

As Fortune Smiles.

A TALE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

CHAPTER XI.

Nearly a month had elapsed since the operation was performed on Herbert; and the great surgeon's predictions of success had been amply justified. The wound had closed again, and a healthy flush was spreading over the previously pale face.

For nearly a month the young man had not seen a soul except Sir William or his attendant; he had not set eyes on a book or newspaper; he had written no letters, nor received any. Not a disturbing sound of the outer world had penetrated to his place of self-appointed confinement, and whether he were north, east, west, or south of London he knew not.

As his bodily strength increased, the traces of his once-lost mental faculty returned. Scenes of his childhood that had been shrouded as by a dark veil shot into the light of memory with refreshing sweetness. He again remembered his father, of whose appearance he had retained no recollection, and the kindly, lovely face of his dead mother smiled at him again. He remembered the glad days at Chaucey Towers. His boyish gambols, his intercourse with lads of his own age, and over it all beamed the contented approval of a happy mother. Then came his schooldays, his combats at Eton, and his youthful love for the pretty girl who has since blossomed into the stately Lady Evelyne.

The evening would close with some such recollection as this, and though the effort fatigued the still weak brain just a trifle, he would be glad to wake in the morning refreshed by the memories which had been after a fashion newly born to him.

There was nothing in his surroundings which could possibly induce his mind to tire itself by undue efforts; but, bit by bit, fragments of his past life sprang upon him as if from hidden ambushes of the soul—some agreeable, others less so. He remembered the rollicking, roystering of his University times, and the hundred-and-one flirtations of the days that followed. Then came the memory of his disgrace with his parents, and with the parents of Lady Evelyne, of his journey to the West, and of his struggles and wanderings there.

All this welled like a limpid stream, cool and refreshing. There was little that jarred, and but here and there a sad memory left a darkish spot upon an otherwise fair page.

He had been thinking of Lady Evelyne—what a handsome wife she would make, what a distinguished sharer of his honors and of his titles, a partner in life to be proud of. Yet there was something that failed to touch his heart about her image. She seemed cold and flighty, and her professions were thin as air, a very butterfly of thoughtless buoyancy; a beautiful moth whose wings might be torn and soiled by a rough touch.

He thought that he liked Lady Evelyne, and he remembered that his boyish fancy had gone straight out to her and had thought her the one woman in the world with whom he might be happy.

He remembered how, during many a dark, bleak night on the prairies, her picture had shone upon him in his dreams like a beacon of flaming hope to guide him to derring-do. It was a beautiful picture, but its beauty was marble, white and cold.

Then another face would dawn upon him in the haze of his enrapturing dreams. A rosy, pretty, lovable, kissable face, with pouting cherry lips, and dimpled cheeks, with big, soft-beaming, tender blue eyes; a sweet face—a face that glowed with womanly truth; a face, the sight of which made his blood flow faster and his finger ends tingle, and made him remember that he was a man. He might have admired a dozen Lady Evelynes, and passed them coldly by, but Lucy's face had the magic charm of hot and budding womanhood upon him, as he traced line by line, the familiar face, he blessed the stars that had sent such an angel across his path.

On a sudden, he came to think that he did not remember how or where he had first met her, and the fierce effort of recollection had become a source of fatigue to him. He passed a day or two in this state of perplexing doubt, and as he did not know where to commence, the picture that formed itself before his eyes was always vague and shapeless.

Then a desire, sharp and strong asserted itself. He wanted to see Lucy; he wanted to read the secret of his past in her eyes; he wanted Lucy herself to furnish the key that would unlock the mysterious shrine.

He was not aware that Lucy was in the house. On the very morning of the day on which the Maclanes completed the actual labor of their fiendish task, Sir William Cutbertson paid a visit to the Nest.

The surgeon was vastly pleased with the progress his patient had made, and replied to the latter's insistent prayer for renewed communication with the outer world with a reassuring smile.

"All in good time, my lord," the medico said. "We must be sure to be able to walk before being allowed to run."

"But think of it, Sir William," the young man whimpered. "I've been here a month without seeing even Miss Maclane."

"Do you really wish to see Miss Maclane?" the surgeon asked. "Would it content you to see Miss Maclane?"

Young Cleve drew up his eyebrows, as if in amazement at the question.

"Do I really wish to see Miss Maclane?" he repeated. "Why, Sir William, if you had been left like myself, without speaking to a soul, don't you think it would please you to speak to a pretty girl who, you know, would do anything in the world to serve you?"

"Now, now, now," the medical adviser remonstrated. "This will never do. We are getting enthusiastic, and we are not strong enough for that kind of thing yet. 'Slow and sure' must be our motto."

"Don't you think you're a little too cautious, Sir, William?" Herbert pleaded.

His eyes brightened and he looked the old gentleman in the face. "Do send to London for Miss Maclane," he continued. "I should be so pleased if you would."

"Well," replied the surgeon, "since we are so very obstinate on this point, science, I suppose, will have to overstep the bounds of caution and to be unusually lenient. Now, if you can get yourself to imagine that Miss Maclane is living with you at this very moment, in this very house—to imagine only, mind you—just at the other side of this door, for instance, and if you think you can accustom your mind to this imagined state of things for a whole day. I may send Miss Maclane to you this evening, and I may allow you, if the night is fine, to have a walk with her in the garden."

The young earl grasped both Sir William's hands and shook them heartily. "Thank you, Sir William," he exclaimed, "thank you!"

The rest of that day was one long stretch of expectant excitement to him. He was to see Lucy. The thought brought back the vigor of his early love, and banished every flickering breath of his affection for Lady Evelyne. Lucy stood again before his mind's eye, and as he was sitting by his open window in the cool and breezy summer evening, with his gaze fixed on the cascades of greenery on the old wall opposite, that homely background changed to a giant rock reaching skywards hundreds of yards, with the blue of the heavens gleaming above. A simple rude log hut nestled against the side of the rock, and a primitive road, overgrown with moss and weeds, ran in front of it.

He was there. He remembered that very well. He was dressed in the buckskin hunting shirt, and the fringe-edged buckskin trousers of the frontiersman; a broad-brimmed felt hat shaded his bronzed face; his feet were encased in moccasins, and he sat on a horse that was caparisoned with a Mexican saddle and trappings.

And Lucy was there. How well he remembered her now. How well he remembered that sun-bonnet and that homely gown. He remembered how his heart had gone out to that pretty face at first sight. He remembered how he had said a few dainty nothings to the girl, and had ridden away mountainward. Where had he ridden to? Here the picture became confused again, and memory declined to serve him.

He walked up and down his room, and with the soft air bathing his face he became more composed. He made another effort. Fred Ashland appeared to him, dressed in a mixture of the garb in which he had seen him only a month back, and of that in use among the mountaineers. It was Fred Ashland and it was not Fred Ashland—there was something perplexing about the man—and Fred Ashland received him cheerily, and told him that he had found gold and that he required his help.

On a sudden, the remembrance of Dick Ashland's letter, but lately in his hand, flashed across his mind, distinct and clear. "Great heavens!" he cried, "that's Dick Ashland! Dick Ashland! Dick Ashland! The man who has never been heard of again—the man who found the gold—the brother, and the living image of that man who came to me the other day."

He sank into his arm-chair and sat there stonily, tapping the floor with his feet. But Lucy's face gleamed again in the blue twilight, and he remembered that, in a few moments, he was to shake her hand, to assure himself, again of her kindly sympathy, of her love.

The expectation soothed his anxiety, and left him hopeful and bright. He waited, as he thought for an hour or more, and then he thought another hour passed. Sir William had promised that he should see Lucy that night, and Lucy had not yet come.

The last gleams of day had sunk in a flood of amber light behind the tree-tops, and night had settled over the scene with soft and pearly blues. Herbert was still thinking of the woman he loved, and who loved him so well, when the door of his room opened noiselessly, and—yes—there was Lucy stretching out both hands to him, her face a little paler and a little sadder than when he had last seen it, but still as lovely and as sweet as ever. There was the warmth of surpassing joy about their mute greeting, and for a few moments they stood looking into each other's eyes, while a silent tear ran down Lucy's face.

But he had so much to tell her. He grew warm upon the subject of his newly-recovered faculty, and she listened as if she drank life and happiness with every word. He was so glad to be able to tell her all he remembered, his boyish history, his days at school and afterward, and he wandered on to his roving on the prairies. Lucy's face became paler yet, and a husky awe trembled on her brow.

He told her all that he remembered about their first meeting, and about his encounter with Dick Ashland. Suddenly a look of horror crept over his features. He started up, as from a fearful dream, and stared at the girl who sat in front of him.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "It's come back to me! It's come back to me! It was David Maclane who murdered Dick Ashland, and who tried to murder me!"

He rose, writhing his arms in the air, and with staring eyes he retreated a step or two.

"I can see him as if it were now," he added, in nervous rapidity. "I can see him in the moonlight. I am lying here, and Dick Ashland is lying there." He pointed with outstretched fingers to two distinct places on the carpet. We are both shot—those fiends, the Maclanes, have shot us from the gulch head above, I can see David Maclane drawing a big knife across Dick Ashland's throat, and the blood is spurting all over him as he kneels, and I fire at the hound from where I lie; and he comes running towards me and grips me by the throat and takes my pistol from me and beats me with it on the head—savagely, furiously. And I heard a woman's voice crying 'Stop! stop!' and I can see you, Lucy—you, Lucy—coming down the gulch side!"

The hot tears were streaming over his face. His breath heaved as if in suffocating agony, and his hand quivered by his side.

Lucy had risen also, and was standing there like a white statue of despair, wringing her hands in voiceless, tearless torture.

He gazed at her long and intently, drawing his breath in vain efforts to speak. At last he clutched his hair and cried:

"Your father and your cousin murdered Dick Ashland—and you—you saved my life."

He fell down on his knees and dragged

himself to where she stood, and covered her cold hand with kisses.

"You angel of angels! Why did I not know ere this what I owe to you? Why do I remember it only now?"

When the picture of that fearful scene was completed, and he had not pushed her from him in disgust as the daughter of an assassin; when he had only found words of praise for what she deemed but her duty humbly done, the warm fountain of her heart were loosened and Lucy found relief in balm tears. Her heart-strings, strained to breaking nearly, again in tender music. She stooped to him, and obeying her gentle impulse, he rose to his feet.

They were both unstrung in mind. Sir William had permitted them a walk in the garden, and they stepped out into the sweetly cool night.

How long they walked up and down there, with barely a word spoken now and then, neither of them knew.

The heavens glittered with their canopy of stars, and the ghostly light of the moon spread like a pearly foam over the sward and the flower-clad borders.

They walked round to the other side of the house, where a bench invited them to a momentary rest. It was now Lucy's turn to open her heart. He knew all now, all that she had hoped to hide from him—her father's crime, her cousin's guilt. Her task was ended, she said; fairer hands than hers would smooth his path—a worthy woman than she would bring him love and affection. All that remained, to her now was to go away—far away—far away from him and from the world, to some spot where, forgotten by those she knew, she might bring solace to some who were suffering.

He started up as if in a fright.

"You want to go away, Lucy?" he cried. "You want to leave me because your father is guilty? You, the truest woman on this earth! No, Lucy; I know you now better than I ever did, and your father's guilt can bring no stain to you."

At that moment, on a sudden, a fierce, fiendish, unearthly roar grew into a hundred deafening crashes not far from them. The very earth seemed to tremble, and their frightened eyes were blinded by a fiery glare. Thunder-crash succeeded on thunder-crash, and a perfect hailstorm of iron and stone rained about them without touching them.

David and George Maclane's hellish scheme had brought retribution on their own heads.

CHAPTER XII.

The "Morning News," of 19th July, 1860, contained the following paragraph: "A terrible, and up to this moment totally unexplainable, explosion of gunpowder occurred about one o'clock this morning at Repton Lodge, a small house standing in its own grounds, on a lane between Shepperton and Halliford-on-Thames, about nineteen miles from Charing Cross. Mr. Samuel Bond, the proprietor of the 'Grayhound' Inn, at Shepperton, a few weeks ago, let the house to Mr. Sylvanus Thompson, who lived in it with a sick friend, whose name is unknown, and an elderly servant. Mr. Thompson was not in the house at the time of the disaster, but it is feared that both the other men have become victims to the explosion. The house has been completely destroyed, and fragments have been found a quarter of a mile away. Considerable damage has also been done to the next building, The Nest, belonging to Sir William Cutbertson, but, luckily, the Earl of Cleve, and a young lady, an attendant, who were staying at The Nest at the time, escaped without injury."

The "Morning News," of 20th July, contained the following: "We can now amplify the lengthened and detailed account given in our issue of yesterday about the explosion at Repton Lodge, by some thrilling and horrifying particulars. Upon the removal yesterday, by the workmen engaged in the task, of the debris of the gutted place, a shaft about ten feet deep was discovered in the centre of the floor of the lower room. The men who descended found that it communicated by an excavated narrow tunnel with a small dug-out chamber underneath the room in which the Earl of Cleve has lately been confined. This, in addition to the discovery of the packet of unexploded fuses, and the large amount of gunpowder that had been stored at Repton Lodge, points inevitably to a dastardly, but happily by Providence frustrated, attempt upon the life of the young earl. The matter is now in the hands of the authorities at Scotland Yard, and active researches are being made for Mr. Sylvanus Thompson, who has not yet shown himself, and whose whereabouts are totally unknown. We understand that the Earl of Cleve has offered a reward of a thousand pounds for the discovery of the perpetrator or perpetrators of this crime, and we are happy to add that Lord Cleve, who, as our readers are aware, has only just recovered from a dangerous operation, is none the worse for the accident."

The "Morning News," of the 23d July, published the following: "The accumulated evidence concerning the explosion at Beeton Lodge, Halliford-on-Thames, becomes daily more appalling. It has now been incontrovertibly proved that the horribly-mangled remains of the two men killed by the explosion are those of Mr. David Maclane and Mr. George Maclane, two American millionaires, residing at The Boltons, South Kensington, who lately attracted a very great deal of attention in London society. Mr. David Maclane having been engaged to be married to Lady Evelyne Wynter, only daughter of the Marquis of Gwendale. The awful news has spread consternation in fashionable circles, and people are asking with bated breath whether the Maclanes are the victims or the originators of an attempted dastardly crime."

The "Morning News," of 27th July, said: "No doubt whatever remains at the present moment that the wretched men, George and David Maclane, became, by the intervention of an avenging Providence, the victims of their own fiendish scheme to assassinate Lord Cleve. The earl has informed the authorities that David and George Maclane were the men who had attempted to murder him in the Rocky Mountains, and that it was David Maclane who had inflicted upon him the terrible wounds which had brought about his total loss of memory. The motive for this second attempt on Lord Cleve's life was the fear of discovery and conviction, resulting from the earl's newly-regained faculty of memory."

The "Morning News," of 16th September, 1860, said:

"The English Consulate at Paris has received information that a very large sum of money in notes of the Bank of England and Bank of France has been found upon the body of Herbert Vavasour, an English gentleman, who has died of delirium tremens at the Hotel des Etrangers. No papers or documents of any kind were found giving a clue to the deceased's friends or relatives, and money remains in the possession of the French police."

From the "Morning News," 26th September, 1860:

"The body of a man calling himself Herbert Vavasour, lately deceased in Paris, has been recognized as that of Edward Wall, a convicted thief. The numbers of the notes found upon him proved that they were issued by the Bank of England to David Maclane who was killed in the Repton Lodge explosion."

The newspapers of the year 1860 do not show that any further evidence was adduced to prove who was the actual perpetrator of the Repton Lodge outrage. I am, therefore, justified in believing that it remained one of those mysterious crimes which the London police have been unable to unravel.

L'ENVOI.

"Mr. Quentheim has settled it all, my dear Lucy," said the Earl of Cleve to the beautiful young countess, "and we will not touch one copper of those blood-stained millions. A hundred thousand pounds go to Fred Ashland, and three hundred thousand pounds are divided among his three children. The London charities get a million; twenty thousand pounds go to the Staffordshire hospitals, and the rest is distributed among charitable institutions in America. Are you contented now, my dear? he asked."

She threw her arms around his neck and kissed him.

"Yes, darling," she said, with a tear brimming in her big blue eye. "I am happy now—as happy as ever I hope to be in this wicked world."

[THE END.]

BETHLEHEM'S STAR.

The Mysterious Luminary That Suddenly Disappeared from Cassiopeia.

Some time ago various newspapers of Europe and America contained the startling intelligence that the star which guided the "Wise Men" would again appear. This star was connected with that celebrated one which, 318 years ago, suddenly disappeared from the constellation of Cassiopeia, and it was found that this star of 1572 had previously appeared in the years 1264 and 945, and, if counted back, must have appeared in the year of the birth of Christ. If these facts were well established, we must certainly expect the star to appear in our day. We should then see a new body in the heavens, entirely unlike any fixed star to be seen in full daylight, which would in a short time again disappear. Every astronomer in recent times has asked hundreds of questions on this subject. Is it true that the Star of Bethlehem will again appear? Is it periodical? Is its place in the sky appointed? The next question is: What really happened in 1572?

It was a few months after St. Bartholomew's Night, Tycho Brahe, the great observer of those days, tells us that: "One evening, as I was watching the heavens in my accustomed manner, I saw, to my great astonishment, in the constellation of Cassiopeia, a brilliant star of unusual clearness." This was on November 11, 1572. Three days before the star had been seen by Cornelius Gemma, who spoke of it as "this new Venus." In December of the same year its luster

BEGAN TO WANE,

and in March, 1574, it had entirely disappeared, leaving no trace. As to the stars of 945 and 1264, we have no authority except that of the Bohemian astrologer, Cyprian Lowitz. No historian mentions them, and the Chinese chroniclers, who watched all appearances in the sky with great care, do not speak of them. Even granting the appearance of these stars to have been a fact, their resemblance to the Star of Bethlehem is doubtful. It is true that by counting back we come to the years 630, 315 and 0; but the star should have again appeared some time between 1880 and 1891.

With regard to the Star of Bethlehem there are five assumptions: First, it had no existence, and the entire statement is a beautiful Oriental fairy tale; second, the fixed star seen by the Wise Men was Venus at the time of its greatest splendor; third, it was a periodical star like that of 1572; fourth, the phenomenon was occasioned by a conjunction of planets; fifth, it was a comet. Of these assumptions the most probable is the second. That it was a periodical star is scarcely likely, for Ptolemy and Ma-tuan-lin would have spoken of it. The fourth statement was suggested in 1826 by the German astronomer, Ideler, and repeated by Encke in 1831. In the year 3 B. C. there were conjunctions of the planets Jupiter, Mars and Saturn on May 29, September 3 and December 5, but on none of these days were the planets nearer together than a degree, so that the Wise Men must have been very near-sighted to take them for one star. The fifth assumption is also not to be considered, for people already knew how to distinguish a comet from other stars, and, besides, we have no knowledge of a comet at that time. For all these reasons we have not the least occasion to expect the return of the Star of Bethlehem at the close of our century. And even if such a star should appear it would simply be the twenty-sixth such case observed in historical times, and the interest attached to it would be purely astronomical.

Modern Matrimony.

Father—I have given the matter the consideration its importance demands, and I have concluded that I cannot give you my daughter in marriage.

Rich Suitor—My dear Sir, I never asked that. Sell her to me.

The Easiest Way Out.

If women, said Uncle Eben, an ez contrary ez some folks wuz dey ez, de best way ter git 'em out ez wantin' suffrage an' ter tell 'em dey gotter vote.

DANGER FROM LIGHTNING.

Is It Increased or Diminished by the Presence of Many Telegraph Wires?

There is a somewhat widespread impression that the use of so much wire for telephone and other electrical purposes in cities and towns largely increases the danger of lightning strokes. The notion is based upon the concentration within certain limits of a great quantity of conducting material, which, it is assumed, attracts the electricity and thereby increases the danger from it. While it is true that the increase of conducting material increases the attraction, it is not true that it increases the danger. As a matter of fact, it decreases the danger, for the more surface electricity has over which to spread, the more readily and quickly it is carried to the earth. A house with a metal roof is not often struck by lightning, for while the metal may attract the electricity, it also gives it room to spread out, and its force is thus dissipated. This fact was demonstrated by Franklin with his kite long ago, and lightning rods are put on buildings to give storm clouds a means of discharging their electricity into the earth. This discharge takes place without the report that we call thunder, for electricity makes no noise unless it meet some resisting medium.

It is a well-known fact that there is less danger from lightning in cities than in the country, and this is due to the general use of iron, steel and other metals in city buildings. The buildings are tall and would seem, therefore, to be specially attractive to the lightning; indeed, they are often struck, but the metal in them dissipates the force of the fluid and carries it harmlessly and quietly to the earth. The effect of telephone wires upon atmospheric electricity has been under official investigation by the German department of telegraphs, and statistics from 900 cities show that the danger from lightning strokes is four times as great in towns that do not have the telephone as in those that have it. The conclusion of the whole matter, therefore, is that an abundance of wires gives protection from lightning, instead of increasing the danger.

TWO HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

How Men Might Live to That Limit of Recorded Time.

Without eating and drinking there is no life; but we may select certain kinds of food containing a minimum amount of the elements which cause the ossific blockages in the system.

An English physician, Dr. C. F. DeLacy Evans, who made many researches in regard to our food, comes to the conclusion that more fruit should be eaten, especially apples, grapes and bananas, they being rich in nutritious elements.

Flourens in his well-known work on "Human Longevity" cites the case of the Italian centenarian Cornaro, whose recipe for health and long life was extreme moderation in all things. Flourens himself insists that a century is the normal life, but the fifty years beyond, and even 200 years, are human possibilities under advantageous conditions.

Hufeland also believed in 200 years as an extreme limit. Sir James Crichton Browne, M. D., concedes, in a late address, that Flourens was right. Duration of growth gives the length of life.

Hufeland held that the human body grows till the age of twenty-five, and that eight times the growth period was the utmost limit of man.

But if twenty years be taken as the time growth, even five times that will give us a century. According to Flourens and Cuvier, man is not of the frugivorous or fruit and nut eating class of animals, like the gorillas and other apes and monkeys.

Man has not teeth like the lions and carnivorous beasts, neither has he teeth like the cows and herbivorous ones. Intestines in the man are seven or eight times the length of the body; the lion's are but three times the length of his body. Herbivorous animals, like the cow, have intestines forty-eight times the length of the body.

So, judging man by his teeth, his stomach and his intestines, he is naturally and primitively frugivorous, and was not intended to eat flesh.

Travel in Spain.

One of the greatest charms of Spain to a reflective mind it is the entire absence of anything like an atmosphere of labor. There is none of the fretting energy of bread winning, and the traveler in her provinces seems to himself to have stepped out of the nineteenth century and crossed the magical portal into the sixteenth, for anything he can discover that bespeaks what we term the "spirit of the age." No one is in a hurry; even the beggars whine lazily. Toiling and spinning and harvesting is not a part of their code of life.

There is no planning or thought for the morrow, for they know the prodigal Ceres will care for her children and the sun-browned idlers fall asleep on the cool marble steps of the cathedral, or by the roadside in the shade of the olive woods, and no one thinks to question their privilege of right to do so. They live for the sole enjoyment of each day by itself. Now and again the air is stirred by the sounds of preparation for some picturesque procession or festival in honor of a favorite saint or for some royal tournament or bull fight, but it is all a mere matter of pleasurable enjoyment, and the thought or anxiety of their daily bread does not enter into the question of the hour.

She Wants a Change.

He—I think your family name is such a fine one.

She—Do you? I get dreadfully tired of it.

The Genuine Article.

Father—Boy or girl?

Nurse—Girl.

Father—Hurrah for the new woman.