SUPPLEMENT TO

The Free Press.

WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD.

THE Baptist missionaries in Japan have ordained their first preacher.

THE Prince of Wales lays the cornerstone of the Cathedral of Truro in April.

CANON OAKELEY, one of the earliest of the Tractarians who seceded to the Church of Rome in 1845, is dead.

The new Cathedral at Edinburgh, built by Misses Walker, is the largest Protestant Episcopal church erected since the reformation.

THE Rev. Mr. Marshall, a Baptist missionary in Orissa, India, writes that 400 Hindus in that place have renounced caste and become Christians. Many of them are men of wealth.

THE fight in Glasgow over the running of tramway cars on Sunday is substantially over, and the cars will run. The tramway company has voted, by an overwhelming majority, for a Sunday service.

THE Rev. Dr. Esher, of Samrodt, Prussia, has celebrated a very uncommon anniversary, the sixtieth anniversary of his being made Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Breslau. He has been Pastor in Samrodt 55 years, and is 85 years of age.

THE endowment for the proposed new Anglican diocese of Liverpool is now assured. At a meeting recently held it was announced that nearly $450,000 had been raised, and, with the amount promised conditionally by the Committee on Home Bishopric Funds, and now available, and application could be made, accordingly, for the appointment of a Bishop for the new diocese.

MOODY's work at St. Louis has taken a new turn, and his meetings are now thronged. On Monday evenings prayer-meetings are held for ministers. The pastors of most of the prominent churches are giving Brother Moody a great deal of help. Excursions from neighbouring cities and towns are made up, some of them bringing several hundred people to the meetings. Moody's sermons are published daily, and have a wide circulation. Conversions, which were for some time few in number, are now reported in greater abundance. The interest in religious affairs in St. Louis is stated now to be greater than it has been known at any previous time west of the Mississippi river.

A curious phase of the question of marriage with a deceased wife's sister attracts attention in England. The Bishop of Bath and Wells having, in a letter to Mr. Edwards, of Cheddar, indorsed the action of the Rev. Richard Bexdon, Vicar of Cheddar, in refusing to admit Mrs. Edwards to the Holy Communion, on the ground that she had married her deceased sister's husband, Mr. Edwards, in reply, asks his Lordship kindly to prescribe a course for the lady, and ultimately applied to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Primate, replying, says: "In similar circumstances my advice has been that persons so circumstanced desiring to communicate should go to some church where their history is not known.

THE Episcopal Church of Scotland is now a power in that land, and numbers among its adherents the bulk of the Scottish aristocracy, but up to forty years ago it was a much-enduring body. Being devoted to the Stuarts, an act was passed in 1719 by which every clergyman who had not taken the oath to King George, and who did not pray for him by name, should suffer six months' imprisonment for performing divine service in any meeting-house; the presence of nine persons, beyond the resident household, constituted a meeting house. In 1748 it was enacted that no ordinations should be valid unless granted in England or Ireland. Even as late as 1822, when George IV. visited Scotland, it is related in the highly interesting memoir, lately published, of Bishop Jolly, that the visit threw the whole House of Bishops into a state of much anxiety between their own loyalty, their knowledge of lingering Jacobitism, doubts whether they would be received if they came forward, and the certainty that they ought not to hang back. The Primate wrote at this time: "There is another thing about which Bishop Sandford (of Edinburgh) is distressing himself exceedingly. It is Bishop Jolly's wig. He alleges that the King would not be able to stand the sight of it, and assures Lord Russell it would convulse the whole court." The wig is described as snow white, and standing out behind his head in enormous curls, of six or eight inches in depth. The Episcopal agitation was allayed, however, by the discovery that a nobleman had given the Bishop a splendid modern wig, which he donned on that occasion. Bishop Hobart, for many years Bishop of New York, once said: "If I had gone from America to Aberdeen and seen nothing but Bishop Jolly, as I saw him for two days, I should hold myself greatly regarded."

The Human Harp.

Imagine two harps in a room, with the same number of strings, and each string perfectly attuned to a corresponding string on the other. Touch a string in one, and the corresponding string in the other will give out the same sound. Try another string, and its corresponding one will be sounded. So with all the strings. So with any combination of the strings. It would not matter how you played the one harp, the other would respond. No doubt the response would be weaker. That is what one would expect; but the response, as regards pitch and quality, would be almost perfect. Now substitute for one harp a human ear, and the conditions would, according to theory, be the same, except that the responsive mechanism of the ear is much smaller than that of the responsive harp. In the ear there are minute cords, rods, or something of such a state of tension as to be tuned to tones of various pitch; sound a tone, its corresponding rod or cord in the ear will respond, perhaps feebly, but still with energy sufficient to excite the nerve-filament connected with it; the result is a nervous current to the brain, and a sensation of a tone of a particular pitch.

A Remarkable Dog.

That animals have minds and can reason has lately been maintained at great length in an interesting book written by one Dr. Lindsay. According to this learned author there is hardly anything that a dog cannot learn. He tells among hundreds of other entertaining and surprising anecdotes, the story of an able Newfoundland dog who was accustomed to accept pennies from his human acquaintances as testimonials of their respect and affections. These pennies he deposited in a cat-proof safe scooped out by himself under the front-door mat, and when he wanted a piece of cake or a roll, he would take the proper price from his bank, carry it to the baker, and buy what he wanted. He was also accustomed to lend money at interest on promissory notes to other dogs, and when any note became due and unpaid he would carry it to the door of a notary's office and solemnly protest it with six distinct howls, after which he would return to the bank and subsequently take its value out of the hide of its debtor. Dr. Lindsay unaccountably fails to mention this latter feature of the dog's commercial career, but, perhaps, his capacity for receiving truth was exhausted when the first half of the story was told to him.

THE Roman Catholic population of Switzerland is reported at 1,023,430 souls. The clergy consists of 2,313 secular, and 378 regular, priests.

AT Birkenhead, England, lately, a man was arrested for furiously driving a horse. It was explained in extenuation that it had become, while in the possession of a drummer of convivial habits, so addicted to strong drink—"standing on its hind legs and drinking beer like a man"—that it was hopeless to attempt to get it past old boozing haunts without putting it into a gallop! The explanation was deemed satisfactory.

That Amateur Flute.

Hear the flutter with his flute—
Silver flute!
Oh, what a world of wailing is awakened by its toot!
How its demi-semi quavers
On the maddened air o' nights
And delieth all endeavours
To escape the sound or sight
Of the flute, flute, flute,
With its tootle, tootle, toot—
With reiterated, tootling of exasperating toots,
The long prot acted tootlings of agonizing toots,
Of the flute, flute, flute, flute,
Flute, flute, flute,
And the wheezings and the splitings of its toots.

Should he get that other flute—
Golden Flute—
Oh, what a deeper anguish will its presence institoot!
How his eyes to heaven he'll raise,
As he plays
All the days!
How he'll stop out on our ways
With its praise!
And the people, oh, the people,
They don't live up in the steeple,
Where he visits and plays—
Where he plays, plays, plays—
In the cruelest of ways.
And thinks we ought to listen,
[illegible]
Who would rather have the earache
Than the music of his flute,
Of his flute, flute, flute,
And the tootings of his toot,
Of the toots wherewith he tootleeth its agonizing toot,

Of the flute, flewt, flult, flout,
Pflute, pflewt, pflewt,
And the tootle, to tle, tooting of its toot.

CARRIED BY STORM.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING,

AUTHOR OF "A MAD MARRIAGE," "A LITTLE QUEEN," ETC., ETC.

PART III.

CHAPTER XVIII.—(CONTINUED.)

"It is like you, Joanna," is what she says. "I can say nothing more than that. You are generosity itself. I can only echo Geoffrey's words, and leave the decision to Leo unbiassed. She is a child in most things, but in this she must judge for herself. You are her sister, and your wishes should have weight. Tell her, and it shall be as she says."

"I have no fear then," Joanna says, gayly. "Leo has common sense, if she is a child, and is free from fine drawn notions and wicked pride. Leo, dear, run and put on your hat. I will drive you over to Abbott Wood, if Miss Ventnor will trust her ponies to my care. I am quite a skilled charioteer, I assure you."

"To Abbott Wood," Leo says, opening wide the velvety black eyes.

"Yes, dear; and we will lunch there together. Quite old times, will it not be? Do not be a minute. I will say good bye to the others while you are gone."

"Good bye!" cries Leo, with dismay.

But Joanna has left her and is already explaining the necessity for her return that very night. She cannot leave her mother, who pines and fruts in her absence.

So she says farewell there and then, to Mrs. Abbott as well as the rest.

"We go abroad very shortly," Joanna says, "and intend passing the winter in Nice. Next spring, when we will return, of course, my first visit will be here."

Frank is there as well as the rest, but to him she does not hold out her hand.

"Come and fetch Leo back this afternoon," she says. "I can make my adieux to you then."

She and Leo depart, and Livingston quits the family group, and is seen no more by any member of the household. It is a day he will not easily forget—the suspense, the dread, the pain he feels, graves themselves on his memory, making this a day apart from all other days in his life.

Meantime the ponies prance along, and speedily do the five miles between Ventnor Villa and Abbott Wood. It is a perfect day—sunny, cloudless, breezy, with the odour of the sea in the crisp air, and Abbott Wood looking more like an ancestral park and baronial hall than ever.

They sweep up the noble drive and alight in front of the house. Great urns glow, filled with tropical plants; the flower-beds blaze in their autumn glory; the deer look at them with wild, shy eyes; fountains tinkle and plash—all is in perfect order. So is the house in an exquisite keeping as when its mistress reigned there. Leo's eyes light as they drink in all its beauty.

She laughs a little, then sighs.

"It is so lovely," she says, "the dear, dear old home! Go where I will I see nothing like it."

"You love it, then?" Joanna quietly says.

"Love it!" Leo repeats. Her eyes flash, her lips part, and then she stops. She must not seem too fond of it now, she remembers, lest Joanna thinks her generous. "Of course I am fond of it," she says. "I was born here, and every tree and every flower and bird seems like old friends. But it will always seem like home to me, now that it is yours. If it had gone to a stranger, I think——it would almost have broken my heart."

"Dear little loving heart!" Joanna interposes, with a smile.

"But it is yours, and you are my own precious sister," goes on Leo, gayly, "and I shall expect you to invite me here often. You are not to forget your poor relations, you know, Mademoiselle Fifty Millions."

Joanna pauses, and looks down upon her.

She lays both hands on her shoulders, and smiles down into her eyes. Very sweet and youthful, and fair is pretty Leo, with her upturned face, and large, luminous eyes.

"It must be the other way," she says. "You must invite me here, little Leo—for Abbott Wood is yours."

"Mine?"

The dark eyes open wide, and stare.

"Yes, my darling—yours and yours only. From this day you are the little châtelaine of Abbott Wood. Do you think I would keep your birthright—the house where you were born?—the place you love so dearly, where you were so good—so good—to me? Ah, no! I never thought of that. I meant to restore it to you from the first. You are my sister, my father's daughter. It was for you he intended it, and yours it shall be. Do not look at me with such wonder-stricken eyes. Could you think so badly of me, as to dream I would keep it? I would not live here if I could. There are reasons."

She stops for a moment.

"No, little Leo, it is yours. All the processes of law has been duly fulfilled. It is yours by free deed of gift, and with it half the fortune our father left. What should I do with so much money? Even half is the embarrassment of riches. I can never spend my income. It was for this I stopped on my way here to speak to Geoffrey. I knew you would do nothing without his consent. He you would have no voice in the matter, so he left it entirely to you. It was to tell your mother, I saw her alone this morning—she, too, leaves it altogether to you. But I do not—you must accept. There is no compulsion, you know, Leo, dear," says Joanna, laughing and kissing her, "only you must. And although you cannot live here alone, and though neither your mother nor brother will ever live here with you, I foresee Abbott Wood will not be long without a mistress. I foresee—you will soon reign here, and not alone, and I hope—oh, my little Leo, with all my heart I hope you may be very, very happy."

Her voice breaks. Leo flings her arms about her and hides her face on her breast. She is sobbing, whether with joy, with love, with gratitude, or with pain, she hardly knows.

Happy! Ah, if Joanna only knew how unhappy she is.

"I—I don't know what to say," she sobs. "I never thought of this. It is like robbing you of your fortune. Oh, I don't know what to do. I ought not to take this—it is your house—I cannot bear to take it from you."

"Luckily you have no choice. It is yours in spite of you! If you refused, it would only be left to lawyers and Mrs. Hill for the term of their natural lives. But you will not refuse, and one day all my predictions will come true. Oh, never look so despondent—trust me, Joanna is among the prophets. And now, wipe those pretty eyes, and let us consider the matter settled, and at an end for ever. No more thanks, or tears, or scenes—they make me almost as uncomfortable as if I were a man. It is luncheon time, and here, I protest is Frank Livingston coming up the avenue. Leo, before he comes, I want you to tell him all about this to-morrow—I mean my story, relationship to you, and so on. Geoffrey has to tell Colonel Ventnor, of course. I have given him permission. And with that we will let it drop, the world will never know. I shall take my rightful name—Bennett—and you will keep yours until you exchange it for——

"Mr. Livingston," says Mrs. Hill, suddenly ushering him in.

Joanna looks at Leo and laughs, and Leo blushes to the temples, as both go forward to greet Frank Livingston.

CHAPTER XIX.

They take their midday refection together, and try to talk easily, but both appetite and conversation are failures.

Everything Mrs. Hill can do to tempt them she has done, but no one is at ease. Joanna looks calm, and in spite of everything is a trifle amused by the marked avoidance of her two guests. She reads it all so plainly, and if there is any pain at her own heart, she resolutely puts it away.

She has made up her mind to the inevitable and to look back and weep for what is for ever gone is not heavy.

After luncheon they wander about the grounds for awhile; then Leo is summoned away by Mrs. Hill to see some of her former pets, and Joanna and Frank stroll back to the house.

The afternoon has worn on—the sun is declining; Joanna looks at her watch as they stand side by side at one of the windows commanding a wide view of the sparkling sunset sea.

"Five," she says; "my train goes at seven. Two good hours yet; we shall have time for some tea presently—a sort of stirrup cup to speed my departure."

"Joanna!" Livingston breaks out, "this must end. You torture me—cannot you see that? You are like ice—like stone—you care nothing for me at all. How coolly you talk of going—of leaving me for an indefinite period. Do you forget you are my promised wife?"

"I have a good memory," Joanna says, "but I assuredly do not remember that. I never promised you anything in my life."

"Have you not?" he demands. "What is it, then? Have I not asked you to marry me? Do you not wear my ring?"

She holds out both hands—ringless.

"As my hands, so my heart—free. Yes, you have asked me, and I—I have said nothing, only this one word from first to last—wait. You have waited—well, your waiting is at an end. That is why I wished to see you here—to say that. If you ever asked me to marry you, ever made me any promise, ever held yourself bound to me, I release you from all back. You, too, are free."

He cannot speak. He stands looking at her, so pale, so conscience-stricken, that she lays her hand lightly for a moment on his.

"Do not blame yourself too much," she says, kindly; "do not blame yourself at all. Indeed, you deserve none; you have tried—do you think I have not seen?—and failed. That has been no fault of yours. You never loved me, Frank—no, not for a poor moment. You thought so that night you were 'Carried by Storm,'—do you recall your own words? They expressed it exactly, but love me—never! Trust a woman to know when she is beloved. Excitement, a moment's impulse, carried you away—when you had time to think you repented. You would not own it even to yourself—all the same it was there. You did your best, your very best, to be faithful, but there are things that are spoiled by trying. Love is one of them. And you know I never could accept that. In the common acceptation of the term I am not proud, but I am too proud to accept a husband after such fashion as that. If I cannot be beloved, I will go to my grave unmarried. And I am quite sure that so I will go. And now, Frank, you are free—free as the wind that blows, and we are friends, good friends, once again and forever."

She holds out her hand, but he does not see it.

He has turned from her, and is pacing to and fro, bitterness on his face, in his heart. Incontinently the keenest sense of loss he has ever felt has come upon him in this hour.

"You never cared for me—it is easy for you to say all this," he says, bitterness in his tone as well.

She smiles slightly, and turns away, and looks far-off at the golden afternoon halo over the sea.

"Weak and unstable he is, and she knows him to be, but he has power to bring a sharp contraction to her heart still.

"Never cared for you?" she repeats dreamily. "Frank, come here; do not be angry; let us talk as friends. Yes, I cared for you. When I was a little child, a little, beaten, barefoot child, I cared for you. When you used to come to Elsefort, you were in my eyes as some beautiful and glorified young prince."

She laughs as she says it, but with a tremor in the clear voice.

"I fell in love with you, even then. You never saw me, you know, in those days, and what wonder? I thought Lora Elsaford the most enviable creature in the world, because you seemed to like her—I hated your cousin because you seemed so fond of her. I used to watch for you to come here. I believe—without knowing it, I was wildly jealous of Olga, of Leo, of every pretty girl who came near you. And when I ran away with George Bishop, do you know what kept me from marrying him? Simply because I saw you—you passed, through the hotel hall, and out into the street, and I could not. I ran away. I cared for you then, did I not? And since, when we met, and you knew me, I was glad—oh, glad, glad—and when I thought you were begging to care for me, I seemed to be in a trance. Do you all the world. I wonder why I tell you all this! I ought not, I know, but it hurts me when you say it is easy for me to give you up. It is not so, it is only right. And when that night you asked me, I was glad—glad—glad—than you will ever know. Only for a little—before an hour was over—I feared; when to-morrow came I knew. And from that time I never meant to hold you to your word.

"I care for you so much, Frank, my friend, my brother, that I give you up. We should never be happy. You would repent, and I should see it, and it would break my heart. Indeed it would, if I were your wife. And I prefer an unbroken friend to a husband who has lost my love, or my heart." I feel this farewell now—so, perhaps, do you in a different way, but it will not hurt either of us, I hope, very badly. But you believe me, Frank, that it is because I have cared for you, and do, that I give you up."

She holds out her hand again. This time he takes it in both his.

He cannot speak—what is there to say?—it is the saddest, gentlest, humblest moment of his life. Her face, too, is sad, her eyes wistful, her grace still lingers on that fading light upon the sea.

"And when we have parted," Joanna goes on, after that pause, "and you meet someone you really love, and who has power to let no foolish scruple about this hold you back, or tear the happiness of that other. And if—slowly—if in anyone for whom I care, the obligations will be more binding still. If you feel you owe me anything repay it in that way. I will understand and rejoice. To-morrow there are things Leo will tell you—why do you start? Leo is not an alarming personage—things you ought to know, and which I prefer you should hear first from her. And now I am tired of talking, and here comes Leo and Mrs. Hill. Perhaps we can have that tea. It is time, for I am thirsty, and must soon be off. Can we not have tea out under the trees, Mrs. Hill? It is so delicious here, in sight of the sea."

So they have tea, and the repast is even more silent than luncheon.

The two young ladies do their best, but Livingston simply cannot talk. His heart is full, and it is there is little room for any but Joanna just now. Then it is over. Joanna looks at her watch again.

"Half-past six. I want to say good bye here, and see you two off before I depart myself. Mrs. Hill, please have them bring the trap round to take me to the station. Leo—Frank!"

And then the supreme moment has come, and Leo's arms are around her, and Leo is sobbing on her breast.

She holds out both hands to Livingston, with tears in the brave, bright eyes.

"Take her away," she says, in a stifled voice; "I cannot bear it. Be good to her, Frank. Heaven bless you both!"

And then, somehow, she is alone, and they are gone, and a last burst of yellow sunshine takes them, and they are lost to view.

She sits down, and covers her face with a long, hard breath. Some oft-quoted lines come into her head, and keep echoing there, and will not be exercised after the fashion of such things. "So tired, so tired, my heart and I!" She is conscious of feeling tired, old, cold, worn out.

She sits a long time, it seems to her—ten minutes by Mrs. Hill's count—and then that portly matron returns, and says the carriage is waiting.

Joanna rises at once.

She is pale, and her eyes are wet, but that is natural enough. She says good bye to Mrs. Hill, and slips largesse into her palm, and goes. And all the way to the station, and all the way back to London, as the train thunders over the iron road, it keeps monotonously beating out the refrain, "So tired, so tired, my heart and I."

CHAPTER XX.

WEDDING BELLS.

Early that autumn there is a fashionable wedding in London, and the beautiful heiress, Miss Olga Ventnor, is the bride. The bridegroom, personally, is unknown to fame, but the "dear five hundred" can see for themselves that he is a very stately and distinguished-looking gentleman, and this goes far to condone his obscurity. That the bride, in white satin and point lace, and orange blossoms, and diamond stars, looks lovely, you know before I tell you.

That the wedding presents are numerous and splendid, the wedding breakfast a triumph of culinary art, that the speech of the bridegroom is notable among stammering bridal speeches—are not these things written in the chronicles of the books of Jenkins—have you not read it in all the daily papers, and shall I bore you with a twice told tale? "Immediately after the breakfast the happy pair departed for Italy," &c.

Thus far Olga and Geoffrey. Mrs. Abbott and Leo go back to their suburban retreat, their birds, their books, their piano, their quiet life. Abbott Wood knows no change—Mrs. Hill still reigns supreme. Joanna is right in her prediction that Leo's mother will never again dwell within its walls.

"All houses wherein men have lived and died are haunted houses,"

"Abbott Wood is to her a haunted house, haunted by terrible memories and a dreadful death.

"For Frank Livingston, he goes to London, sets up his easel and *atelier*, and goes to work with an energy and will that astonish his friends. His lazy insouciance is gone—he is a holiday artist, playing at picture-making, no more.

What is given him to do, he does with all his might. It is no great thing, perhaps—he is no embryo Raphael or Dore, but his best he does. And he has a fair standard.

He paints a picture that winter that is exhibited, and criticised, and a good deal talked about. Better, a very rich man, and a patron of native talent, buys it at a fancy price.

It is a twilight scene—some bare brown fields a dreary expanse of arid marsh, a gray, frowning sky, a chill wind—you can feel the chill rustling of the reeds and sedge grass—a broken rail fence, and a barefooted girl leaning upon it. Her wild hair blows in the wind, her face is wan and unchildlike, her eyes, fixed on the far-off sky line, have a mournful, appealing, dogdike look. It is called "Heart Hungry."

It is Joanna, of course, as he has often seen her in the days when he thought of her so little. Her thinks of her now, almost more than of anyone else, with mingled affection, admiration, and remorse.

How noble she is, how generous, how great of heart! He feels that he could never have made her happy; her nature is too noble for his. As man and wife they would have jarred. It is better as it is!

All he can do is to try, by constant hard work to approach ever so little nearer her level. He paints other pictures, and they sell. He is fairly successful, and each new success spurs him on to still further endeavours.

Of Leo he sees nothing; in those busy days he has little time for visits, and besides—well, besides, there is a long future for all that.

Spring comes—May, June.

With the end of June returns the wedded pair, looking happy and handsome, and absorbed in each other, of course. Almost immediately they go to Brightbrook.

The Ventnors are to follow in a couple of weeks, and Mrs. Abbott and Leo have promised to spend the holidays with them. Mrs. Abbott is dying for her son, Mrs. Ventnor for her daughter. So once more they are to be reunited, the happiest household in the world.

It is Frank Livingston who drives Olga down to the station to meet the expected guests. The colour flushes into little Leo's face at sight of him—is it a surprise—nothing has been said of his coming.

"And indeed, he did not want to come," says Mrs. Dr. Lamar, severly. She makes the most charming and radiant of young matrons. "We had almost to tear him by force from his beloved studio. You may see for yourself how badly he is looking—quite old and ugly. And he used to be fairly good-looking—now, used he not, little Leo?"

And, of course, at this malicious homethrust, poor little Leo is overwhelmed with confusion and wishes the carriage would open and swallow her.

Frank laughs lazily.

He is looking rather thin, but perfectly well in all other respects. And there is an expression of manliness, of gravity, of determination on his handsome face, which is new and extremely becoming.

"His latest work of art," says Olga Lamar, on the back seat, to Leo, "is——Guess what! A picture of you. It is painted from memory, and the commission is mine—as you looked in your bridesmaid's dress dear—I never saw you look so pretty, as you did that day. What a stick the child has of blushing! Do you know we are going to live at Brightbrook, and Geoffrey will actually practise in the village? They want a doctor and he wants work. Of course, we will go to London in winter, but to all intents and purposes the ville will be home. Home! It is not a sweet word? We are enlarging and improving it in a number of ways. And we are going to settle down into the most humdrum Darby and Joan life you can imagine—we intend to."

"And speaking of Joan reminds me of Joanna—dear Joanna! Geoffrey had a letter from her last night, and, oh, Leo, she will not come. Says she is going abroad for the summer; her mother wishes to visit her native land once more. Is it not too bad? And I counted so confidently on her spending July and August with us! But it ever is. I would have my life-pictures like Queen Elizabeth's portrait, without shadow, and this cannot be. Joanna is the grey background this time, and yes—the fact that Abbott Wood is still without a mistress. But yet—I live in hope."

She runs on gayly, and laughs down in Leo's sombre, soft eyes. She is so radiantly happy—this fair Princess Olga, in her new life, that she seems to have received a fresh baptism of brightness and beauty.

Next morning the famous picture is displayed—a soft-eyed, sweet-faced girl, in white silk and lace, with white flowers in her dusky hair. In the sky, wide-open, wondering-looking eyes, there is an unconscious touch of pathos.

"Is it not charming?" Olga cries. "And do you not fall in love with yourself, little Leo, only to look at it? I do. And what have you got that pleading look in you eyes for, and why do you seem as if you were waiting for something—or somebody? Perhaps the artist knows. Did she look like that on my wedding-day, Frank? I wish you had painted me then. How do you like yourself, Leo?"

"It is much too pretty," Leo answers, blushing, of course; "it is dreadfully flattered. But I like to be flattered—in that way, I fancy."

"You hear, Frank? Leo really think it is flattered," Livingston says, a few minutes later.

He is adding some finishing touches to the likeness, and has asked her to remain. The others have moved away. He is busy, and only the summer wind swinging the roses outside the window, the bees booming, and the birds chirping in the trees.

"Indeed I do—grossly. And that expression—I am sure I never looked like that," with a little pout, "so sentimental and lackadaisical, and all that."

"Is it lackadaisical?" says the artist, laughing. "Then I think I like lackadaisical looks. But you really did wear just that pathetic expression. It was a sentimental occasion, you know, and, for the matter of that, you often have that waiting, wistful look. It becomes you. Do you know you have real Oriental eyes, Leo—long, almond-shaped, velvet-black?"

"I think I must look like a Chinaman," remarks Leo, ruefully. "They have almond eyes, have they not?"

But while she laughs she tingles to her fingerends with delight.

"You look like what you are—the fairest, dearest darling in all the world, Leo" she throws down brush and mahlstick and takes both her hands with a sudden impulse that flushes his blonde face and fires his blue eyes—"don't you know I love you?"

"Oh!" says Leo, with a sort of gasp, and tries to draw her hands away.

She turns pale now, instead of red, it is so sudden, and somehow he looks so overwhelming.

"Have I startled you, dear little Leo? You were always easily startled. I promised myself not know that I meant to speak this morning, but the love we hide so long, all in a moment breaks its bounds and overflows. I love you! You are not angry that I say this?"

"No," Leo says, and laughs nervously. "Only curious. To how many more have you said it, I wonder?"

She hits the truth so nearly that he winces. Then he, too, laughs a little.

"Yes, I have said it to others, but I do not think I ever meant it until to-day. I have deceived myself before, and taken passing fancies for love. That is one reason why I have waited so long before speaking to you. It is no passing fancy now. I love you. I have little to offer, but at least I have enough to put me beyond the suspicion of fortune-hunting. What I have I lay at your feet with my heart—my life. Will you take them, Leo?"

And Leo's answer.

Well, it is not in very coherent words, but it is very intelligible. One look of the soft, shy eyes, one drop of the blushing face, and then that face is hidden on Mr. Livingston's velvet painting blouse, and broken murmurs issue from Mr. Livingston's moustached lips, of which, "My darling! my love! my Leo!" are the only distinct articulations the listening robins and blackbirds can catch.

CHAPTER XXI.

And so there is another wedding in September, another fair bride is given away, another young man looks nonsensically happy, another bridal breakfast is eaten, another wedding trip is taken. And Abbott Wood, under the superintendence of Dr. Lamar exteriorly, and Mrs. Dr. Lamar interiorly, is to be put in applepie order for the home-coming and house-warming that are to follow, and the stately mansion is to have its mistress at last.

Joanna's prediction is verified—Leo will live there, and not alone.

For Joanna—well, letters come from California with cheerful regularity, and they breathe all good wishes for the happiness of the newly-wedded pair. She is well, and her mother improves quite wonderfully in body and mind.

She expresses no regrets at not being able to be present at the marriage, but she promises to come and spend Christmas with them at Brightbrook. Her plans for her own future are formed and settled; her mother wishes to reside permanently abroad, and Joanna lives but to accede to her wishes.

She has bought a pretty place there, she writes and called it Brightbrook, and so, after all, a Brightbrook will be her future home.

So writes Joanna. But, as it chances, Joanna is not Madame Olga's only correspondent, and it is about this time that the following letter arrives from the Lady Hilda Stafford:—

"MY DEAREST OLGA.—Your last was charming. How vividly you picture your fair Brightbrook home! How I long to see it, and Doctor Lamar, and you! But, delightful as your Brightbrook may be, it can hardly equal ours, I fancy, and even you do not know how to be more bewitching than Miss Bennett. We owe you a debt of gratitude for your letters of introduction to us, more particularly as she has made up her mind to settle among us for good.

"She has purchased an exquisite place here, and named it Brightbrook, as you know, and the neighbourhood is enchanted with its new acquisition. What a voice she has! and a pair of eyes! I fell in love with her at first sight, and, I fancy, I am not the only one who has done so. You met Sir Roland Hardwicke, you know, while here. You have not forgotten him, I hope; for if the fair, stately, green-robed Joanna does not end by becoming Lady Hardwicke, the fault will not be his. His case was hopeless from the first, and he is a splendid fellow, and quite worthy of so noble a heart as hers. He is every inch a soldier and a gentleman, owning a handsome face, a gallant figure, a long pedigree, and a long rent-roll. Send your blessing and approval, for I really think both will speedily be required.

Olga is delighted—Geoffrey smiles and approves. Both remember Sir Roland Hardwicke very distinctly, a man whose favour any woman might be proud to win. But Joanna is not one to be easily won, too readily pleased, and the pedigree and rent-roll, of which Lady Hilda speaks, will not count for much with her.

"I hope—oh, I do hope he may please her!" Olga cries, "dear, generous Joanna! If ever anyone deserved love and happiness, it is she. And as his wife I am sure she will have both. Lady Hardwicke! To think of Joanna—Elsaford's Joanna"—laughing, but with tears in the sapphire eyes—"wearing a title at last!"

After that the letters from Lady Hilda are waited for with feverish impatience. They come often, are long and satisfactory. Everything progresses well so far as he can see.

She is not in Miss Bennett's confidence, of course, but Sir Roland, who is travelling, is a frequent—a very frequent visitor at Brightbrook, and people talk of it already as a settled thing.

Everyone loves her, she is the Lady Bountiful of the parish, and Lady Hardwicke—Sir Roland's mother—has graciously offered to present her at Court, if she comes to England next season, which shows the good-nature, &c.

Early in December Mr. and Mrs. Livingston return, and parties are given, far and wide, in honour of the bride. And Frank has but one secret in the world from his little wife, and that one is the fact of his brief engagement to Joanna.

Somehow he shrinks from telling that; it is the one memory sacred to himself and his friend, that even his wife may not know. He feels its sacredness, and that it would give her pain, that Joanna would not wish it, and so he hides it in his heart as in a grave.

Two days before Christmas Joanna comes. She finds a rare household assembled at Abbott Wood, and radiant of young matrons. Mrs. Abbott, Olga and Geoffrey, Frank and Leo, of course. But there are others, whose presence is a cheering surprise—a surprise over which she laughs and cry together. The Professor and Madame Erlanson there; there, too, is portly Mr. Gibbs, rich and rare in black silk. There is Ted, quite a slim, "genteel" young man, a little conceited and overdressed, but what will you at nineteen? There are the twins, Lonzo and Lissy. There is Mrs. Hill; and the Reverend Ignatius Lamb; and little Miss Rice. There, in short, is everyone Joanna cares for most.

Her mother is not with her, the wintry voyage was too much for her, but she is so thoroughly restored she can bear cheerfully to part with her treasure for two or three months.

Olga looks at her keenly. Yes, Joanna is changed—the change that love, happy love alone works, is in her radiant face.

Looking from Olga's beautiful, questioning eyes, the quick blush and smile tell their tale. And the sapphire eyes flash with glad joy, and Olga's arms clasps her close.

"Oh, Joanna (dearest Joanna, is it indeed so, as Lady Hilda says?) And you love him, and are happy," she whispers, in a fervent kiss.

"Happy! happy! happy!" is Joanna's reply, "and love him with all my heart."

"Such a great, brave, generous heart. Oh, my darling! this only was needed to complete our cities. And when is date to be?"

"Next June, they tell me," Joanna laughs; "in May, you know, I am to be presented at Court by—by his mother. And you and Geoffrey, and Frank and Leo are to come over for the wedding, which is to be a very grand affair indeed. Olga, I think I am the very happiest and most fortunate woman in all the universe."

There are tears in the dark, earnest eyes. Olga gives her a last rapturous kiss.

"Not one whit happier than you deserve—you could not be" is her ultimatum, and like all imperial Olga's decisions, it stands uncontradicted.

CHAPTER XXII.

It is New Year's eve. Christmas, with its joy bells, its good wishes, its good cheer, its happy faces, has come and gone, and the old year is dying to-night.

"It brought me a friend, and a true, true love," sings happy Leo, as she flits about the house.

Fire burns, lights flash, warmth, music, feasting, are within; frost, wind, cold, snow, are without. The long drawing-rooms are fragrant with flowers, brilliant with lamps, gay with happy faces.

There are only the family to-night, no outsiders, but they form a sufficiently large assembly.

Near one of the windows Joanna stands, looking out at the fast falling snow, listening to the wind "wuthering" among the trees.

She looks a fair and stately woman in her rich black velvet trimmed with sable; the velvet robe suits the grand curves of her figure—it sweeps in soft, dark folds behind her on the carpet. The fine lace at her throat is caught by one, large, gleaming diamond; a knot of forget-me-nots is beneath it, another in her hair.

"You look a queen of noble Nature's crowning, Joanna," says Livingston, approaching. "I must paint you in that velvet dress, and these forget-me-nots. Do you know, you have been making a picture of yourself for the last ten minutes, and that I have been lost in artistic admiration."

"And that if it had lasted one-millionth part of a second longer I should have been jealous," laughs Leo, coming up; and then there is a momentary pause.

Livingston looks conscious. Joanna smiles down upon the dark-eyed fairy in creamy silk and white roses.

"And do you know, what is more to the purpose than empty compliments," says Mrs. Geoffrey Lamar, coming forward in a cloud of rose pink, silky shine, "that you never sing for us now, Lady Hardwicke—that is to be. You have grown very stingy about that lovely voice of yours since you have been in foreign parts. Come and chant us a New Year's anthem, or an old year's dirge, for it is almost on the witching stroke of twelve."

Joanna goes, and presently her full, rich tones ring through the room, but the wind of the winter night itself is hardly saddier, wilder, than the strain she sings:

"Toll, bells, within your airy heights!
Wail, wind, o'er moor and mere!
On this, the saddest of all nights,
The last night of the year.
The last long night when lamps are lit,
Like sad eyes round a bier
Where quiet folks at still hearths sit,
And God seems very near.

"The old clock strikes upon the stair,
Time's tide is at its turn;
And here, and there, and everywhere
The New Year steps to burn.
Strange, dreamy anthems fill the street,
The mists hang o'er the river,
The organ groans, the drums are beat,
The Old Year's gone for ever!

"Oh! Joanna, what a melancholy song!" cries little Leo, reproachfully—"and to-night of all nights! You give me the heart-ache. Do sing something less dreary."

"Hark!" says Geoffrey, raising his hand. All the clocks in the house chime out one after another—twelve. The bells in Brightbrook burst forth a joyous peal—the New Year has begun. Good wishes go round, they touch glasses in the German fashion, and drink to each other, and "eyes look love to eyes that speak again."

Joanna sings—her voice touches the keys. This time it is like a jubilant burst of joy:

"Swing bells, a hundred happy ways!
Laugh, wind, o'er moor and mere;
On this the gladdest of all days,
The first day of the year!
The first sweet day when all content
We gather round the hearth;
O God, we thank Thee, who has sent
This New Year to our earth!"

"What a grand creature she is!" Frank Livingston thinks, standing a little apart, looking and listening; "the noblest woman that walks the earth!"

His little bride, never content for many minutes together to be away from him, comes up, and slips her hand through his arm with the old wistful, upward look.

"Thinking of Joanna?" she says. "Does she not sing deliciously, and does she not sing lovely to-night? Frank, I wonder, rich, accomplished, handsome as she is, that you never fell in love with her in the old days. I believe she never had even a passing fancy in all her life until she met this Sir Roland Hardwicke. Joanna—Lady Hardwicke! Can you realise it?"

"But Frank does not say a word, and Geoffrey Lamar, who is standing by his side, is silent, for his memory runs back to another time, and another face, the face of poor Marie de Lorme, her weary, lonely life, comes up before his mental vision, only to fade away again as rapidly. It was cruel to give her up. It would have been doubly so to have married her.

(THE END.

THE Empress of Austria met with an accident on the first day she was out with the Ward staghounds. Her horse was carried against passing through a gate, and so much hurt that the principal veterinary surgeon was immediately telegraphed for from Dublin. The Empress herself was not thrown, and received no injury.

THE young Marquis of Lansdowne has been spending the whole winter on his Kerry estates in order personally to conduct relief works. He has been making roads, draining extensively, and otherwise providing work for hundreds. Besides this, he has bought large quantities of seed potatoes to retail at half price to needy farmers. He has done only what he ought to do, but how few Irish landlords would have done so much.

ABOUT PROMINENT PEOPLE.

THE life of the late Marquis of Anglesey was insured in various companies for an aggregate of not less than £750,000. The present Marquis will come into a magnificent and unencumbered property, with an estimated income of £100,000 a year.

LORD BEACONSFIELD had no less than eleven Dukes at his parliamentary dinner on the eve of the opening of the Session. Lord Granville could only muster four. How the soul of the author of "The Young Duke" must have rejoiced within him.

It is freely stated in court circles in