

AS GOOD AS GOLD.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Returning from her appointment Lucetta saw a man waiting by the lamp nearest to her own door.

He begged her pardon for addressing her. But he had heard that Mr. Farfrae had been applied to by a neighbouring corn-merchant to recommend a working partner; if so, he wished to offer himself.

"But you can testify to my trustworthiness better than anybody, ma'am," said Jopp. "I was in Jersey several years, and knew you there by sight."

"Indeed," she replied. "But I knew nothing of you."

"I think, ma'am, that a word from you would secure for me what I covet very much," he persisted.

She steadily refused to have anything to do with the affair, and, because of her anxiety to get indoors before her husband should miss her, left him on the pavement.

He watched her till she had vanished, and then went home. When he got there he sat down in the fireless chimney corner looking at the iron dogs.

A movement upstairs disturbed him, and Henchard came down from his bedroom, where he seemed to have been rummaging boxes.

"I wish," said Henchard, "you would do me a service Jopp, now, to-night, I mean, if you can. Leave this at Mrs. Farfrae's for her. I should take it myself, of course, but I don't wish to be seen there."

He handed a package in brown paper, sealed. Henchard had been as good as his word.

"Well, how have ye got on to-day?" his lodger asked. "Any prospect of an opening?"

"I am afraid not," said Jopp, who had not told the other of his application to Farfrae.

"There never will be in Casterbridge," declared Henchard decisively. "You must roam farther afield." He then returned to his own part of the house.

be, and bore about the same social relation to the King of Prussia as the latter bore to the Golden Crown.

A pedestrian would be seen abstractedly passing along Mixen Lane; and then, in a moment, he would vanish, causing the gazer to blink like Ash-ton at the disappearance of Ravens-wood.

The company at the King of Prussia were persons of quality in comparison with the company which gathered here; though it must be admitted that the lowest fringe of the King's party touched the crests of Peter's at points. Waifs and strays of all sorts loitered about here.

To this house Jopp and his acquaintances had arrived. A thunder of bows echoed from the backyard; swings hung behind the blower of the chimney; and ex-poachers and ex-game keepers, whom squires had persecuted without a cause (in their own view), sat elbowing each other.

"How was closed?" asked Jopp.

"Yes—this not our greatest doings that the world gets wind of," said the firmity-woman, who lately settled in this parish, as among the rest, it was she who presently asked Jopp what was the parcel he kept so snugly under his arm.

"Ah, therein lies a grand secret," said Jopp. "It is the passion of love. To think that a woman should love one man so well, and hate another so unmercifully."

"Who's the object of your meditation, sir?"

"One that stands high, in this town. I'd like to shame her! Upon my life 'twould be as good as a play to read her love-letters, the proud piece of silk and wax-work! For 'tis her love-letters that I've got here."

"Love letters? then let's hear 'em, good soul," said Mother Cuxsom. "Lord, de ye mind, Richard, what fools we used to be when we were younger? getting a schoolboy to write ours for us, and giving him a penny, do ye mind, not to tell other folks what he'd put inside, do ye mind?"

"By this time Jopp had pushed his finger under the seals, and unfastened the letters, tumbling them over and picking up one here and there at random, which he read aloud. These passages soon began to uncover the secret which Lucetta had so earnestly endeavored to keep buried, though the epistles, being allusive only, did not make it altogether plain.

"Mrs. Farfrae wrote that!" said Nance Mockridge. "'Tis a humbling thing for us, as respectable women, that one of the same sex could do it. And now's she's vowed herself to another man!"

"So much the better for her," said the firmity-woman. "Ah, I saved her from a real bad marriage, and she's never been the one to thank me."

"I say, what a good foundation for a skimmity-ride," said Nance.

The plank was now lowered; and the stranger's form shaped itself from the darkness. He was a middle-aged man, with hair and whiskers prematurely gray, and a broad and genial face.

"What place is this?" he asked, when they reached the door.

"A public house," said Jopp.

"Oh, perhaps it will suit me to put up at. Now then, come in and wet your whistle at my expense for the lift-over you have given me."

"What do they mean by a 'skimmity-ride'?" he asked.

"Well sir," she simpered, "tis the funniest thing under the sun! And it costs money."

"Ah! I remember hearing of some such thing. Now I shall be in Caster-bridge for two or three weeks to come, and should not mind seeing the performances. Wait a moment."

"We will," said Nance. "A good laugh warms 'em heart more than a cordial, and that's the truth ont."

Jopp gathered up the letters, and it being now somewhat late, he did not attempt to call at Farfrae's with them that night.

Such was the state of things when the current affairs of Casterbridge were interrupted by an event of such magnitude that its influence reached to the lowest social stratum there, stirring the depths of its society so sensibly as to cut into the midst of the preparations for the skimmity-ride.

A royal personage was about to pass through the borough, on his course farther west, to inaugurate an immense engineering work on the water-way. He had consented to halt half-an-hour or so in the town, and to receive an address from the Corporation of Caster-bridge.

The address was prepared on parchment, by an artist, who was handy at ornamental lettering, and was laid on with the best gold-leaf and colors that the sign-painter had in his shop.

"I have a feeling," he said, advancing to the table and laying his hand upon the green cloth, "that I should like to join ye in this reception of our illustrious visitor. I suppose I could walk with the rest?"

"Yes," said Jopp, "I think I will. I am not to be allowed to have anything to do with it officially?"

"I am afraid, so; it is out of the question, indeed. But of course you can see the things full well, such as they are to be, like the rest of the spectators."

and lonely uplands, the latter in oiled boots and tilt bonnets, to see the reception, or if not to see it, at any rate to be near it.

Henchard had determined to do no work that day. He primed himself in the morning with a glass of rum, and walking down the street met Elizabeth-Jane, whom he had not seen for a week.

"See it! I have other fish to fry. You see it. It will be worth seeing!" she could do nothing to elucidate this. But he carried a flag, of somewhat homely construction, formed by tacking one of the small Union Jacks, which abounded in the town to-day, to the end of a deal wand—probably the roller from a piece of calico.

"It is a curious thing," says an English woman, "to note the subtle affinity between the young man and his necktie. Talk of 'the style' being 'the man'! In these days of sober masculine attire, the cravat, nine times out of ten, denotes the individual, and above all, his humor. Observe how he has fingered his tie and you shall know his mood."

There are men—and worthy citizens too—who always wear blood-red silk about their throats. There are others who will adorn themselves with ready-made bows, which buckle in some mysterious fashion, at the back; but this variety of the genius homo is held by the well-dressed to be beyond the pale.

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Fifty Years Ago.

This is the stamp that the letter bore which carried the story far and wide, of certain cure for the loathsome sore that bubbled up from the tainted die of the blood below.

Ayer's Sarsaparilla is the original sarsaparilla. It has behind it a record for cures unequalled by any blood purifying compound.

50 Years of Cures.

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ALL DRUGGISTS, PERFUMERS AND GENERAL DEALERS.

Farmers, Threshers and Millmen

AT THE BRICK FOUNDRY -- WE MAKE --

Furnace Kettles, Power Staw Cutters, Hot Air Furnaces, Shingle Machinery, Band Saws, Emery Machines, hand or power; Cresting Farmers' Kettles, Columns, Church Seat Ends, Bed Fasteners, Fencing, Pump-Makers' Supplies, School Desks, Fanning Mill Castings, Light Castings and Builders' Supplies, Sole Plates and Points for the different ploughs in use.

-- WE REPAIR --

Steam Engines, Horse Powers, Separators, Mowers, Reapers. Circular and Cross-Cut Saws Gummed, Filed and Set.

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Who can think of some original thing to patent? Write JOHN WEDDERBURN & CO. Patent Attorneys, Washington, D. C. for their \$1.00 prize offer and list of two hundred inventions wanted.

LAKE V

Mr. John Wilson... Mr. William... Mr. John... building near... which he purchase... Messrs. Robert... Henry attended the Derby of Norman... There is a grand Merritt correspo... to the Grey R... blaming us for it... they know that... Mr. John McMe... friends and we... heart, in Bentin... Mr. Thomas Hill... visited at Mr. W... few days recently... Mr. Colin Bly... spent a fortnight... Wilson at the saw... owns a mill in N... used to own this... son's. He is tal... the hog business... success.

Notice of... Died on Satur... Philip Lawrence... months. This be... will be much mi... took place on Mo... tery east of Durh...

Noticed at Durh... W. L. Mackenzie...

S. T. O... Upper Town... WILLIAM LAW... Pollock's old st... ham Horseshoe... work and genera... ly attended to... test our ability...

MEN AND WOM... duet business at... work is simple w... of addresses rec... ing, to be forwa... various experie... writers preferre... those who are co... of 86 weekly in... Publisher, care... ham.

Marke... DURHAM... Fall Wheat... Spring Wheat... Oats... Peas... Barley... Hay... Butter... Eggs per doz... Apples... per bag... Potatoes... per bn... Flour per cwt... Oatmeal per sack... Chop per cwt... Turkeys per lb... Geese per lb... Ducks per pair... Chickens per pair... Dressed Hogs per... Hides... per lb... Sheepskins... Wool...

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