; and while she still stood there, she heard a quick step below, and saw a young man with a frank, handsome face stop at their door and raise the knocker. She could see him glancing up at her by the street lamp.

Sidney Trench—for it was he—having knocked at the old house in Took's Court, again glanced towards the window; and the glimpse he gained of the girl by the dim light thrown upon her set him wondering. Where had he seen that pretty dark face before? Next moment the door opened and the dark face was looking up inquiringly at him. And now, so familiar did her whole appearance seem to Sidney, that he could scarcely suppress a smile of recognition. Where had they met, and when? These questions rose to his lips; but he could not give them utterance. He could only look at the girl in silent wonder and admiration. It was like a dream-scene that had flashed through his brain only to vex and bewilder him.

"Do you wish to see Mr. Norris?"

Her voice scarcely recalled him; for it puzzled him too, little else than the face.

"Yes. Does he live here?"

She led the way into the parlor. "He will be with you directly.—Are you Mr. Trench?"

He was standing with his back towards the window. The girl lingered at the door, and was glancing at him with modest curiosity. Was it his fancy or was there a look of recognition in her eyes too? He hastened to answer her.

"My name is Trench—Sidney Trench. Have I the pleasure to address Miss Norris?"

She hesitated a moment before answering; then she looked up into his face and said: "My name is Rosa."

An exclamation nearly escaped him. But at this moment the old clerk came in with a light. It was an antique reading-lamp, of which the glass was broken.

Rosa went out and Abel Norris closed the door.

"Pray be seated, sir;" and Sidney sat down by the fireside where the girl had eben dreaming not many minutes before.

Norris placed himself at his desk; he was more at his ease in that position. Taking the quill from his ear, he dipped it in the ink with some show of energy, such is the force of habit; then he waited for Sidney to speak.

"You have had some years' experience," the young man suggested, "in a lawyer's office?"

"Fifty, sir: fifty years, and one or two to spare."

Sidney scrutinized the clerk's face. "In London?"

"At St. Albans," said Norris, "for over forty years. Since then, we've been wandering here and there; for when mother died"—

"Your wife?"

"That's what I should say—my wife. For when she died," he resumed, "we thought we would seek our fortune, so to speak. We have met with nothing but misfortune."

"I'm sorry to hear that," said Sidney sympathetically; "and I hope your fortune will now mend."

For a moment the young lawyer looked thoughtful. He then resumed: "All that I have heard about you," said he, "makes me anxious, if I can, to serve you. And I would offer you without hesitation a place in our office; but I find it impossible to do so." Sidney Trench, without turning his head, glanced towards the old clerk; for he heard the pen drop from the man's fingers. He now observed that he was pressing his hands to his head in a despairing attitude.

There was a lengthy pause. Sidney felt that after his conversation with Mr. Pilkington, he would be acting decidedly in opposition to his wishes if he engaged this clerk. How, then could he serve one who appeared so deserving? He had roused his interest; and was he not also interested in the dark eyes that had looked up into his face when he came in? The young lawyer turned to the clerk, "Mr. Norris," said he, "I have something to propose. Although I cannot promise, at least not at once, a situation in our office, there is no reason why you should not work here. I want some deeds and other documents copied. Will you undertake to do this for me?"

Norris briskly picked up his pen. "Here, sir, at my desk? It is the method I should prefer."

"Is it? Then you shall begin," said Sidney, "to-morrow morning.—Meanwhile," added the young man, taking a cheque from his pocket, "put this in your desk."

The old clerk could not speak; but his trembling outstretched hand and the tears that sprang to his eyes expressed his gratitude.

"You have no family?" Sidney presently remarked.

"No, sir, none," said Norris; "only Rosa.

Sidney regarded the man keenly. "The young girl who"—he hesitated slightly—"who let me in?"

"Yes."

"Ah," said Sidney, assuming indifference, "a grandchild, perhaps?"

"An adopted daughter."—After a moment's silence, he added: "It's a strange story."

"Indeed?" Sidney looked up inquiringly into the old clerk's face.

Norris became thoughtful; and then in a low voice, as if recalling to mind the incident rather than addressing Sidney Trench, he said: "It was one afternoon, a wintry afternoon, just twelve years ago. I was sitting at my desk at St. Albans—as it might be now—and happening to glance towards the window, I saw an elderly gentleman coming across the road. The gentleman stopped and seeing my wife at the front door spoke to her; and presently they came in together, where I was sitting. My wife was holding a child—a little girl—by the hand." Pausing a moment with the pensive look still on his face, he then resumed. He had placed his snuff-box on the table, but had not mustered the courage yet, in the presence of his new master, to extract a pinch. "A prettier child," said he, "with her dark eyes and thick black hair, I never saw. I took to her at once—fell in love with her, so to speak, at first sight! The gentleman briefly explained his errand. He was going abroad—he did not say for how long, and wanted a home for the child. He had been recommended to call upon us. Would we undertake the charge of this little girl during his absence? He would pay us liberally"——

"Can you recall to mind," interrupted Sidney, "what this gentleman was like?"

"Yes; I shall never forget that," replied Norris. "A stern face, with thick grey eyebrows. I don't remember the eyes, but it was a hard mouth; a hard man, I thought; a reticent man, who seemed to read your character at a glance, and gain your confidence by sheer force of intellect. A more clever face—as I expressed myself to my wife at the time—I never saw."

"What age did he appear?"

"Between sixty and seventy. And I remember thinking—perhaps because I had to do with the law myself—that he must be a member of the legal profession." In an absent-minded manner, Norris took a pinch of snuff, and then concluded: "We accepted the offer gladly enough, for we were very poor. He placed fifty pounds in bank notes in my hand; and he wrote down an address in Paris, and promised that we should soon hear from him again. I posted letters to that address, but never received any asnwer; so at last I ceased writing. We have neither seen nor heard anything of him since."

Sidney now rose and stood on the hearth-rug, with an earnest look on his face. "A mysterious affair. Have you no clue?"

"None. I have even lost the address in Paris."

"How comes it that you call the girl Rosa?"

"Ah! we were just talking about that, sir, before you came. She told us herself that her name was Rosa: and that was all she could tell us, though we questioned her over and over again."

Sidney Trench, thinking over all that he had learnt from Abel Norris, began to recall to mind in a dreamy way his boyhood. He had had a playmate in those days—now twelve years ago—and he had named her his little sweetheart. She was a child, he could well remember. But he had been sent away to a school in Switzerland for three years, and she had gone out of his young life; for when he returned to England she was never spoken of in his presence. But an incident, which had impressed him deeply had one day occurred. Mr. Pilkington had been appointed his guardian by Sidney's father, the late senior partner. It was a grave responsibility. Sidney Trench was very young; and Mr. Pilkington, even at that time, was getting on in years; and should he die, this was when Sidney was fourteen, all the legal secrets, as far as Trench, Pilkington and Trench were concerned would die with him. To read between the lines of legal documents which lay in deed-boxes in every corner of the old house would be impossible; and the calamity, if it came about, could only be compared to the loss of a bunch of keys which could never be replaced; for the clients would take their secrets elsewhere, an dthe great firm would dwindle into comparative significance. The very thought of such a mishap — as Sidney had been thought to believe in his wondering boyhood—was enough to shorten his guardian's life.

(To be Continued.)

EMIGRATION TO BRAZIL.

The Fiasco That Involved Several Hundred of Canadians in Much Suffering.

The attempt to supply in part, the great demand for labor on the coffee plantations of this country by inducing a lot of Canadians to come here with a view to settlement was a complete fiasco, says a Santos, Brazil, correspondent. The disappointed immigrants, with the aid of charity, have returned to their former homes. Instead of a blessing they have been a detriment to Brazil, for the story of their hardships reflects unjustly upon this republic and upon the State of Sao Paulo, which, in particular promoted this immigration.

The coffee planters of this State are sorely in need of a good supply of labor. The negroes were freed eight years ago, and cannot be relied upon to supply nearly all the labor needed. With inadequate labor there has been at the same time an enormous expansion, of coffee planting, and relief has been sought through the encouragement of immigration, the usual method being to pay to an immigration or steamship company a certain sum per head for the immigrants they bring here. Each Canadian who was landed here cost the Government of Sao Paulo $45. In this neighborhood immigration depots were reared at elevations that were

SAFE FROM YELLOW FEVER,

and last year the 87,686 immigrants landing in Sao Paulo received each free board and lodging for eight days, to give them ample opportunity to make arrangements with the crowd of farmers who were anxious to employ them.

More than half of last year's immigrants were Italians. It is found that they do not like farm work and fail to give satisfaction on the plantations. The most of them soon forsake the farms and congregate in the towns, and, like the Chinese, they have no intention of remaining permanently in this country. The immigrants desired are those who intend to keep their savings here and remain permanently in the country. Another disadvantage under which we labor is that, on account of the high price of coffee, agricultural energy has chiefly been devoted to its production, to the neglect of breadstuffs and other food products which we have to import at very high prices.

So the Government decided to try to establish new colonies and give them some assistance in the way of establishing themselves in the business of raising breadstuffs, and vegetables. Most of the Europeans who come here are not desirable for this work, and it was decided to try, if possible, a new race of men. A contract were given to an Italian agency to bring 10,000 Canadians to this country.

It was expected that months would elapse before any of these immigrants arrived, but the company by too glowing and unauthorized promises soon got together about 1,000 persons. The hue and cry that was made about it in Canada frightened more than half of the lot before they sailed, but 471 were finally embarked, and they arrived here early in October last. Great was the disappointment when it was found that they were not the sort of immigrants desired. They embarked from Canada, but there were Arabs, Irish, Italian, and other Old World natives among them. In fact

THEY WERE MOSTLY RIFFRAFF,

collected indiscriminately, and were not at all fitted for the agricultural labor they were expected to engage in.

They had arrived prematurely, the State was not ready to organize the colonies it had in contemplation, and they could not be started with such material in any event. So the party was taken to the usual depot, where coffee planters eagerly sought to employ them. Some of them accepted the work, but many admitted that they were physically unfitted for such service, and insisted upon being assigned to homes with Government aid, according to the promises made them, The Government could do nothing with them on the lines proposed, and finally they were turned out of the depot and had to shift for themselves. After many hardships and privations most of them have succeeded, by public and private aid, in returning to Canada.

So the efforts, thus far, to introduce the Anglo-Saxon are a failure, and it is extremely doubtful if the experiment is worth repeating. There is little probability that the residents of northern regions like Canada can easily adapt themselves to toil in the fields of this hot country.

A BAD CASE.

"You wouldn't believe it, but Grampy has a bad case of swelled head."

"There must be some mistake."

"Not a bit of it. Genuine old-fashioned mumps on both sides."

THE JUBILEE SOUVENIRS.

ALL ENGLAND GOES WILD ON THE QUESTION

Of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee — While the Dealers in These Mementoes of the Event Are Reaping a Golden Harvest.

It is impossible to overestimate the manner in which business is booming in the British Isles, as a direct result of the enormous demands for souvenirs of the coming "Diamond Jubilee" of Queen Victoria, says a London letter. All sorts of traders seem to be preparing for a huge business, and even now there are goods enough actually in the market to suggest doubts as to whether many commercial enthusiasts will not find themselves overstocked.

From jubilee Bibles and prayer books down to jubilee back-hair combs and toothpicks, all sorts of goods are ready for customers or soon will be. Among the prayer books is a handsome volume in four sizes, embellished by two portraits of Her Majesty—one in her yoouth, the other in the imperial dignity of mature womanhood. Four sizes of Bibles are also being prepared, on each of which will be two portraits of

THE QUEEN.

One in which she is wearing the old "poke" bonnet of the early reign, and the other in indoor dress. This latter —of course, unlike the early one—is a reproduction from a photograph, and is a lifelike portrait of the Queen in her widow weeds, seated in an armchair, with a walking stick in hand.

Portraits and busts of Her Majesty are being turned out in every imaginable form. Art pottery establishments are busy in the preparation of vases and other articles. The textile factories of the North are rushing off portraits by the hundreds of thousands in velvet for the making of cushions, and in cheaper material for silk and cotton handkerchiefs.

As to handkerchiefs, they are being reeled off without the slightest reference to the number of noses to be found under the British flag; and if on the forthcoming 22d of June feeling should be so stirred that not a try eye should be found in the whole of John Bull's dominions, there ought to be an ample supply of handkerchiefs for the occasion, if only they get properly distributed. Ingenuity seems to have been taxed to the utmost to make them interesting as well as useful, and a very good historical education could be obtained by the simple device of using a fresh jubilee pocket handkerchief every day out of a stock laid in from some of the London warehouses just now. It is literally a royal road to learning. One elaborate linen square, for instance, gives, together with a large number of portraits, and dates, views of old London and New, pictures of old and new battleships, of early railroad trains and modern expresses, and of old four-in-hand coaches and the latest motor cars. With a well selected stock of such articles the development of the historical sense in a child should be easy.

TO NURTURE ROYALTY.

In this memorable year tens of thousands of children all over the British dominions will have a knowledge of history rubbed into them with every cake of soap, and will take in the events of Her Majesty's reign by the pores of the skin. A wholesale list just printed enumerates hundreds of articles, all especially prepared for the jubilee. There are purses, writing cases, pearl necklets, China mugs and cups and saucers, mirrors, and ebony brushes, needle cases, picture books, ivory plaques, pincushions, wall decorations, flag brooches, and maltese crosses. As to cards of congratulation, and portraits and busts, these things are falling all over the British Empire, thick as leaves in autumn. Many are very handsome, though some, especially of the busts, seem to have been turned out with a prudential regard to the possibility of not being cleared out this celebration, and of having on some future occasion to represent other distinguished persons.

There is one small bust on the market that would pass very well for a portrait of John Milton, if occasion should hereafter require. Many of the pictures and little plaster casts are, however, very good. Of a

CERTAIN LITTLE BUST,

The original of which is said to be in the possession of the Queen, one city house gave the other day an order for $5,000 worth, and in reply to a doubt as to whether they would ever see that money back, it was stated that they had already received orders for $4,500 worth which means that of this one article 25,000 to 30,000 have been sold to storekeepers.

The fear seems to be that the production will not keep up with the demand. Some large houses have been unable to fill orders from colonial customers for small souvenirs, and as to flags and bunting in general, wreaths of artificial flowers, and gilded foliage, of fairy lamps and Chinese and Japanese lanterns—everything of a decorative nature, the demand is already threatening to demoralize the factory owners, and every week it will increase.

THE PERFECT FORM.

When a woman is well proportioned and her weight is correct according to her height she may consider herself entitled to good health, barring accidents. The weight of a woman of 5 ft. should be 110 lbs.; 5 ft. 1 in., 115 lbs.; 5 ft. 2in., 120 lbs.; 5 feet 3 in., 129 lbs.; 5 ft. 4 in., 134 lbs.; 5 ft. 5 in., 142 lbs.; 5 ft. 6 in., 146 lbs.; 5 ft. 7 in., 152 lbs.; 6 ft. 8 in., 160 lbs. There are very few women who have what might be called perfect forms.