

Literary Miscellany.

MIRK ABBEY.

CHAPTER XV.—Continued.

MISTRESS AND MAID.

It was very seldom—not once in a year, perhaps—that Mary Forest was ever out of temper with her lady; but then such a supreme occasion as the present had never occurred before.

"I will say nothing more, Mary, of the mutual esteem and affection between us two and of the pain that an eternal parting—such as your marriage with Mr. Derrick would most undoubtedly entail—needs must cost us both."

"You have met him some dozen times—during a period of less than four months; yet such is his influence over you, that you are prepared to sacrifice for him a friend of thirty years' standing, a comfortable home, and a position in which you are respected by all who know you."

"Now, what is it," pursued my lady, "which has produced this confidence in an almost strange man? Do you know anything of his former life, which may be a guarantee to you for the stability of your future? Have you ever met a single individual who is acquainted with it in any way?"

"For a moment the relative position of Mentor and pupil were exchanged; there was a quiet power about the waiting-maid's rebuke, for which an archbishop would have given more than his blessing, if he could only have incorporated it into a charge."

"You are right, Mary," said my lady frankly: "let us only speak of what is within our own knowledge. Does this man's own conduct, then, give any promise of lasting happiness to the woman who may become his wife? Is he sober?"

"I believe he is fond of a glass, my lady, as most men are who have no home, or people to look after them. If he had a wife, he would never go to the public-house at all, perhaps—be he tells me so himself."

"I am not aware, my lady, that his age is anything against him," replied the waiting-maid coldly. "He is not so likely to run through his money as if he were younger, and particularly when he has got some to provide for beside himself. And indeed, so far as money goes, he has thousands of pounds, and if he goes well with his—something has occurred today about which he has sent me a line by hand, dear fellow, by which it has been made almost certain that things will go well—he will be a very rich man indeed after a week or two. There is some great race on Epsom Downs."

"O Mary, how can you talk so cheerfully of money acquired in that way. If it is won to-day, it is lost to-morrow; and even if it is not lost to-morrow, it is gained from those who can ill afford to lose it, and who, having lost it, often turn to wicked ways?"

"I don't know about that, my lady, I'm sure," responded the waiting-maid demurely; "I leave all these things to my betters. But, I suppose, if racing was a crime, Mr. Chisney would not be let to have the Abbey Farm—Sir Richard being so very particular—and Master Walter would not let ever be up at the stables. Why, he and Mr. Derrick are both together, hand and glove, in this very business—something about a French race, it is; although, when you and I were at Dijon, my lady, we never heard of there being such a thing in all France, did we?—so my poor Ralph cannot be so very wicked after all. And please, ma'am, if it is no use saying anything more about it, for I have written him that letter already which he was to find in London, and put it in the post."

"And did you answer 'Yes' 'No,' Mary?" "I answered 'Yes,' my lady—that I would marry him—and begging your pardon, ma'am, but I mean to stand to it."

wits. Would you have me picture what this house would be should he come hither and claim me for his wife? Richard and he beneath the same roof, and he the master! Would Walter, though he herds with him, you say, brook this man as his equal? Would he not loathe him rather, and how soon, ah me! unlearn the love he owes to me, his wretched mother? I cannot bear to think of it, I tell you. Let us act; let us be doing something, something! How my brain whirls! Think for me, Mary, pray for me, for Heaven is deaf, alas, to my prayers!"

But even while she spoke, the gracious tears began to fill the furrows in her cheeks; which until now had been dry throughout her talk; and having told her friend, the weight about her heart was lifted off a little, and the brightness round her brow was loosened by the blessed hand of sympathy.

"I must write to him at once," said Mary thoughtfully. "How fortunate that he did not leave Mirk until to-night. The two letters will now reach him at the same time. He cannot write in answer to the one which I—while I wrote first, without having read the other; that will be something saved."

"There is but little hope in that, I fear; for he himself has this night told me—yes, I saw him face to face, Mary, only I was thickly veiled, thank Heaven—the told me frankly (thinking that I did not wish to lose my waiting-maid) that he should lay it to my charge if my reply was 'No,' and should not take it as the answer of your heart. How much more, if he gets a refusal coming so quickly upon the very heels of this acceptance, will he decline to believe it comes from your own self. More likely, it would cause him, reckless as he is, to do something rash and vengeful, perhaps to return hither on the instant, and to marry, Mary, I would give five thousand pounds this day, if that would stop his coming to Mirk again!"

"What? Not know whether he's married or not? Wobbed the unhappy bride-elect. 'I don't believe that, at all events, even if I believe you. He has married so many, that he doesn't know rightly who is his wife; that is what you mean, I see. Sailors are all alike. O dear, dear, dear, when Mrs. Welsh comes to know of it! And the manster will have got my letter by to-morrow night, to shew about it! How nearly have I been committing bi—bi—bigamy!"

"Calm yourself, dear Mary, calm yourself. Your trouble is nothing to what I suffer, and must continue to endure for my life long."

"Ah, my lady, I daresay it is very bad to be a widow; but it's much worse to die an old—leastways, at forty-five or forty rather—than to lose—O dear! what an honest man he looked, and such a beard and eyes! I will never trust to appearances again. I daresay it is very wrong, my lady, but I feel—feel—as though I could turn Mr. Derrick's eyes out, I do, indeed!"

"We have known one another more than half our lives, Mary," said I, "and yet that there has been a secret between us all this time. I have never kept anything else from you, but this was not mine alone to tell; it was Sir Robert's also. When he asked me to become his wife at Coveton, and you thought me so mad for first refusing him, and afterwards for demanding such a long delay, I had a reason for it, which he knew, but which you have never guessed. It was then the three-weeks' bride of another man. You may well start, Mary, but that is the dreadful truth. The man, Ralph Gavestone, whom I mourned so deeply, as being drowned with my dear parents'—and that rest of the ship's company, in that great storm—which I would to Heaven had whelmed me in its waves—was not my half-brother, as Sir Robert persuaded me to give out, but my husband!"

"You had no wedding ring, my lady, when you came ashore," murmured the waiting-maid half incredulously.

"That is true, Mary. I know not how it was, but perhaps the cold and wet of that dreadful night made my fingers shrink—you remember how wan and thin I looked—and the ring must have dropped off; I never saw it after I reached land. But I was none the less a widow; and I thought, and although friendly, save for you, Mary, when I married another as Sir Robert's wife than you were, Mary. Think of that. And he was not my husband. And our children, of whom he was so proud, are baseborn—bastards. Sir Richard, is it not terrible? do you not wonder that I live and am not mad? he is not Sir Richard. And my dear, dear Walter, he is baseborn too. And Letty—for whom her eldest brother thinks nobody too high—she, too, is no Liscard. If I had waited seven years instead of three, this would not have been so. There are law-books in the library which have told me so much; but I have no adviser—none; no friend—yes, you, Mary, I know—but not one who could help me. Is not that something worse than death itself which has fallen upon me?"

"And this man Derrick, he was Gavestone?" whispered Mary Forest, in a hoarse, grating voice.

"Yes, did I not tell you so? I only found it out last Christmas Eve. I knew his voice, and I knew the carol that he sang. For one thing only do I thank Heaven—I who had reason, as I thought, to be thankful for so many things—that Sir Robert is not alive. His sleep in yonder churchyard is disturbed by no such ghastly dream. Ah, happy dead!"

"I must, beloved Mistress," cried the waiting-maid, in an agony of remorse—"forgive me that I have been thinking of myself these many weeks, while you have been so burdened and tormented. Henceforth, I am yours only. As I hope to get to Heaven when I die, I will be true to you whatever happens. Let us think what that may be."

THE CIRCULATION OF 'THE HERALD' RAPIDLY INCREASING.

THE GREATEST WONDER OF MODERN TIMES. HOLLOWAY'S PILLS AND OINTMENT.



The Pills purify the Blood, correct all disorders of the Liver, Stomach, Kidneys and Bowels, and are invaluable in all complaints incidental to Females.

I deem it my duty to state that my Pills and Ointment are neither manufactured nor sold in the United States.

SPECIAL NOTICES. OXYGEN IS LIFE.—DR. BRIGT'S PHOSPHODYNE.—MULTITUDES OF PEOPLE are laboring under Debility, Nervous and Labor Complaints, Depression of Spirits, Hypochondria, Timidity, Indigestion, Failure of Hearing, Sight and Memory, Lassitude, Want of Power, etc., whose cases admit of a permanent cure by the new remedy PHOSPHODYNE.

MEDICAL HALL, MARKHAM. GEORGE RANKIN, Dispensing Chemist, MAIN STREET, MARKHAM.

AT THE HERALD JOB PRINTING OFFICE, RICHMOND HILL, ONTARIO.

A LARGE STOCK OF TEAS. Family Groceries. I. Crosby, Fire Proof Store, RICHMOND HILL, ONTARIO.

BOOK OF THE CENTENNIAL Newspaper Exhibition. Three hundred pages. A complete Newspaper Directory (Guarantee of towns in which newspapers are published, and including sketches of leading American Newspapers, compiled by Geo. P. Rowell & Co.) PRICE BY MAIL, 35 CENTS.

THOMAS SEDMAN, CARRIAGE and Wagon Maker, Undertaker, etc. Residence—Nearly opposite the Post Office, Richmond Hill.

Something New at the People's Store IN MACHINERY OILS.

Anderson's Lightning Lubricator. This Machine Oil will neither gum nor freeze at a temperature as low as zero.

Boiled and Raw Linsed Oil, Turpentine, White Lead and colorings, Paint Brushes, Sash Tools, Stripping Brushes, Putty, and Glass of all Sizes.

A Large Stock of FURNITURE kept constantly on hand. FLOUR AND FEED! All of which will be sold at the Lowest Possible Rates for Cash.

M. H. KEEFER, SUCCESSOR TO ALEX. SCOTT, Bookseller, Stationer, Printer, Publisher and News Agent, Richmond Hill, Ont.

AT FALCONBRIDGE'S THIS DAY. In addition to his very extensive and well assorted stock of Dry Goods, Groceries, etc., the Subscriber begs to announce that he has

Just Received a Large Supply of Lyman Brothers & Co.'s OF MONTREAL, CELEBRATED 'Genuine' and 'No. 1' White Lead.

Also Fire-proof Paint for Outhouses, Fences, etc., with Suitable Oil, at a Low Figure; also Boiled and Raw Linsed Oil, Turpentine, etc. A large lot of Self-Sealing Fruit Jars. Jones' celebrated spades, shovels, Hay and barley Forks, etc.

J. K. FALCONBRIDGE. Richmond Hill, June 13, 1876.

'The Herald' Book & Fancy Store. M. H. Keefer, Proprietor, List of Licensed Pedlars and Auctioneers for County of York.

Table with 4 columns: NAME, RESIDENCE, DESCRIPTION OF LICENSE, DATE WHEN LICENSE EXPIRES. Lists names like Robert Sharp, John E. Beck, Fred. Cobbin, etc.

SCHOOL REQUISITES! OF ALL KINDS. Books, Stationery & Fancy Goods, AT 'THE HERALD' BOOK STORE, M. H. Keefer, Proprietor. The Herald's office for Fine Printing Games, Toys, &c. FOR SALE AT the Hra 10, Book Store

Protected by Royal Letters Patent. Dated October 11th, 1869.

UNDER DISTINGUISHED PATENT. DR. BRIGHT'S PHOSPHODYNE. (OZONIC OXYGEN.)

This Phosphodyne combination is pronounced by most eminent members of the Medical Profession to be unequalled for its power in supplying the vitality of the body, by supplying all the essential constituents of the blood and nerve substance, and for developing all the powers and functions of the system to the highest degree.

It is agreeable to the palate, and innocent in its action, wide reaching all its extraordinary properties, and as a specific, surpassing all the known therapeutic agents of the present day for the speedy and permanent cure of the following complaints:

Loss of Energy and Ap... Consumption (in its early stages only) Hypochondria Eruptions of the Skin General Debility Impaired Sight and Memory Flatulence Nervous Fancies Indigestion Nervous Debility in all its stages Sick Headache Premature Puberty And all morbid conditions of the system arising from whatever cause.

Dr. Bright's Phosphodyne IS SOLD ONLY IN CASES AT 10s. 6d. BY ALL CHEMISTS AND PATENT MEDICINE VENDERS THROUGHOUT THE ISLAND.

Advertisement for 'The Russell Watch' featuring an image of a watch and text describing its quality and availability at W. E. Cornell, 83 King Street East, Toronto, Ont.