

MRS. LAMSHED'S WILL.

CHAPTER I.

Mr. Montague Dottleton, East India merchant of Calcutta and London, was writing letters in the library of his private residence in Blakewood Square, Kensington. It was Sunday afternoon, and the rain was coming down with steady persistency, as though it had made up its mind to keep Londoners indoors for the rest of the day. Mr. Dottleton, who was a methodical man in everything made a regular practice of going for a long walk every Sunday after lunch; and when the weather permitted to interfere with his arrangement the effect upon his temper was infelicitous. Accordingly, it is our misfortune to present him to the reader at a moment when he is decidedly snappish and surly.

"Very aggravating," said he, "throwing down his pen and going to the window; 'no chance of its clearing up either. How I detest a wet Sunday!'"

He picked up a book and made himself comfortable in an armchair; but he had hardly read a page when the door opened and his daughter Kate appeared. She was a fair, pretty girl of twenty, whose gentleness and tact saved her from coming in collision with the irascible parent at times when other members of the household shrank from the consequences of intruding upon his privacy.

"Well, what's the matter?" asked Mr. Dottleton curtly.

"Grandmamma isn't feeling very well this afternoon, papa."

Kate had not completed her errand, but knew from her father's manner that she had come in at a time when it was best to say as little as possible; when he was in this humour, he was certain to jump at any opportunity for grumbling, and would finish her message for her.

"She wants that doctor, I suppose?" snarled Mr. Dottleton.

"Perhaps we had better send for him."

Mr. Dottleton threw down his book and frowned savagely. "Isn't it a very singular thing, Kate, that your maternal grandmother should select this impecunious young prig Lakeworth to be her medical attendant, when there are half a dozen experienced practitioners living within a stone's throw of the square? Isn't it very curious that Mrs. Lamshed never knew what illness was or asked to see a doctor until she met this Dr. Lakeworth at Scarborough last summer? Her confidence in him is positively touching, and passes my comprehension altogether."

It was evidently a mystery to Kate also, for she shook her head slowly and looked out of the window. It was a fact of her grandmother's to have Dr. Lakeworth; and when a patient has reached the eighties, perhaps one physician can do little more than another. "I don't know why she likes him, papa."

"I suppose you must send for him; but I don't imagine he will thank Mrs. Lamshed for bringing him through a mile and a half of back streets on a day like this, just to tell her that her heart is much the same as it was the day before yesterday."

Kate left the room without making any reply, and her father walked over to the hearth and proceeded to address the figure he saw reflected in the mirror above the mantel-piece. Many people have a habit of "talking to themselves," and Mr. Dottleton cultivated it to a remarkable extent; it was his peculiarity, though, that he could not take himself properly into confidence unless he saw himself in the glass. He stood with his left hand thrust into his waistcoat pocket, emphasising the remarks he made aloud with his right forefinger.

"Now, will you have the goodness to tell me what my mother-in-law wants with this young medico? He's got no practice to speak of; he's got nothing any one can see to recommend him, and he lives most inconveniently far away. Ever since she met him last year, she has required medical advice, and no advice but his will do. When she thinks she's sedy, he's called in to earn a fee; and when she's well, he's called in to receive it. He's never out of the house. I wonder he doesn't take lodgings next door to be close to the gold mine.—I tell you candidly," continued Mr. Dottleton, suddenly withdrawing his hand from his pocket and tapping the palm impressively with his fingers—"I tell you candidly that if I didn't know the old lady would alter her will without compunction, I'd forbid Dr. Charles Lakeworth the house.—Why, bless my heart! if Mrs. Lamshed lives ten years longer, she'll spend every shilling of her twenty thousand in physic and fees."

This final prediction, although made by himself, so worked upon Mr. Dottleton that he swung around upon his heel and stamped on the floor.

Mrs. Lamshed, who was the mother of his departed wife was eighty-one years of age, and in spite of her frequent calls for the doctor, gave every promise of maintaining her interest in mundane affairs for ten or even twenty years longer. "I'm an old woman," she would say; "but I was an old haven't grown a day older since—not a day."

And indeed Mrs. Lamshed seemed almost as active and sprightly now as she had been half a century ago. Fourteen years before, the middle-aged, dust-dried lawyer who looked after her concerns had come to urge the desirability of making her will.

"Make my will!" cried she. "I'll make it, if you're afraid you won't live to do it. Smuggles; but I hadn't begun to think about it yet! Why should I?" However, the solicitor's arguments prevailed, and the thing was done, "to oblige her old friend, who had always taken good care of her affairs, and was in a hurry to finish them." And though the fact has no bearing upon this story, we

may mention that the engrossing of Mrs. Lamshed's will was the last bit of professional work the careworn Smuggles ever did for his client. He was twenty years her junior; but he passed from Lincoln's Inn to another place long before she began to use spectacles. The spring of vitality was strong in Mrs. Lamshed.

Mr. Dottleton turned away from the mirror to which he had been confiding his woes, and went up-stairs to see his mother-in-law, whom he found in the drawing-room with Kate.

"I'm sorry to hear you're not well," he said, going to her side.

The old lady looked up and smiled. "I'm getting very feeble, Montague, though I don't look it. I am not quite up to the mark, and thought I'd like to see Lakeworth."

"They sent for him half an hour ago. But don't you think, now, that a more experienced man should be called in?"

"Lakeworth will do nicely, Montague; he understands my constitution." When an old lady is convinced that one particular man "understands her constitution," no reasoning will move her. Mr. Dottleton knew this, and did not press the expediency of making a change.

"What do you think is wrong, this time?" he said, sitting down near her. "It's the heart," replied Mrs. Lamshed with a deep sigh, which did not seem quite genuine somehow.

Mr. Dottleton tried to put on a look of griefed anxiety, but only succeeded in appearing sulky and incredulous. "I trust not—I hope you're mistaken," he said. "I must speak to Dr. Lakeworth when he comes."

His tone implied that he held the young man personally responsible for the condition of Mrs. Lamshed's heart, whatever it might be, and intended to know what he meant by it. He rose as he spoke and went back to the library, where he tried to interest himself once more in his book.

"I don't think papa likes Dr. Lakeworth," said Kate, as soon as the door had closed behind her parent.

"I don't know why, I'm sure; but he doesn't seem so pleased to see him as you do, child."

Kate laughed a little, and said no more. It was her heart, and not her grandmother's, which gave reason for Charles Lakeworth's frequent visits; and the eagerness with which she pounced upon any excuse for calling him in to see Mrs. Lamshed had been a fruitful source of amusement to that lady, until she allowed Kate to see that she understood the manoeuvre.

Mr. Dottleton had never thought of his mother-in-law's favorite in connection with his daughter. He was essentially a grasping mercenary man, and the fear always before his eyes was, that Mrs. Lamshed might alter her will and bequeath her property to this doctor. He had heard of ladies who had cut off their rightful heirs in favor of their medical attendants, and Mrs. Lamshed was eccentric enough for anything. If any one had told him that Kate was the attraction, he would have laughed at the idea. She had nothing, and would have nothing but what he chose to give her; and it was not likely that a man who had to push his way in the world would encumber himself with a wife. Dr. Lakeworth was dancing attendance on the old lady in the hope of getting her money, and really she seemed so fond of him that the danger was making him very uneasy.

(To be Continued.)

THE TRAIN WAITED.

"When a woman will, she will," said a railway engineer. He was employed upon a Southern road, where he had many odd experiences. One day, at a junction, a woman approached the engine and asked him to hold the train for five minutes or so, till her daughter should arrive. He told her that he could not do it; but the event proved that he was mistaken. As the old saying is, "What has to be done can be done."

"I don't see why," she expostulated. "I think you might to a little thing like that."

I tried to explain to her that trains run on schedule time, and like time and tide, wait for no man, or woman, either, for that matter. But she wouldn't have it, and finally, just as we were about to start, she shouted indignantly:

"Well, I'll just see about that!"

I laughed, but soon I ceased to laugh. For what did that old woman do but get right on the track about three feet in front of the engine. She set herself there, firmly grasping the rails with both hands.

The conductor signalled for me to go ahead, as our stop was over. But I couldn't do it as long as she remained on the track, for I should kill her certainly. I called to the conductor, and he, impatient at the delay, came up. I explained the situation to him. He was as mad as I was, and going up to the woman, told her to get off the track.

"I just won't," she replied, "until my daughter gets on board your train!" He pleaded with her, and finally declared that he should be compelled to use force.

"Just you dare!" she cried. "I'll sue you for damages if you do!"

This opened a new complication, and we reasoned with ourselves whether we had better remove her by force. Just as we had determined upon a course of procedure her daughter came, up and seeing the old woman on the track, kissed her good-bye and got on the train, while her mother called to her:

"Go ahead, Mary Ann! You have plenty of time, though, for I will sit on the track until you get on board."

And then, when Mary Ann was safely on board and we were about ready to run over the old woman if necessary, she calmly and slowly got up and waved me a good-bye, calling, as we pulled out of the station:

"I hope I've taught you fellows a grain of perliteness!"

AN EFFECTIVE COUGH REMEDY.

Were those cough drops beneficial? They worked like a charm. They have such a horrible taste that the children have all stopped coughing.

As Good as Gold.

CONCLUSION.

In a few days Farfrae's inquiries elicited that Henchard had been seen, less than a month before, by one who knew him, walking steadily along the Melchaster highway westward, at twelve o'clock at night—in other words, retracing his steps on the road by which he had gone.

This was enough; and the next morning Farfrae might have been discovered driving his gig out of Casterbridge in that direction, Elizabeth-Jane sitting beside him, wrapped in a thick flat fur.

After driving along the highway for a few miles, they made further inquiries, and learnt of a road-mender, who had been working thereabouts for weeks, that he had observed such a man at the time mentioned; he had turned back from the Casterbridge coach-road by a forking highway which crossed Egdon Heath.

They searched Egdon, but found no Henchard. Farfrae drove onward, and by the afternoon reached the neighborhood of some woodland to the east. That the road they were following, had, up to this point, been Henchard's track on foot they were pretty certain. They were now a score of miles at least from home, but, by resting the horse for a couple of hours at the village they had just traversed, it would be possible to go back to Casterbridge that same day; while to go much farther afield would reduce them to the necessity of camping out for the night. She pondered the position, and agreed with him.

He accordingly drew rein, but before reversing their direction paused a moment, and looked vaguely around upon the wide country which the elevated position disclosed. While they looked, a solitary human form came from under the clump of trees, and crossed ahead of them. The person was some labourer; his gait was shambling, his regard fixed in front of him as absolutely as if he wore blinkers; and in his hand he carried a few sticks. Having crossed the road he descended into a ravine, where a cottage revealed itself, which he entered.

"If it were not so far away from Casterbridge I should say that must be poor Whittle. 'Tis just like him," observed Elizabeth-Jane.

"And it may be Whittle, for he's never been to the yard these three weeks, going away without saying any word at all; and I owing him for two days' work, without knowing who to pay it to."

The possibility led them to alight, and at least make an inquiry at the cottage. Farfrae hitched the reins to the gate-post, and they approached what was of a humble dwellings, surely the humblest. The walls, built of kneaded clay originally faced with a trowel, had been worn by years of rain-washing to a lumpy crumbling surface, channelled and sunken from its plane, its gray rents held together here and there by a leafy strap of ivy which could scarcely find substance enough for the purpose. Leaves from the fence had been blown into the corners of the doorway, and lay there undisturbed. The door was ajar; Farfrae knocked; and he who stood before them was Whittle, as they had conjectured.

His face showed marks of deep sadness, his eyes lighting on them with an unfocused gaze; and he still held in his hand the few sticks he had been out to gather. As soon as he recognized them he started.

"What, Abel Whittle; is it that ye are here?" said Farfrae.

"Ay, yes sir! You see, he was kind-like to mother when she wer here below, though 'a was rough to me."

"Who are you talking of?"

"Oh, sir—Mr. Henchard? Didn't ye know it? He's just gone—about half-an-hour ago, by the sun; for I've got no watch to my name."

"Not—dead?" faltered Elizabeth-Jane.

"Yes, ma'am, he's gone! He was kind-like to mother when she wer here below, sending her the best ship-cold, and hardly any ashes from it at all; and taties, and suchlike that were very needful to her. I couldn't forget him, and traipsed out here to look for him, about the time of your worshipful's wedding to the lady at yer side, and I seed him walking along in the rain, and I thought he looked low and fall-ering."

And I followed en over the road, and he turned and saw me, and said, 'You go back!' But I followed, and he turned again, and said, 'Do you hear, sir? Go back!' But I saw that he was low, and I followed on still. Then 'a said, 'Whittle, what do ye follow me for when I've told ye to go back all these times?' And I said, 'Because, sir, I see things be bad with ye, and ye wer kind-like to mother if ye wer rough to me, and I would fain be kind-like to you.' Then he walked on, and I followed; and he never complained at me any more. We walked on like that all night; and in the blue o' the morning, when 'twas hardly day, I looked ahead o' me, and I seed that he wambled, and could hardly drag along. By that time we had got past here, but I had seen that this house was empty as I went by, and I got him to come back; and I took down the boards from the windows, and helped him inside. 'What, Whittle,' he said, 'and can ye really be such a poor fond fool as to care for such a wretch as I!' He was as wet as a sponge, and he seemed to have been wet for days. Then I went on farther, and some neighborly woodman lent me a bed, and a chair, and a few other traps, and we brought 'em here, and made him as comfortable as we could. But he didn't gain strength, for you see, ma'am, he couldn't eat—no, no appetite at all—and he got weaker; and to-day he died. One of the neighbors have gone to get a man to measure him."

"Dear me—is it so!" said Farfrae.

As for Elizabeth, she said nothing.

"Upon the head of his bed he pinned

a piece of paper, with some writing upon it," continued Abel Whittle. "But not being a man of letters, I can't read writing; so I don't know what it is. I can get it and show ye."

They stood in silence while he ran into the cottage; returning in a moment with a crumpled scrap of paper. On it there was pencilled as follows:—

MICHAEL HENCHARD'S WILL.

"That Elizabeth-Jane Farfrae be not told of my death, or made to grieve on account of me."

"& that I be not bury'd in consecrated ground."

"& that no sexton be asked to toll the bell."

"& that nobody is wished to see my dead body."

"& that no mourners walk behind me at my funeral."

"& that no flours be planted on my grave."

"& that no man remember me."

"To this I put my name."

Michael Henchard."

"What are we to do?" said Donald, when he had handed the paper to her. She could not answer directly. "Oh, Donald," she said at last. "What bitterness lies here! But there's no altering—so it must be."

All was over at last, even her regrets for not having searched him out sooner, though these were deep and sharp for a good while. From this time forward, Elizabeth-Jane found herself in a latitude of calm weather, kindly and grateful in itself, and doubly so after the Capharnaum in which some of her preceding years had been spent. As the lively and sparkling emotions of her early married life cohered into an equable serenity, the finer movements of her nature found scope in discovering to the narrowed-lived ones around her the secret, as she had once learnt it, of making limited opportunities endurable; which she deemed to consist in the cunning enlargement by a species of microscopic treatment, even to the magnitude of positive pleasure, those minute forms of satisfaction that offer themselves to everybody not in positive pain; which, thus handled, have much of the same inspiring effect upon life as wider interests cursorily embraced.

Her teaching had a reflex action upon herself, inasmuch that she thought she could perceive no great personal difference between being respected in the either parts of Casterbridge, and glorified at the uppermost end of the social world.

Her position was, to a marked degree one that, in the common phrase, afforded much to be thankful for. That she was not demonstratively thankful was no fault of hers. Her experience had been of a kind to teach her, rightly or wrongly, that the doubtful honour of a brief transit through a sorry world hardly called for effusiveness, even when the path was suddenly irradiated at some halfway point by daybeams rich as hers. But her strong sense that neither she nor any human being deserves less than was given, did not blind her to the fact that there were others receiving less who had deserved much more. And in being forced to class herself among the fortunate she did not cease to wonder at the persistence of the unforseen, when the one to whom such unbroken tranquillity had been accorded in the adult stage was she whose youth had seemed to teach that happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain.

The End.

A MARVELLOUS VESSEL.

An Inventor Claims He Can Cross the Atlantic in Two Days.

If the claim made by Captain Carl J. H. Flindt, of New York, a seafaring man of 17 years' experience, and an inventor, is substantiated it will soon be possible to make the voyage from New York to Queenstown by water in two days. He intends making the experiment about the middle of May. Captain Flindt asserts that he has invented a propeller which, when driven by a gasoline engine, will develop a speed in smooth water of more than 50 miles an hour. He is a hard headed, practical man, and with other persons who are interested with him financially in the scheme to revolutionize travel by water, is

NOW BUILDING THE CRAFT

In one of the sheds of the Morgan Iron Works, at the foot of East Ninetieth St., N. Y. The propeller consists of two steel plates, each with two flanges, which cut the water in such a way as to produce the least resistance. Each blade of the propeller to be used in making the proposed trip across the Atlantic is to be three feet across and two feet from the top of the blade to the shaft. It will be thicker at the base than at the top.

The vessel which is to be fitted with the new propeller is about one third completed, and is to be named the Dolphin. She is constructed on the "whaleback" principle, and is intended to go through the seas rather than over them, thus offering the least resistance to the waves, which in heavy weather will pass over her instead of beating against her, and thus retarding her speed.

THE VESSEL IS MADE OF STEEL.

Oak and cedar, and is 53 feet long. Her beam is 61-2 feet and her draught 51-2 feet. Her height is 12 feet from keel to the top of her deck, with a pilot house 4 feet high in addition. She is of 10 tons burden. She is to have a saloon 13 feet in length, three state-rooms, a kitchen and an engine room. Her ordinary crew will consist of five men, but she will have accommodation for 30 persons, while 50 can be carried if her decks are utilized also.

An engine of 20-horse power will be placed abaft, amidships, and with her other machinery will weigh 10 tons. It was at first intended by Captain Flindt that electricity should be used as the motive power, but in view of the accidents which may happen to motors, and their liability to get out of order at times, it was decided to substitute gasoline. It is claimed that an engine has been found, after many had been examined and rejected, which will meet all requirements.

THE CONVICT IN RUSSIA.

HOW THE PENAL SETTLEMENTS ARE CONDUCTED.

What Dr. Benjamin Howard Has to Say About the Treatment of the Russian Convict—Comparison With the English System.

Dr. Benjamin Howard, who since 1859 has made a special study of penology, has arrived in England from a fourth visit to Russia and Siberia, undertaken for the purpose of confirming and bringing up to date the observations made by him in Saghalien and elsewhere since 1888. In the course of a conversation, Dr. Howard touched upon some of the results of his investigations. He said:

"The special object of my last journey, which occupied six months, was to complete my studies regarding the recapture, redistribution, and means of forwarding Siberian exiles. I have been through every convict and exile prison between St. Petersburg and Siberia. I have waylaid exile gangs by road, rail and river, examined when empty the convict barges on which they were conveyed, and have had opportunities of speaking to every man on board when the boats have been full. For hundreds of consecutive miles I have kept observation on the gangs in order to see them under all conditions."

Asked concerning the result of his observations, Dr. Howard, replied:

"In its main principle of productive labor the Russian penal system is WORTHY OF IMITATION."

In its general maladministration it is worthy of reprobation."

Asked to explain the strangely divergent accounts of Mr. De Windt and Mr. Kennan, he declined to confirm or deny such statements. He continued, "I can only speak of what I have seen. The administration of the Siberian system rests so largely with individuals that almost anything may be possible. Of all that is bad in Siberia proper, Saghalien has had the reputation of being, by far the worst in every particular."

Comparing the lot of Siberian exiles with that of convicts in other countries, Dr. Howard remarked:

"The result of my experience has been to show that the treatment of a convict largely depends upon himself. After a Siberian exile's term of two years' imprisonment is over there is nothing to prevent him in three to five years from becoming, within certain geographical limits, a free man. This shows good in a general way, with very special exceptions. Escape from Saghalien is practically impossible. A political exile or a murderer in Saghalien lives with his family, in a well built, and often pretty, four-roomed cottage, with its vestibule and garden. The island is populated mostly by murderers or by persons guilty of similarly serious crimes. They work peaceably and quietly on their farms, and walk about the streets to all appearances free men. You go into the bureaux of the prisons and you see men writing at rows of desks. Their general demeanor and the appearance of the place is not unlike that you would see in offices in any part of the world. Yet each man is probably

A CONVICTED MURDERER.

Russian convicts, instead of being a heavy charge on the resources of the country, are a source of revenue. Convict labor has added to the Russian empire an island the length of England, not an acre of which was previously under cultivation, and it is only the population of Siberia by these people that has made possible the line of the Trans-Siberian Railway—the envy of the whole world." In conclusion, Dr. Howard said: "The main lesson to be drawn from this system, is the absolute futility of punishment for its sake alone. The first principle taught is that of self-maintenance. Convict labor should be productive of a net profit to the state, so that instead (as in England, for instance) of costing many millions, it should prove a source of annual revenue by putting in force organized forms of industry suited to the capacity of the respective criminals. By the means employed in Siberia the convicts do not lose all self-respect, and are often better fitted than before to become useful members of society. In the English and some other prison systems the outcome is generally the opposite. The result of the convict's incarceration and of the useless forms of labor on which he has been employed has often been merely to generate a vengeful feeling which tends to render him a habitual criminal."

TO CLEAN YOUR GLOVES.

If your gloves are of dressed kid or suede, no matter how soiled they may be, so long as it is not by perspiration, you can make them look almost like new if you clean them with gasoline. Dip the articles in the gasoline and rub between the fingers, the same as you would in washing goods in water. When the gasoline becomes dirty throw out and use fresh again until the article is perfectly clean. Gasoline is better than benzine, because it leaves gloves more soft and pliable, and they do not have to be dried on the hands. Silk ribbons and neckties may also be cleaned in this wise. Great care should be taken never to use gasoline near a fire, or lamp, as it is highly explosive. It should be used in the daytime, and outdoors, and anything cleaned with gasoline should be hung in the open air, day and night until the unpleasant odor has evaporated. Then place in a case with some favorite sachet powder.

REASONABLE REQUEST.

Have you anything to say? asked the judge.

"W'y, only this your honor, answered the pickpocket. I only ask that you won't let 'em handcuff me while they take me to the pen."

Want to have a better chance to escape, eh?

Indeed I don't; upon my word and honor I don't. I just thought that if my hands was loose I might get a chance to make expense some way or another on the trip.