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VOLUME 26. MILTON, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1886. NO. 19.

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For the Year 1886

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1	Milton	Wm. Panton	29	26	28	9	24	26	10 a.m.
2	Oakville	R. Balmer	6	3	5	3	11	3	10 a.m.
3	Georgetown	L. Grant	12	16	11	7	17	9	9.30a.m
	Acton	J. Matthews	13	11	13	8	16	11	10 a.m.
	Campbellville	S. R. Lister	11	8	10	0	9	8	9 30 "
	Burlington	W. J. Bastedo	5	2	4	1 2	10	2	11 "

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County Court Sittings—Formerly Terms—Monday, 4th January, 5th April, 5th July, and 4th October at 10 a.m., each day.

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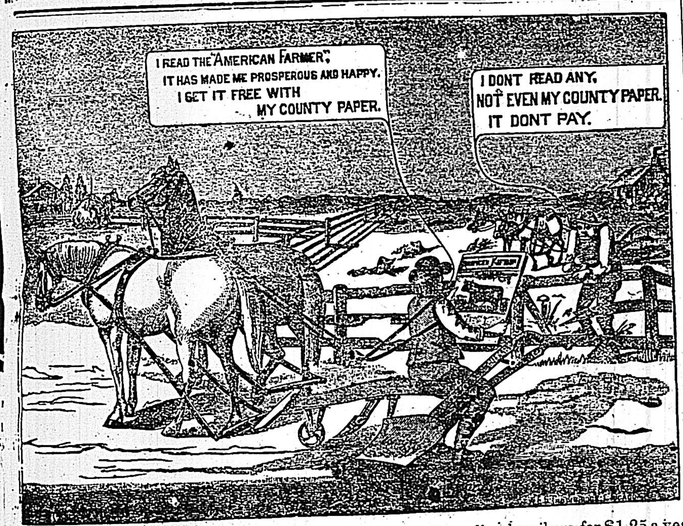

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LADY ISABEL'S ATONEMENT.

A SEQUEL TO EAST LYNNE.

My lord straightened as though he had received an electric shock, a wild cry escaped him, he sprang to his feet and confronted the lawyer with an awful look.

"Wretch, the truth is out," he shrieked, maniacally. "I know the secret; I have heard the story. It has killed her, and would to God it had killed me. Do you understand me. I know the shame of Isabel's mother as well as her own. Your *wife* has revealed it—your miserable, fallen, drunken wife who sits there."

He flung out his hand as he spoke and pointed to the figure in the chair.

Archibald Carlyle turned suddenly, looked at La Sylphine, staggered back and gasped:

"Just Heaven, it is Afy Hallijohn."

The words reached her drowsy ears, she lifted her head, saw him, and came forward with the simple remark—sublime in its simplicity:

"Well, I never! Why, Mr. Carlyle, how *do* you do? Lawk a mussy! I never knew *you* was here and——"

She stopped suddenly and clapped her hand over her mouth.

"There, if I ain't gone and put my foot in it, after all," she said, with a vapid giggle. "But it's done and it can't be helped. Only Pierre and Rosamond will cut up high jinks, and I'll have to go back to the ballet again, just as sure as guns."

My lord stood stock still and looked at her. Reverent hands had lifted that fair old figure and borne it quietly to a velvet lounge across the room, but he neither saw nor heard, and turning swiftly, Archibald Carlyle looked at him.

"Lord Beresford, who has told you this woman is, or ever has been, my wife?" he said, huskily.

"She is nothing to me—less than nothing to Isabel—she is Afy Hallijohn, Joyce's sister—speak, woman, and say if it is not so."

La Sylphine made a maudlin smile.

"Well, there ain't no more in the pie, for me, so I may as well own up," she said, glibly. "Yes, I'm Afy Hallijohn—there's no goin' back on that afore *you*, s there, Mr. Carlyle. Lady Rosamond fixed it up in pretty straight style; but, good gracious, it won't wash now, I'm sincered. I've made a fool of myself——I'm always a doin' it, somehow."

My lord was standing there still—stone, ice, marble—and looking straight before him with that red and stupefied stare. Archibald Carlyle laid one hand on his shoulder.

"Lionel," he said, very tenderly, "Lionel, poor boy, there is something I should have told long ago, but I kept it until I can keep it no longer. Lionel in the hour of death, may I tell it now.

May I send the servants from the room and tell you the sacrifice, the anguish, the atonement of your wife for the sin of mine—the secret which has darkened Isabel's life and—and (God help and pity you both), may stand forever a gulf between her pride and yours?"

My lord did not reply in words. That dazed, deep stupor seemed to enchain him yet. He merely bowed his head in acquiescence, and so, quietly dismissing the servants, and with no one near but La Sylphine and the silent dead, the story of Lady Isabel Carlyle's blighted life was laid bare by her most miserable husband, and the heart-wounds time had thinly healed were opened up afresh to my lord's horrified gaze.

He listened to the last terrible word—listened in death silence—never changing that rigid, corpse-like stare, never altering that stark, erect position. There was no change in him when the story was ended, save that a look of hopeless horror filled his eyes, an ashen grayness lay upon his face, and his lips were tightened and rigid under his golden mustache.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE HAND OF JUSTICE.

When Pierre Blonshar left my lady and her scheming mother at the Laurel Hedge, and hastened across the moonlit lawn to the shadow of the trees beyond, it was his sincere intention to make all haste in reaching the Devonshire Arms, where he had left La Sylphine reveling in wine with her boon companions, and if not by persuasion, at least by force, wring from her the truth of all she had proclaimed in her tipsy folly. But you know the old proverb: "Man proposes, etc."—witness its fulfilment now; for some a higher power than his own miserable will had already ordained it that Monsieur Pierre Blonshar, standing now on the Earl of Beresford's domain, should never again quit it.

Hurrying straight on through the trees, he issued near the entrance to the great Oak Walk, and within a stone's throw of the mansion turned swiftly to the left across the lawn and down the path to the great gates, when something brought him to a dead standstill with a little gasp of terror.

That "something" was a woman's agonizing shriek issuing from the open window of the great library—a wild, ear-splitting, blood-curdling shriek, the awful death-cry uttered by Vivenne, Countess of Beresford, as she fell lifeless to the floor.

"*Mon Dieu!* what was that?" gasped Pierre, reeling back in the moonlight and clutching at the gnarled bole of a mighty oak. "It came from the window of the library, and—— *Peste!* what an awful cry. Hark! the household is astir. Something has happened, and—and—— *Ma foi,* I must know—I must know."

He glanced hurriedly at the mansion. Lights were flashing to and fro, people were hastening down the stairs with noisy outcries, and presently there came the awful sound of a door being battered down.

Monsieur Blonshar waited for nothing more. Glancing at the library window, where lights were now aflame and the din of voices rang, he darted to the stone terrace, slipped down beneath the clustering roses, and so ran on until the window was reached.

One look, only one—and he staggered back with a smothered cry.

"Betrayed, *mon Dieu,* betrayed," he grated, in an angry whisper. "The drunken fool has sold us—the game is up—La Sylphine has balled me, but better for her had she never been born. *Basta!* the fool is acknowledging all. Hark, she acknowledges the scheme, she confesses she is Afy Hallijohn, she throws me over to save herself, and I—*Ma foi,* I'll hear it to the end. I'll see the tragedy played out, and then"—a ghastly smile flickered over his wicked face—"then say your prayers, Mademoiselle La Sylphine, for the moment you leave that room you die like a dog."

He sank down in the shrubbery as he ceased speaking and listened eagerly, with that murderous purpose in his heart. La Sylphine should die for her treachery; he would kill her for bailing him, he told himself; but the hand of Heaven was in this exhircissement and, Monsieur Pierre Blonshar, crouching there and listening to that dreadful scene, was marked already as the instrument of vengeance where now his thoughts never turned.

* * * * * * *

Yes, it was all told,—the story of Lady Isabel Carlyle's bitter sin, the history of Sir Francis Levison's falsehood and deceit,—and my lord knew now the sudden blow which had spoiled his bride's life, and darkened the name of Beresford with the tragedy of to-night.

Still he did not speak, still he stood and looked before him with that awful expression in eyes and face, and Archibald Carlyle, looking on this bright young peer whose stainless honor had been his glory, knew that the shadow which had darkened his young life, was now spreading across the horizon and shadowing the brightness of another.

"It was not Isabel's fault, Lionel," he finished, brokenly. "The child never knew, never dreamed, and she treasured her mother's memory so deeply that God must forgive me if I succumbed to temptation, and spared her the terrible revelation. It was not her fault, Lionel—you are man enough to understand that."

For the first time my lord lifted his eyes, for the first time he spoke.

"It was not her fault," he answered, hollowly. "But God help and pity me, the shame is there still—nothing can wash that out—nothing—nothing. Ah, is Heaven, and I was so proud of my spotless name, so proud of my honor, so proud of—of—*her.* It is well to know that this—this creature here is not her mother, well to know that I am spared that shame, but—but *he exists*—he—this illegitimate brother, this living evidence of her mother's sin."

Archibald Carlyle bowed his head and groaned.

"Yes, *he* exists," he echoed, hollowly. "Nothing can wash that out. Sir Francis Levison's child exists, for I have seen him. Between these wretches they have blasted my child's life—the shameful history is known to the world at last, nothing can come from hiding it, and I shall punish the guilty to the fullest limit of the law. This wretched woman—Sir Francis Levison's son—Lady Rosamond—her mother—*all* shall be hounded down, all shall be brought to justice and punished according to their deeds."

He lifted his clenched hand as he spoke, a ring of determination echoed through his voice, and then—then there was a little feminine cry of terror, a rustle of gaudy silks, a clasping of frantic hands, and La Sylphine went down on her knees before him.

"Mercy, mercy," she pleaded. "Don't send me to prison, Mr. Carlyle, promise you won't—please, please promise me you won't, and I'll make a clean breast of the whole thing. Say you won't do it, Mr. Carlyle—just say you won't now, and I'll tell you something that'll lift Lady Isabel Beresford out o' the shame of this, and baffle the Countess o' Mount Severn entirely. Promise me you won't send me to jail—please promise me you won't, and I'll turn the tables and blow the whole plot."

Archibald Carlyle looked down sternly.

"You deserve the worst the law can give you," he said, huskily; "but if you baffle her—if you balk the Countess of Mount Severn, I promise you I will let you go."

La Sylphine uttered a breathless cry.

"Oh, you're so good," she simpered, in her pretty, kittenish way. "I—I don't deserve it, I know, but—but I'll do my best to repay you. Every one for themselves, you know, and I ain't a-going to rot in a prison and never have another chance to dance a ballet nor go to a banquet for all the Lady Rosamonds in Christendom. Self-preservation's the first law o' nature, ain't it, lord 'Beresford? Thanky for your kindness, Mr. Carlyle, and now, see here. You've been a-believing all Lady Rosamond's been a-sayin' about the illegitimate brother business, but you've been awful took in. Why, that young man ain't no more Lady Isabel's brother than I be—he never seed her ma nor Sir Francis Levison in his life. It's all Lady Mount Severn's get up—a lie from first to last."

"What!"

"Sure's you're alive," responded La Sylphine. "It was jest because he looked so much like Sir Francis Levison that Lady Rosamond pounced on him and got up the yarn. It was him as took Lady Isabel Carlyle's body from the grave marked 'I. V.' (so's it could play the part, you know), and he did it all, willing enough, 'cos he'd a spite agin Lord Beresford and wanted to pay him off. See here, my lord, don't you recollect as you hit him once? Well, he never forgave the blow, much as he appeared to, and I tell you—on my oath, mind,—I tell you there ain't no sich person as Sir Francis Levison's child a-livin'. Him as has been a play-in' the part is your old walley, my lord—that yaller little Frenchman, Monseer Pierre Blonshar, whom my Lady Rosamond bought and paid for the sake o' gettin' square."

The story ended there and then. There was no reply from Lord Lionel Beresford, no word, no cry from the lips of Archibald Carlyle. Face to face they stood, these two men, eye looked into eye with mute horror for my lady's misdeeds, and so standing, so looking, the last dark blow fell.

A woman's frightened cry fluttered down the deserted halls, a hand thrust back the battered door, and Mrs. Fleck, all wild and white with terror, reeled into the room.

"Oh, my lord—oh, Mr. Carlyle!" she broke out, in an awful voice. "Something so terrible—so wild—so strange. Come quick, come quick! Lady Isabel, my poor mistress. Oh, Heaven! when will these horrors cease?"

It was like a stroke of magic the name of the bright young bride who had been more sinned against than sinning, thoswest young wife whose awful atonement had spoiled her life, and my lord, laugh.

"Speak—tell me," he groaned. "Lady Isabel, my wife—Oh, Heaven, have you been frightened by Mrs. Fleck, has she been a-scarin' you? Afraid? "She is gone, my lord, gone!" broke out Mrs. Fleck, in a shuddering voice. "I'd thought of her suddenly, while we were huddled together in the next room and ran up to her apartments to see if she had revived. They were quite empty when I reached them. Joyce and my lady had disappeared—left the house by the servant's staircase, for I found the door open—and not a trace left behind. Nothing, my lord, but—but this."

"This" was a folded paper written in the hand he loved. My lord took it, glanced across the written words, uttered a little sharp, shuddering cry, turned as though to reel away, swayed dizzily, threw up his arms, and then fell—fell hobgoblins. This woman has betrayed me to prison, Mr. Carlyle,