Acton Free Press.

VOLUME V. No. 25.—WHOLE No. 234 ACTON, ONT., DECEMBER 18, 1879. $1.00 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

The Acton Free Press,

A FIRST-CLASS LOCAL AND GENERAL FAMILY JOURNAL, PUBLISHED ESPECIALLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE CITIZENS OF HALTON COUNTY,

EVERY THURSDAY MORNING

At THE FREE PRESS Printing and Publishing House, next to the Methodist Church, Mill Street, Acton, Ont.

TERMS:—THE FREE PRESS will be sent to subscribers, postage paid, for $1.00 per annum in advance; if paid during the year, $1.50; if not paid till after expiration of the year, $2.00. No paper discontinued till all arrears are paid, except at the option of the publisher.

ADVERTISING RATES.—Casual advertisements, 8 cents per line for the first insertion, and 2 cents per line for each subsequent insertion—cash. Professional Cards, 10 lines or less, $4.00 per annum. 1 square, 12 lines, $5.00 per annum, payable in 6 months from date of insertion. Any Special Notice, the object of which is to promote the pecuniary benefit of any individual or company, to be considered an advertisement. The number of lines reckoned by the space occupied, measured by a scale of solid Nonpareil.

Advertisements without special instructions inserted till forbid, and charged accordingly.

Orders for discontinuing advertisements must be in writing, otherwise the publishers will not be responsible.

—*JOB PRINTING.*—

Every facility for Book, Plain and Fancy Job Printing. Experienced workmen. Newest styles of Type. Presses good. Charges moderate.

H. P. MOORE,
Editor and Proprietor.

Business Directory.

W. H. LOWRY, M.B., M.C.P.S., GRADUATE of Trinity College, Member of College of Physicians and Surgeons. Office and Residence, at the head of Frederick St., Acton. 7-6m

N. McGARVIN, M.D., M.C.P.S., Graduate at Victoria College. Residence, corner of Mill and Frederick streets. Consultation daily from 8 to 10 a.m., and from 3 to 6 p.m.

ALISTER M. CLARK, BARRISTER, QUEBEC ST., GUELPH. BRANCH OFFICE:—In Mr. Matthew's Building, Mill St., Acton. OFFICE OPEN EVERY FRIDAY.

WM. HEMSTREET, Licensed Auctioneer For the Counties of Wellington and Halton. Orders left at the FREE PRESS Office, Acton, or at my residence in Rockwood, will be promptly attended to. Terms reasonable.

PATENTS FOR INVENTIONS expeditiously and properly secured in Canada, the United States, and Europe. Patent guaranteed, or no charge. Send for printed instructions. Agency in operation ten years. HENRY GRIST, Ottawa, Canada. Mechanical Engineer, Solicitor of Patents, and Draughtsman.

J. D. MATHESON, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, Solicitor in Chancery, &c. Office, next door to Wallace's Hotel, Milton.

DOMINION HOTEL, ACTON. ROBERT Agnew, Proprietor. The new Hotel is fitted up in first-class style with new furniture. Commercial Travellers will find good accommodation and commodious Sample Rooms. Special attention paid to the wants of the travelling public. Bar supplied with the best Liquors and Cigars. Good Stabling and attentive Hostlers.

ROYAL EXCHANGE HOTEL, ACTON. Jas. Campbell, Proprietor. Mr. Campbell, late of the Rossin House, near G. T. R. Station, takes pleasure in announcing to his many old friends and patrons that he has recently purchased and refitted the Royal Exchange in the neatest and most comfortable style, and is prepared to accommodate all who may favour him, in the most comfortable manner. Choice Wines, Liquors, Cigars and cool summer drinks always in stock. Stable in charge of an attentive hostler. The patronage of the public is respectfully solicited, and no effort will be spared to give the very best attention. JAS. CAMPBELL.

CASH FOR SKINS. I am prepared to pay the highest cash price for all classes of Lamb and Sheep Skins, delivered at my tannery. Lace Leather constantly on hand. JAMES MOORE. 41-1y.

AUCTION SALE advertisements inserted in the ACTON FREE PRESS, at low rates, the best local paper of Halton Co.

BIRTHS, Marriages and Deaths inserted free in the ACTON FREE PRESS, the best local paper of Halton Co.

CARDS, Billheads and Circulars of every description executed neatly at the ACTON FREE PRESS office, the best local paper of Halton Co.

COMMUNICATIONS on local questions of interest will gladly be received by the ACTON FREE PRESS, the best local paper of Halton Co.

ENVELOPES printed in the neatest style, and at the lowest prices, at the ACTON FREE PRESS, the best local paper of Halton Co.

IF you have farms or farm stock for sale, advertise them in the ACTON FREE PRESS the best local paper of Halton Co.

MERCHANTS and farmers alike should advertise and support the ACTON FREE PRESS, the best local paper of Halton Co.

STRAYED or Stolen Advertisements of this nature inserted very cheap in the ACTON FREE PRESS, the best local paper of Halton Co.

Pumps! Pumps! Pumps! W. E. ADAMS, Manufacturer of superior Well and Cistern Pumps, which will be put in on short notice. Repairing promptly done. Charges moderate. Also saws filed and set. Give him a call. Shop on Frederick street, opposite Dr. Lowry's residence. W. E. ADAMS.

—THE— "CLIMAX PLOW" —MADE AT— Crowe's Iron Works, Guelph. Is ahead of all competitors for general purposes. Iron Beams, Steel Board and Shears made of special hard iron. Cheap; $14 cash. New Patterns, Stoves, Metal Letters, and Castings of all kinds. JOHN CROWE.

$66 A WEEK in your own town, and no capital risked. You can give the business a trial without expense. The best opportunity ever offered for those willing to work. You should try nothing else until you see for yourself what you can do at the business we offer. No room to explain here. You can devote all your time or only your spare time to the business, and make great pay for every hour that you work. Women make as much as men. Send for special private terms and particulars, which we mail free. $5 outfit free. Don't complain of hard times while you have such a chance. Address H. HALLETT & CO., Portland, Maine.

CANADA LOAN & BANKING COMPANY Savings Bank, CORNER OF JAMES AND VINE STS., HAMILTON. Six Per Cent. Interest paid on deposits of $1 and upwards. *SAFEST AND BEST SECURITY.*

Board of Directors. H. B. CHISHOLM, Esq., President. WM. KERNS, Esq., of (John Walde & Co.) Burlington, Vice-President. J. W. ROSEBRUGH, M. D., Hamilton. HUGH MURRAY, Esq., Hamilton. THOS. BLANCHARD, Esq., Nelson. Col. JOHN LAND, Burlington. ROBT. DUNCAN, Esq., Hamilton. R. K. CHISHOLM, Esq., Oakville. WM. FREEMAN, M. D., Georgetown. H. S. GRIFFIN, M. D. C. B. SNOW, Esq., (Manager Cotton Mills) Dundas.

Money to loan on Real Estate in sums to suit borrowers, and on easy terms.

Office open every week-day from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

D. DEXTER, Manager. Aug. 11, 1879. 7-6m

FEDERAL BANK OF CANADA. Guelph Branch. A GENERAL BANKING BUSINESS DONE. *DRAFTS and BILLS OF EXCHANGE Bought and Sold.* DEPOSITORS Are allowed interest at the rate of five (5) per cent. per annum in the Savings Bank Department, and six (6) per cent. per annum will be allowed on Deposit Receipts, provided the money remains in the Bank not less than six (6) months, and three (3) months notice be given of its withdrawal. THOMAS Y. GREET, Manager.

THE TRAVELLERS Life & Accident Ins. Co., OF HARTFORD, CONN., Writes everything desirable in the way of Life and Accident Insurance. Rates Low. Security Unquestioned. Ample deposit made with the Dominion Government, for the security of Canadian Policy Holders.

Paid up Cash Capital,	$ 603,000.00
Gross Assets,	4,798,677.76
Total Liabilities,	2,511,724.27
Surplus to Policy Holders,	1,286,943.37

JAMES MATTHEWS, Agent, Acton, Ont.

BAKERY AND CONFECTIONERY. MESSRS. B. & E. NICKLIN would intimate that they have opened up their NEW BAKE SHOP OF THE Corner of MILL and MAIN Sts. ACTON, And that they will always be supplied with A 1. Bread, besides Buns, Cakes, Pastry &c., &c., &c. A LARGE STOCK OF CHOICE Confectionery will be found on hand, which is all new and fresh—OATMEAL, CORNMEAL, BUCKWHEAT FLOUR, CRACKED WHEAT, &c., always in stock. This will be found to be the place where the best goods will be kept at the lowest prices. TEMPERANCE. B. & E. NICKLIN.

HARNESS, HARNESS. Any person in want of a good set of Harness, either SINGLE OR DOUBLE; Should call at Creech's Saddlery, ACTON, Where they can get better value for their money than any place in the County. A good assortment of TRUNKS AND VALISES On hand, all of which will be sold cheap for cash. Repairing promptly attended to. R. CREECH. Acton, Feb. 26, 1879.

MANHOOD. WE have recently published a new edition of Dr. Culverwell's Celebrated Essay on the RADICAL AND PERMANENT CURE (without medicine) of Nervous Debility, Mental and Physical Incapacity, Impediments to Marriage, etc., resulting from excesses. Price, in a sealed envelope, only six cents, or two postage stamps. The celebrated author, in this admirable Essay, clearly demonstrates, from thirty years' successful practice, that alarming consequences may be radically cured without the dangerous use of internal medicine or the application of the knife; pointing out a mode of cure at once simple, certain and effectual, by means of which every sufferer, no matter what his condition may be, may cure himself cheaply, privately and radically. This Lecture should be in the hands of every youth and every man in the land. Address, The Culverwell Medical Co., 47 Ann St., New York. Post Office Box 4586.

ALBERT COLLEGE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, BELLEVILLE, ONTARIO. *This School offers the following advantages:* 1st. MATRICULATION. Every year candidates from this school are passing the examinations of the Law Society, Council of Physicians, and Surgeons. Matriculating into the different Universities with few or no rejections. 2nd. TEACHERS. In 1877, 1878, and 1879, nearly all the students competing made most satisfactory examinations, and the school is now prepared by its enlarged staff to give the most thorough grinding to candidates for certificates of all grades. 3rd. COMMERCIAL DIPLOMAS. The advantages include not only the complete practical curriculum of the celebrated Eastman college at Poughkeepsie, N. Y., precisely as taught at that college, but gives the further advantages of Grammar, History, Composition, Elocution, or the languages if required, at no additional expense.

TUITION.

	Michaelmas. 15 weeks.	*Hilary.* 11 weeks.	*Trinity.* 10 weeks.
Advanced,	$11.50.	$10.50.	$8.50.
Primary,	9.50.	8.50.	6.50.

BOARD and ROOMS can be had in building or outside, at $2.50 per week. 15 weeks Commercial Training for $49.00. For particulars apply to J. R. JAQUES, D.D., Ph.D., President or M. H. DAVIS, Commercial Master.

C. T. HILL, —FOR— GROCERIES. If you want a good and cheap article in Young Hyson, Japan, Black or Gunpowder TEAS!! Sugars, Syrups, Spices, and Tobaccos, Of all kinds, FRESH AND SWEET. HARDWARE, *of all kinds,* PAINTS AND OILS, HINGES AND LOCKS, NAILS, GLASS & PUTTY, SALT BY THE BARREL, ALL CHEAP FOR CASH, —GO TO— C. T. HILL'S, Mill Street, Acton.

BEATTY'S GUIDE TO ELEGANT WRITING. —TO— ELEGANT WRITING is a perfect self-instructor in PENMANSHIP, by the aid of which young people may become good Writers in a very short time. It consists of a Book of Fifty Pages containing analysis and explanations, a large number of Copy Slips for practising, a beautiful Ornamental Sheet, and a handsome case to contain the whole. PRICE, POST-PAID $1. Address Robinson & Johnson, Ontario Business College, Belleville. Agents Wanted.

ORGANS AND SEWING MACHINES.

ROBT. CRAINE, ACTON, Is prepared to call on persons requiring either Sewing Machines or Organs. HE HAS AGENCIES FROM THE best manufacturers in the country, and will guarantee satisfaction to purchasers. Terms very reasonable. Orders left at his residence or addressed to him to Acton P.O. will receive prompt attention. R. CRAINE.

SCOTT & BOWNE'S PALATABLE CASTOR OIL. Is prepared in a form perfectly agreeable to children and most sensitive persons. In its manufacture the properties of the oil that produce pain and griping are eliminated, and it is rendered not only mild and pleasant in its action, but absolutely tasteless and palatable. It is pre-eminently the finest laxative and cathartic known, and as a remedy for Costiveness, Constipation, and all Internal Derangements it is unequalled, and is destined to take the place of crude oil and all drastic pills and purgatives. For sale by all Druggists at 25 cents a bottle. Don't fail to try it.

She Confesses.

"But never come anot' er
To roll the stone from the repulchral heart away,
And sit in it—an angel!"

—*Festus.*

Yet, Fate may darker works I though land
Or sea divide us, yet shall stand
Thy kingdom in my heart, nith high the wall
Of brittle clay which gives it round shall fall;
There reign supreme, until some Judas-breath
Betrays me to the clinging kiss of death!

Time's mercy lets my face seem somewhat fair,
And girlhood's sunlight lingers on my hair;
But, long ago, bright Hope and joyous Trust
Faltered into their side's common dust.
Since then the hopeless days have drifted by
Without one thought—without one passing sigh

For love or friendship; all too well I know
That present joy but breeds sore future woe!
Yet, when thy fine touch mine—in that same hour
My slumbering heart aroused itself in power;
Awoke to learn that life could never more
Wear the same icy coldness as before.

Suns come and go, moons wax and wane, but yet
The glory of one day can never set.
What the future hold, it can not be
(This side the grave) forgetfulness, for me.
The heavens shall roll away, stars fade and fall,
And one week woman's love outlives them all!

MIRIAM BEATRICE DEAN

CARRIED BY STORM.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING.

AUTHOR OF "A MAD MARRIAGE," "LITTLE QUEEN," &c., &c.

CHAPTER VI.—(CONTINUED.)

IN WHICH JOANNA SEEKS HER FORTUNE.

It is up four pairs, and very long pairs at that; she feels as though she could never reach the top.

They do reach it, however, the boy opens a door, there is a flood of light, a gush of warmth, and they are "there."

It is now after eleven, but late as is the hour the boy's mother is still pursuing her avocation. Upon a stove, glowing red-hot, stands an array of smoothing irons, at a long narrow table, in the middle of the floor, the woman stands, polishing the front of a shirt.

The room is perfectly neat and clean, two lamps light it brightly. The woman herself is in a spotless cotton dress, and long, white apron, and looks both respectable, and, like her son, good-natured.

On a trundle-bed, in a corner, two children lie asleep.

"Bless us, Ted, how late you are!" she begins. Then she sees his companion, and stops inquiringly, but in no surprise, and smiles a welcome. "Good evening, miss. Come in and take an air of the fire. You look half froze."

Joanna advances. The mother takes in at the first glance, the silk dress, the golden trinkets, the fine crimson shawl, and her face grows first puzzled, then grave.

She turns to her son with something of a frown, and motions him into an adjoining room.

"Who is this you have brought?" she asks. "I don't know her."

"No more do I," Ted rejoins, "but she's all right—bet you a tanner on it! She ain't no clever. She's a country girl, and greener'n grass. Cut away from her friends, I believe, and come to London to seek her fortune. They all do it! Don't she hope she may find it?"

"Where did you pick her up?" the mother asks, still dissatisfied.

Ted explains at some length. Ted's mother listens, neither satisfied nor convinced.

"I'd rather have my room emptying for ever, you know that," she says, with some asperity, "than harbour half the rubbish that's going. If I thought she wasn't all right, I'd bundle her off again, and let her go to the station, and bore your ears into the bargain! I won't have girls picked up from the streets. I only lodge respectable young women out of place."

"Well, she a respectable young woman out o' place," says Ted. "But, mother, don't let us stand here jawin'. Give a fellow his supper, can't you, and let him go to bed."

"And what about the young woman?"

"No, but she's got a gold chain, and the best of clothes, and is willin' to put 'em up the spout first thing to pay you. But, mother, you can't turn her out, so cheese it all, and give us some supper."

He returns impatiently to the kitchen where Joanna still sits in a chair near the fire.

"In earnest, the rest, the silence, have lulled her into sleep."

Her head lies against the back, her hat is off, her pale, tired face has the look of a spent child. The woman bends over her, and gradually the perturbed expression leaves her face. No—on that brow the dreaded brand of the streets has not been rested. She is little better than a child in years. The story she has told Ted must be true.

She is one of these foolish, romance reading country girls who run away from home and come to London to seek their fortune. There are so many of them—so many! Poor souls! the fortune they mostly find is ruin for life, and a death of dark despair.

This girl has evidently been well off, her dress is of rich silk, handsomely trimmed and made, she wears a gold chain and watch, a breastpin and ring. And the shawl on her lap, the woman's eyes glisten as she lifts it. All her life it has been her ambition to own a shawl like this, all wool, soft as silk, and such a splendid, darkly, beautifully red. All her life it has been an ambition unsatisfied.

"I will keep her for a fortnight for this shawl," she thinks, replacing it, "if she's mind to make the bargain."

Ted is calling lustily for his supper. It is soon set before him, some slices of cold beef, some bread and butter, and coffee.

The lad falls to with an appetite, and his mother gently wakes Joanna.

"You must be very hungry," she says. "Take some supper and go to bed."

But Joanna is not hungry, she dined late, and fared well. She is very, very tired, though, and will go to bed, with her hostess's permission.

"My name is Gibbs," suggests the matron, taking one of the lamps—"Mrs. Gibbs. Will you tell me yours?"

For a moment there is a pause.

She has no name. The hated one of Sleaford is not here, she would not retain it if it were. Blake, she thinks of giving, but no, she has no right to poor George's name.

The only one that belongs to her is Joanna—Wild Joanna. Then it flashes upon her—she has only to reverse that, and she is now christened for the rest of her life.

"My name is Wild, Mrs. Gibbs," she says—"Joanna Wild."

"And you look it," thinks Mrs. Gibbs, going on with the lamp. "Wild by name and wild by nature, I daresay. But you're not a bad sort of girl, I daresay, and that's a beautiful shawl, so it's all right."

The room is a tiny attic chamber, with a sloping roof, and lit by only two lights of glass. The bed is wide enough to lie down on, but certainly to turn in it would be a serious risk. Still it looks perfectly clean, and that is everything. The floor is bare, one chair comprises all the furniture there is space for.

"I hope you will sleep well," says Mrs. Gibbs, kindly. "There's a bolt on the door, if you're a mind to, but you're quite safe up here."

"Thank you," Joanna says. "Good night."

Mrs. Gibbs returns to her son and her work—two is her general hour for retiring.

"Gone to roost, has she?" inquires Tom, still going into his supper with energy and appetite.

"She's a run'un, she is. Wonder if her mother knows she's out?"

And so, by the mercy of heaven, Joanna is saved from the streets, and sleeps deeply, dreamless dy, and long, in her hard little attic bed.

With the rising of the next morning's frosty sun, Joanna's new life begins.

It is rather late when she descends to the room, with the cooking stove, which is kitchen, parlour, dining room, and children's sleeping room, inclusive.

The little stove so heats it that the windows are open, and two or three pots of geraniums flourish on the sills. They make a pleasant spot of colour to the girl's country eyes, with their vivid green leaves and pink blossoms. Sunlight finds the room as tidy as lamplight.

Mrs Gibbs stands over a tub in a corner, washing, a little boy and girl of five toddle about, each with a doll made out of a bottle. This is the home scene which greets Joanna.

"Good morning," Mrs. Gibbs says. "How did you rest, my dear?"

Mrs. Gibbs' language and manners are superior of her station, and Mrs. Gibbs greatly prides herself thereon.

She is a person of literary tastes, and has seen better days. The better days were in the lifetime of the late Mr. Gibbs, when she had but little to do, and a great deal of time to read romances, of which she is exceedingly fond.

Mr. Gibbs was by profession a mason's assistant, in other words a hod-carrier, and one day, overcome by sunstroke, fell off a scaffold and was instantly killed. That was four years ago, and since then Mrs. Gibbs has adopted the occupation of laundress, and wisely eschewed romance. But what she has read has left its mark.

Seven years after Ted's birth, twins arrived, almost simultaneously with a copy of "Alonzo and Melissa," these innocents being christened after that romantic pair. It is Alonzo and Melissa who are now pressing to their chubby bosoms two wine bottles, and pausing in their play to stare with round, wondering eyes at the new comer. Ted has departed to retail the day's news, "and afterwards" ships "gentlemen's boots.

"I slept very well," Joanna answers, and holds out her hands with a smile to the little ones.

She loves children, and her eyes brighten at sight of them. Many good traits are in the girl's character that have never had a chance to come out—this is one of them. She has never known a child in her life.

Alonzo and Melissa look at her, and with the intuitive instinct of children and dogs, see in her a friend at once.

"Perhaps you won't mind getting your own breakfast?" says Mrs. Gibbs. "I'm busy, as you see. There's the teapot on the hob, and the dishes and the bread and butter are in the pantry. Set the table yourself and take your breakfast."

"I feel as if I were a burden to you, Mrs. Gibbs," Joanna says, "but I hope it will not be for long. I have no money now, but the very first I earn I will give you."

She says it with an honesty and earnestness her hostess sees is real.

Mrs. Gibbs finds she "likes the look of her" by daylight, though she is an uncommon-looking young woman somehow, too.

"What do you intend to do?" she asks, rubbing away at the shirt she is at work upon.

She smiles a little to herself as she asks—she knows so well what the answer will be.

All these girls who run away from their friends seem to have but one idea—to go on the stage and dazzle the London public as full-fledged *Mabbetts*.

They may leave home plain and unattractive enough, but something in the air of the great city is to make them beautiful and talented, and send them home to their relatives in a few years dazzling visions of loveliness, fame, and wealth. It happens like that to their favourite heroines, why not to them?

But Joanna's reply is not to order.

"I intend to work," she says steadily. "There's a kind of housework, I think, I cannot do. I am very strong, and very willing. I can wash, iron, cook—I have done it all my life."

Mrs. Gibbs is so astonished that she pauses in her washing, and with suds up to her elbows, gazes admiringly at the speaker.

"Well, upon my word," she says.

Then she laughs and vigorously resumes her rubbing.

"Work is the last thing that girls that run—come up from the country—seem to think of. I have known lots of 'em, and I never knew one of them who wanted to work. They can't get enough of that at home. They want to go on the stage, and be ballet girls, actresses, what not. They seem to think that the London flagstones are made of gold. Poor things, they soon find out their mistake. Sometimes they go back ashamed and half starved, sometimes they stay on, and—oh, dear me, London is a bad place for a friendless, country girl. And you want to work. Oh, well, you will get that fast enough; always plenty to do for willing hands and hearts. And housework's easier got than most things, than those places in shops, or sewing, or genteel things like that. By your dress you should have been pretty well off down there whenever it is. You won't make enough at housework, let me tell you, to buy silk dresses like that, and gold watches and chains."

Joanna looks ruefully down at her dress, and nods assent.

She is fully alive to the fact that she is not likely to be able to earn her living in the most ordinary fashion without considerable difficulty much more indules in luxuries, even such as George Blake could afford her. But she is alone, penniless, and among strangers, and something must be done, and done at once. If good-hearted Mrs. Gibbs can help her, well and good, if not—she shudders at the bare contemplation of the idea. Of two things she is quite certain—she will never go back to the Sleafords, nor will she be the wife of George Blake!

CHAPTER VII.

IN WHICH JOANNA FINDS HER FORTUNE.

Mrs. Gibbs looks long and earnestly at Joanna as if she would read her very soul.

"You must have had a good home," she says thoughtfully at last, "and kind friends. Take my advice, Miss Wild, and go back before it is too late. The city is not what you think it. Go back to your good home, no matter how hard you may have to work, and thank heaven you've got it."

"It was not a good home," Joanna says, steadily. "I had not kind friends. It was a bad, cruel place to live in. Yes, bad, and they were bad people. I had no friends in that home."

"And yet your dress, your jewellery—"

"Oh! the dress! That is nothing," the girl says, with a touch of her old impatience; "the watch and chain were New Year's gifts from a lady who was kind to me. But I cannot go back—I never will go back. I am willing and able to work; you may recommend me without fear. The jewellery is to keep for the lady's sake," her voice falters a little. "You have been kind to me—you have saved me from the streets. As sure as I live, you will find me grateful."

There is silence. Mrs. Gibbs rubs away, Joanna clears off the breakfast service. Suddenly the widow breaks out—

"Look here, Miss Wild, I don't want to take no mean advantage of you, but, of course, I can't afford to keep you for nothing. But I will keep you, board, and everything, for—say a fortnight—that will give you time to look about you and get used to town—for that red shawl of yours. There! I like that shawl—if you think it a fair exchange, let me say so."

She looks eagerly as she makes the proposal, evidently fearing a refusal. That anyone can possess such a beautiful garment, and be willing to part with it, is what she does not expect. But Joanna's face lights with relief at the offer.

"The red shawl," she exclaims, laughing, and again wondering what honest Mrs. Gibbs would say if she knew how she had come by it; "why, certainly. I am glad to be rid of it—I could not wear a red shawl if I wanted to. I am sure I do not know why I bought it. Take it and welcome."

The widow draws a long breath—the desire of many years is attained at last.

"Well, I'm sure, I'm much obliged. It's a beautiful shawl, all wool, soft as silk, and such a solidity. I will tell you what I'll do," she says, lovingly. "I will sew your dress in a petticoat, Mrs. Gibbs, in a hurry of gratitude, "you shall stay for three weeks if you're a mind to, and Ted shall take you about on Sundays, and I'll find you a nice easy place in a small family, as waitress, nurse girl, or something of that sort. Would you mind wearing a cap and a white apron?"

It appears, upon explanation, that Joanna would mind those badges of servitude, although otherwise preferring the situation of children's nurse.

"Well, then it must be housework, I suppose," says Mrs. Gibbs, "but never mind. I'll find you a nice easy place, with only two or three in the family, and every Sunday out. You must come to see me often, and look upon this as your home whenever out of place."

Amicable relations of the warmest kind being thus established through the medium of Lil's affected; that evening she is too seriously indisposed to sing—someone else must be substituted. Nothing else *shall*, swears the professor. And in a beautiful costume, Miss Wild, to the surprise of everybody, takes Mdlle. Azelma's part, and sings better than that lady ever did in all her life. The audience applaud; they, like the management, are tired of the leading lady's caprices. Herr Ericson glows with delight. He fairly clasps Joanna in his arms when she comes off.

"You sing like an angel," he cries, in a rapture. "Mdlle. Azelma may go hang herself! Ah! I foresee my project will be a grand success."

Next day the project is decided. It is to travel through the country, with Joanna and another protege of his, a young Italian tenor he has picked up and instructed, and give concerts. Madame Ericson, who is also a vocalist of no mean ability, goes with them. They will be a company of four; and they will storm the provinces! They will make their fortunes! They will see life! They will cover themselves with immortality!

It suits Joanna exactly. Already she is anxious to leave London. Twice she has passed Frank Livingston in the street, and once on horseback in the park.

On neither occasion has he noticed her, but the recognition has set her heart beating wildly.

Riding in the park with a young lady by his side, he has looked like a demi-god in Joanna's dazed eyes, something so far above and beyond her that she wonders to remember she has ever spoken to him at all. And her last words to him were a bitter rebuke. She is not safe in London; he, or George Blake, may meet and recognize her, any day. To all who have known her, she wishes to be for ever lost.

Early in May the little company are to start. All this time Joanna has gone on living with Mrs. Gibbs, whom she has paid and repaid, over and over again.

The rest of her earnings are swallowed up by a wardrobe, which the professor insists shall be handsome and abundant.

She is to sing songs in character, and many costumes are needed to fit them all.

The winter days fly by. May comes, warm and sunny.

From Brightbrook she has heard nothing. She does not want to hear. That life is dead and done with, it holds no memory that is not of pain. Sleaford's Joanna lives no more. Miss Wild does, and her new life seems to open pleasantly and promisingly enough.

About the middle of May they leave London, and Joanna is fairly launched in her new life.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRAGEDY AT SLEAFORD'S.

And at Brightbrook?

It chances that Mr. Giles Sleaford is absent from the bosom of his family while all these disastrous affairs are going on. Mr. Sleaford is a patron of the ring, and a pugilistic encounter for the championship of a town some forty miles away takes place about this time.

In company with some other congenial souls, Giles is on the spot, betting heavily, drinking deeply, swearing roundly, and using his own fists—mawlers, Mr. Sleaford terms them—freely when occasion offers. And so it falls out that for nine days after the flight of Joanna, that flight remains a secret to Black Giles.

On the evening of that ninth day, Mr. Sleaford returns to his home and family, blacker than usual, more savage than usual, a sadder, though by no means a wiser man, cursing his luck, his eyes, the road, the weather, as he jogs along. The road is certainly rutty, the weather is especially gloomy and raw. A keen January wind is blowing, and driving the sleet in fierce, slanting lines into Mr. Sleaford's inflamed, and whisky-bleared eyes.

A great bitterness is upon him; the vanity of all things earthly, of Pitt, sets-to in particular, has been forced upon him rudely. The man he has backed has been beaten, shamefully and hopelessly, and "doubled up" in three rounds. But not your trust in prizefighters, has been sadly brought home to Mr. Giles Sleaford.

He ambles on, on his jaded horse, stopping at every "pub," until, as the black and sleety winter night is closing in, he reaches the Red Farm.

The cheery light of fire and lamp streams far out over the iron bound road; warmth and savoury smell of supper greet him. But Mr. Sleaford's paternal greeting is growled out, strongly impregnated with whisky fumes, and is a gruff command for Joanna to come and pull off his boots. His (adjective) hands are so (adjective) froze that, bless his (adjective) eyes, if he can do it himself!

There is a pause; Alf and the two girls exchange glances. They are all afraid of their father, except Dan, and Dan at the present moment is not there. Neither is Joanna, Mr. Sleaford sees, but in her place is a strapping country lass of fifteen or so, whom he eyes with early amaze and disfavour.

"Well, bless my (adjective) eyes!" repeats Mr. Sleaford, ferociously, "what the dash do you mean, by randin' there like a passel of stuck pigs, and starin'? Why the—don't you call that gal?"

"Looky here, dad," said Alf, to whom the girls mutely appeal, "it's no good making a row, but Joanna ain't here. She's cut and run—there!"

"Hey?" roars Giles Sleaford, staring in fierce amazement at his son.

"True as gospel, dad—cut and run a week—nine days ago, with George Blake."

"And stole all our things—my new silk suit and hat, and Lil's shawl!" chimes in Lora.

"Went off at break of day, to London, with Blake," continued Alf, plucking up heart of grace to face his formidable father. "But Dan's head open with a horsewhip first, and all for wanting her to sing at Watford's."

Giles Sleaford's jaw drops; his eyes start as if about to fall from their sockets. He is still "far wide"—he only takes in the one blank fact that Joanna has run away.

"This is how it was," goes on Alf, seeing his parent's mystification.

And thereupon he gives a dispassionate and perfectly correct version of the whole proceeding. He does not spare Dan; in his heart Alf exults in the pluck Joanna has shown, and chuckles inwardly whenever he looks at his brother's wound. He, himself, has never in his life lifted his hand to the girl.

Giles Sleaford listens in dead silence. Even after his son has done, he sits staring with open mouth and eyes, quite rigid and mute.

This is so unexpected and startling, that the Misses Sleaford exchange apprehensive looks; they have expected an outburst of rage and red-hot oaths. They hear neither.

With a snap, Black Giles' jaws come together again, as the jaws of a dog close over a bone. Then he takes down his short black pipe, and slowly begins to load it to the muzzle—all without a word of comment.

He lights up, and fills the kitchen with volumes of smoke, always in awful and ominous silence.

Presently Dan comes in, and his father eyes him a peculiar way the longitudinal strip of plaster that adorns his brow. No greeting, except a grumbling sort of grunt on Dan's part, is exchanged.

Mr. Sleaford sits buried in profound reflection. Supper is announced, strong and savoury as it is in the nature of the Sleaford repasts to be. Fried beefsteak smothered in onions and grease, mashed potatoes, and tea.

Giles takes out his pipe, and falls to, with the sharpest air of a man who has travelled forty miles, and who does not permit the loss of forty pounds and a household drudge to impair his appetite. But the Sleaford family are, one and all, valiant trencherman and women.

Seen through the lighted windows, is a cheerful picture enough of rough homely comfort and abundance.

The beautifully spread table, the five healthy, dark-skinned, highly-colored faces—but the repast is eaten in perfect silence, except a few whispered remarks between the girls.

Outside, the sleet is still lashing the glass, and the night has fairly closed in, in dense darkness and storm.

This is the subject of whispers, and a matter of some concern to the Misses Sleaford, who are due at a dance some few miles up the village, and the unpleasant weather is something of a damper to their expected enjoyment.

After supper, still without a word, Giles gets up, buttons his rough coat, puts on his fur cap, twists some yards of red lead round his neck, and leaves the house. The young people look at each other uneasily.

"Did you tell the old man?" asks Dan.

"All did," says Lora, "and he never said a word—not one single blessed word. I wonder where he's going?"

"What d've bet it ain't to Abbott Wood?" says Alf, carefully putting his beloved fiddle in its case. "That old red rooster up there knows more about our dad than anyone else. He's going for money. He's been pretty well shook, for I know he backed the Brightbrook Beauty heavy, and he's gone for another supply of the needful. I thought he'd raise the roof when he heard of Joanna's being gone, but bless your eyes, he took it like Mary's little lamb! I wonder where Jo is to-night?"

"That he'd ward for about ten minutes. I would pay her out for my beautiful red shawl."

If they could have seen Joanna at that moment, they would have seen her "going on" in the train of Mdle. Arelma, and facing a London audience for the first time.

"If you gals are coming, come," growls Dan. "I am going to get round the trap, so be ready, as I won't wait—mind that."

The young ladies flurry off, giving sundry directions to Joanna's successor, the stout-limbed rustic maiden. They will not be home until morning; she need not sit up for father, and she is to have breakfast for them, hot and hot, when they return in the morning about six.

Then they ascend to their chamber to adorn themselves for the dance, envelope themselves in shawls and "clouds," and finally roll themselves away in the back seat of the trap, and are driven through the white whirling storm to their destination.

Their father, meantime, has reached his, which proves to be, as Alf has predicted, Abbott Wood. He still maintains that ominous composure which has so surprised his family, but there is a fierce light of dogged determination in his sinister eyes.

It is something more than common that takes him to Abbott Wood.

Since he first became the tenant of the Red Farm, fully six years before, he only entered that house once—one other stormy night. He is going there again, through darkness and tempest, and wind, and this time, too, its master shall do his bidding, or he, Giles, will know the reason why.

As before, Joanna is the cause that brings him.

He reaches the house, a huge black bulk in the darkness, but few lights to be seen.

He grinds his teeth and shakes his fist at it, as he rings a peal that brings two startled men-servants hurriedly to the door.

"Is your master in?" he hurtily demands.

The men stare, but the fierce, black-bearded face commands civility, and an answer.

Not in. At Brightbrook. Dinner party. Will be back to-night, but do not know when.

"You're *sure* he isn't in?" says Giles, eyeing the men in a way that makes them step hurriedly back. "'Cause why? You'll save him some trouble, if he is, by tellin' him Giles Sleaford is here, and wants to see him, uncommon particular."

He is not in, both men assure him, with the earnestness of personal alarm.

"Hah! Werry well, then. When he does come in you tell him this: 'Giles Sleaford's been here' see you. 'Giles Sleaford,' see you, 'come through all this here bloomin' storm to purpose to see you to-night, and must see you to-night. Giles Sleaford,' you see, 'left them werminty set you to-night. He can't wait, leastways he wont, not here, but he'll wait for you at his own place,' you see, 'till after one o'clock, and *you'd better come.* Them,' you see, 'was Giles Sleaford's own expressions.' You tell your master them words, my man, when he comes from that 'ere dinner-party."

With which Giles Sleaford turns away, remounts his horse, and rides back to the Red Farm, where the girl has not retired; she is nodding stupidly over the kitchen fire.

With an oath she is dismissed to bed, and goes. She is a dull, limpish creature, and is frightened to find herself alone with the rats and black-beetles, and this savage man.

She has Joanna's little room under the rafters, adjoining Giles' own, and opposite the two occupied by the Sleaford boys and girls. She gets into bed, and falls fast asleep in a moment.

She does not know how long she sleeps. All the events of that dreadful night are blurred and confounded in her dull brain.

She awakes suddenly to the sound of the fiercely beating storm, the rain freezing as it falls, lashing the windows like lines of steel, the wind roaring dismally through the woods. It is very cold too, and she shivers on her hard bed.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Portuguese Man-of-War.

While bathing at the Cape as a boy I managed to get the long, lovely blue tentacle of the first round my wrist, and well recollect the attendant long-enduring agony and irritation, while the blue mark remained long on my wrist. Twenty-five years after, while soaking in a Peninsula and Oriental steamer's marble bath in Madras roads, I suddenly received what seemed an agonizing stab below my left knee, and jumped out of the bath with the pain. The cause was at once apparent, a bit of the fatal blue filament had been pumped into the bath and left the familiar mark on my knee, and I bore it for a long time.—*Nature.*

At this season of the year it is always fowl weather at the markets.

A story is told of a teacher who was talking to her scholars regarding the order of the higher beings. If was a very profitable subject, and one in which they took an uncommon interest. She told them the angels came first in perfection, and when she asked who came next and was readily answered by the boy, "man," she felt encouraged to ask, "What came next to man?" And here a little shaver, who was evidently smarting under defeat in the preceding question, immediately distanced all competitors by promptly shouting out, "His undershirt, ma'am."