



CHAPTER XIX.

Of that night's fatal work the country-side remains in complete ignorance. Of Mr. Dyrart's sudden death it hears the following morning with a feeling of strong curiosity, but with none of regret. The funeral that takes place on the third day is small, certainly, yet, considering all things—the dead man's open hostility to his neighbors, and the death of hospitality that characterized his sojourn among them—larger than might have been expected, and at all events select. Among others Lord Riversdale attended—out of compliment. It was supposed, to Seaton, as he and the old man had never so much as seen each other's features.

But it was found impossible to conceal the existence of Seaton from the two girls. Peyton had undertaken to give them a rather careful account of what had happened; and in truth, when all was told, he was almost as much at sea about it as they were. The stranger remained a stranger to him. Seaton had determined to reveal the secret held by him on Mr. Dyrart to Seaton, thinking the latter would make good his father's promises.

It is in the old man's private den that he does this. Going up to the old-fashioned bureau he, by a subtle touch, unlocks the secret spring.

The door falls back, the hidden shelves and their contents lie all unaccounted. Seaton draws it out, and overcome by fatigue and excitement, drops upon his knees. Eagerly he opens and scans it, and then holds it to Dyrart.

"Compare that," says he, in a high tone of triumph, with the will of your grandfather, that left all to Gregory Dyrart, cutting out the elder son. Compare it, I say, and you will see that this was executed three years later than that other—that other which is now in force, and has been these twenty years."

Mechanically Dyrart takes it. No word escapes him. Speech, indeed, is impossible to him, so busy is his mind trying to take in all the miserable dishonor of the story that as yet has but the bald outlines laid before him.

"No one knew of it but me," says Seaton, feverishly, yet with an undercurrent of delicious excitement in the recital. "But me and Grunch. What she made out of it no one can tell, as the old chap's gone, but she's as knowing a file in my opinion as you'd meet in a day's walk. We can see our two signatures. Eh, can't you read 'em? We witnessed it. You alone knew, and he bought us over. Well, 'twas worth a quid or two; 'tis a fine old place."

Dyrart makes no answer. He has supported himself against a table near him, and is gazing blankly, hopelessly, through the window at the dull landscape outside. He sees nothing, hears nothing, save the voice of the man who is speaking.

"Twas felony, mind you, besides the fact of having to give up the money, and property, and all, so I knew I could turn on the screw as tight as I liked. But," he laughs, "you see, I counted without my host. I never dreamed the old man would show fight like that. He took it hard, my return—guess he believed me dead, and resented the breath in me—and I shouldn't wonder if after all these years, he had not to believe the place, money and everything, was legally his own."

Still Dyrart says nothing. He has indeed withdrawn his dull eyes from the scene without, and is now staring with unseeing eyes at the parchment that tells him how the property was never his father's, but was left to his uncle, and how his father suppressed the will, and kept the property in spite of law and honor, and all things that go to give a sweet savor to man's life on earth. It had never been his father's, all this huge property, it never would be his. And if not, whose? Vera's? He starts as if shot.

"Is that all?" he asks.

"Well, no. Not quite. Your face says very politely that you'd be glad to see my back, but business first, pleasure afterward." He grins. "It is as good for us to come to terms now as later."

"Terms?" repeats Dyrart, gazing at him darkly.

"Ay, why not? D'ye think you'll get out of it scot free?"

Dyrart stares at him as if scarcely comprehending.

"Want time to think it over like your respected parent with a sneer. 'Not for me, my lad. We'll settle now or never. You see you're in my power, and I'm not the one to—'"

"Sir, I am in no man's power," says Dyrart, calmly. "I trust I never shall be. This will," striking it with his hand, "through which my uncle and his daughter have been—been fraudulently—he says the word with difficulty—"kept out of their property for so many years, shall be at once restored to its proper owner. A yellow tint overspreads Seaton's face. As if entirely overcome, he sinks upon a chair.

"You'll surrender?" he says with a gasp. "And your father's memory? How will you like to hear him branded as a common swindler, whom death alone saves from the law's grip?"

Dyrart blanches. Involuntarily he puts out his hand and seizes the chair next him and clings to it as if for support. No, that he could not endure.

"I will give you £500 the day I see you on board a steamer sailing for Australia," says Dyrart with dry lips and a heart that seems dead within him. "I am now, comparatively speaking, a poor man," his words coming from him slowly, mechanically, in a dull, expressionless way. "I can offer you no more."

"Double it," says Seaton, "and I'll leave the country to-morrow."

"I haven't it at this moment, but I dare say I shall be able to manage it," says Dyrart, in the same worn-out, indifferent manner. "In the meantime, while I try to get it, I shall require of you that you stay within this house and hold speech with no one save Grunch."

"Well, I guess I'll chance it," says Seaton after a long glance at the young man's pale, earnest face.

CHAPTER XX.

With the fatal will clasped in his hand, Dyrart goes straight to the small morning room, where he knows he will be sure to find Vera. 'Twillight is beginning to fall, and already the swift shadow of night is proclaiming the approach of his king. She starts slightly as he comes in.

"I am sorry to disturb you," says Dyrart, with an effort at calmness, "but it was so necessary that I should come, that I—"

"I am glad you have come. I, too, was anxious to see you," says Vera, a

touch of nervousness in her tone. "I— you must know it is impossible that we could stay here any longer. Our uncle, who was our guardian, is gone, and she has risen to her feet and is looking at him in sore distress—"I have wanted to speak to you about it for a long time; I thought, perhaps, you would help us to find another home." He can see that she suffers terribly in having to throw herself upon his good nature, to openly demand his assistance. "We must leave this, and at once," says she, stammering a little, and with a slight miserable break in her voice.

"You will not have to look for another home," says he. "This is your own house."

"Oh, no," drawing back with a haughty gesture; "I have told you it is impossible. I shall certainly not stay here."

"As you will," quite as haughtily. "It will be in your power for the future to reside exactly where you please, but if the fear of seeing me here is deciding you against this place, pray be satisfied on that point; I have no longer the smallest claim to consider myself master here."

Warned by a change in his manner, Vera looks at him.

"Something has happened?" she says, abruptly.

"Yes; something I find it difficult to explain to you."

Still he manages to tell her all and to show her her grandfather's will—the will which his father had suppressed all these years.

"But this is horrible!" she says, faintly, when he had finished. "I won't have it!" She throws out her hands as though in renunciation. "Why should I deprive you of your home? Give me enough to live on elsewhere with Griselida, but—"

"You are quick to fall into error," says he, grimly. "I have begged you already to try to grasp the situation. It is I, it appears, who am the hesitating, and after finding it impossible to speak of your home, you now say that I beg. I beg, slowly, 'that you will not permit yourself any further foolish discussion on this subject.'"

He turns away abruptly. There is something so solitary, so utterly alone in his whole air, that without giving herself time for thought she springs to her feet and calls to him.

"Where are you going? To sit alone? To brood over all this? Oh, do not. Why," going swiftly to him and standing before him with downcast lips and trembling fingers and quickened breath, "why not stay here with me for a little while and let us discuss all this together and try to see a way out of it?"

"My way is plain before me; it wants no discussion," says Dyrart, resolutely, refusing to look at her.

"You mean," tremulously, "that you will not stay?" One white hand hanging at her side closes upon a fold of her soft black gown and crushes it convulsively.

"I mean," in an uncompromising tone, "that I fully understand your mistaken kindness—the sacrifice of your inclination you would make—and decline to profit by it."

"You are disingenuous. What you really mean is," in a low tone, "that you will not forgive."

"There is nothing to forgive, save my presumption."

He opens the door deliberately and closes it with a firm hand behind him. Vera, left standing thus cavalierly in the middle of the room, with the knowledge full upon her that she has been slighted, spurned, her kind intentions ruthlessly flung back upon her, lets the quick, passionate blood rise upward, until it dyes cheek and brow. She presses her hand upon her throbbing heart, and then all at once it comes to her that she is no longer poor, forlorn, but rich, one of the richest commoners in England. And with this comes, too, a sense of deeper consolation than she has as yet known. Dropping into a chair, she covers her face with her hands and cries as if her heart is broken.

BREAD 1,800 YEARS OLD.

Loaves that were being baked when Pompeii was destroyed.

Sufferers from indigestion are advised to eat stale bread; the staler the better, they are told. There is in the museum at Naples some bread which ought to be stale enough for anybody. It was baked one day in August, 79 A. D., in one of the curious ovens still to be seen at Pompeii.

More than eighteen centuries, therefore, have elapsed since it was drawn "all hot" and indigestible from the oven. So it may claim to be the oldest bread in the world. You may see it in a glass case on the upper floor of the museum. There are several loaves of it, one still bearing the impress of the baker's name.

In shape and size they resemble the small cottage loaves of England, but not in appearance, for they are as black as charcoal, which, in fact, they closely resemble. This was not their original color, but they have become carbonized, and if eaten would probably remind one of charcoal biscuits. When new they may have weighed about a couple of pounds each, and were most likely raised with leaven, as is most of the bread in oriental countries at the present time.

The popular idea that Pompeii was destroyed by lava is a fallacious one. If a lava stream had descended upon the city the bread and everything else in the place would have been utterly destroyed. Pompeii was really buried under ashes and fine clinders, called by the Italians lapilli. On that dreadful day in August, when the great eruption of Vesuvius took place, showers of fine ashes fell first upon the doomed city, then showers of lapilli, then more ashes and more lapilli, until Pompeii was covered over to a depth in places of fifteen and even twenty feet.

Other comestibles besides the bread were preserved, and may now be seen in the same room in the museum. There are various kinds of grain, fruit, vegetables and even pieces of meat. Most interesting is a dish of walnuts, some cracked ready for eating, others whole. Though carbonized, like all the other eatables, they have preserved their characteristic wrinkles and lines.

There are figs, too, and pears, the former rather shriveled, as one would expect after all these years, the latter certainly no longer "juicy." But perhaps the most interesting relic in the room is a honeycomb, every cell of which can be distinctly made out. It is so well preserved that it is hard to realize that the comb is no longer wax, nor the honey, honey.

A piece of the comb seems to have been cut out, and one can imagine some young Pompeian having helped himself to it and sitting down to eat it, when he had to jump up and fly for his life. One cannot help wondering what became of the piece—whether the young fellow took it with him and ate it as he ran, or whether he left it on his plate, intending to return for it when the eruption was over.

How a Filipino Dies.

The general, in a white hat, was marching in advance of the firing line, when the discharge of a rifle was heard in the yard of the house next to the road, says Harper's Weekly. Several soldiers rushed into the yard, but not in time to prevent two more shots, which came whizzing in the direction of the general. At this moment I came to a break in the hedge, where I could see what was going on. A young Filipino was about thirty yards off. He was turning this way and that like an animal at bay, thoroughly frightened. He had a rifle in his hand. It afterward turned out that this rifle was choked. The soldiers were breaking down the high hedge to get in. Suddenly the Filipino made a run for life. He got through the hedge some way and dashed across an open field. Three shots followed, all of which took effect. The wounded man turned, ran sideways a few paces, lay down on the ground and a second after was dead.

I got a good sight of the whole incident and so naturally did the Filipino stretch himself along the ground and rest his head upon his arm that I thought he was shamming. An examination a minute later proved that he was dead. There is this difference between the manner in which American and Filipino soldiers die—the American falls in a heap and dies hard; the Filipino stretches himself out, and when dead he always found in some easy attitude, generally with his head on his arms. They die the way a wild animal dies—in just such a position as one finds a deer or an antelope which one has shot in the woods.

Made It Himself.

"Did you dream on Amy's wedding cake?"

"Mum—yes; I thought it was safer to put it under my pillow and dream on it than to eat it and have the nightmare."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

No Much Prices.

"They say every man has his price." "Yes; and how cheap one always feels when he gets sold."—Philadelphia Bulletin.

The Royal Crown of Persia.

dates back to remote ages, is in the form of a pot of flowers, surmounted by an uncured rot of the size of a hen's egg.

The joys of meeting pay the pangs of absence; else who could bear it.

Rowe.

CLERICAL LIFE

The Amenities of Existence in the Parsonage—Preaching Is Sometimes the Least of a Minister's Trying Duties.

66 I SHOULD like to get a place with a good salary," said a young preacher seeking an appointment to an old clergyman high in the councils and respect of the denomination with which he was connected. "Young man," rejoined the senior, "if salary is your object you had better go into any other vocation than the ministry." The old man was right, for in looking over the salaries and contemplating the talents of the men engaged in clerical work, it is easy to see that most of them would probably be able to succeed much better, in a financial way, in almost any other calling than that which they have chosen, and that the same amount of work, in some other direction, might have made them independently wealthy. But a preacher should not, and, as a rule, does not preach merely for the sake of the salary attached to the place he fills. Of course, he wants a support, and a support in a style commensurate with that of the people whom he serves, but if he expects to make money out of preaching he is destined to be woefully disappointed, for, at the best, after the year is ended he finds himself fortunately situated if his bills are all paid.

During the year he and his wife have generally one long ceaseless struggle to make both ends meet, and often with indifferent success. He must be economical where other men are liberal; he must learn to go without luxuries and even without many things which by most persons are regarded as necessities. He must make his old black coat do duty for season after season,

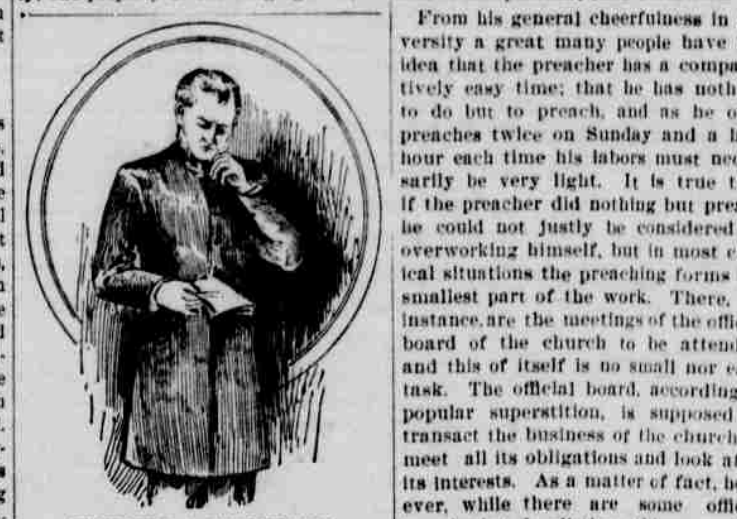
that were to fall from his lips. To the man of another profession, such an incident does not seem execrably funny, and not a few would sympathize warmly with the unlucky shepherd who found himself suddenly in the presence of his sheep without anything to say to them; but to the preacher Brother A.'s predicament furnishes amusement only, for he thinks that Brother A. should be ready-witted enough to go ahead with a few remarks, even if his sermon was a mile away on his study table.

He finds himself also able to extract some degree of amusement from even the petty impositions that are daily practiced on him or his brethren, for it is a well-understood fact that a preacher is fair game for everybody to pluck at, and every day small swindles are perpetrated on him, for no other reason than that he is a preacher. Not long ago a clergyman of the city received an invitation from a church elsewhere to preach for them on an especial occasion. He read the invitation with some dismay, as it said not a word about expense, and he was not in a position to incur additional obligations. After much hesitation, he finally accepted the invitation, went at his own expense, delivered two sermons, materially aiding the church which he visited, and returned, and still heard not a word about his expenses. A few days later came a letter with the postmark of the town he visited, and he opened the missive with satisfaction, feeling sure that here, at last, was a check for the \$20 he had expended in aid of his brethren. His



A QUIET MARRIAGE IN THE PARLOR.

and his wife must retrim her hat to make it look like new, and make over her last winter's dress so as to be decent in the eyes of her husband's people, else they will complain, for it is a well understood fact that the preacher, the preacher's wife, his son, his daughter, his man servant and his maid servant, if he is so fortunate as to have either, and even the stranger within his gates, are severally and collectively, the property of the congregation, to



REQUESTING A CONTRIBUTION.

criticize and gossip about and backbite and abuse, from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same and a few hours in the evening. All things considered, therefore, the preacher's life is far from merry. His fate is no more fortunate than that of the famous "Constables" in the Pirates of Penzance, who, after aligning themselves on the stage in a rank as nearly straight as an outline sketch of the big fiddle, with a roar unanimously declare that:

"Taking one consideration with another, The policeman's lot is not a happy one."

But the clergyman's life has its bright spots here and there, though, it may be, none of them are very bright, and there is no doubt at all that they are entirely too few. There would probably also a question arise in the minds of some persons as to what constituted a bright spot, for the hard-worked preacher has so little in his life to be merry about that he might be able to find a good deal of enjoyment in matters over which others would scratch their heads in a vain attempt to discover any humor whatever. Besides this, his interest, like that of most men of every class, centers largely in his own profession and fellow-professionals, and his humor naturally takes the same turn. To him it seems a good joke to hear that Brother A. went to church last Sunday morning and did not discover that he had left his sermon at home until the last hymn had been sung before sermon time, the last cougher had coughed his last cough, preliminary to settling into an attitude of attention, and the entire congregation had prepared to hear in silence the words of wisdom

standings that the preacher, on contemplating the muddle, seriously considers with himself the propriety of throwing up his job as the quickest and easiest way out of the mess.

But if any one supposes that the preacher does not earn his money, just let the unbeliever take his stand behind the pastor when a female deputation is to have a hearing. Some one has said this is the woman's age, and to judge from the influence wield-

ed by the fair sex, the saying certainly appears to be justified by the facts. Nowhere, however, is the influence of woman felt to a greater extent than in the church organizations, which, being to a certain extent social in character, depend on the female members to no considerable extent for effectiveness that he who said, "If it were not for woman, Christianity would die out in one century," had no little justification for his remark. So far as the female deputation is concerned, it may have any business or no business at all; that is a secondary matter. The women have come to talk, and talk they will, though the heavens fall. The preacher knows they are coming—of course they could not keep that fact to themselves—and is generally prepared for them; the preparation, in this



A DONATION PARTY.

case, commonly amounting to a determination to do whatever they want done, and to do it quickly, too, without making the slightest objection. Therefore, when the feminine contingent marches in with colors flying, band playing and bayonets fixed, the wise preacher stands up, listens to the reading of the inevitable preamble and set of resolutions, declares that the movement has his cordial support, that he will do all he can to forward it.

Then there is evening at the church sociable. The old brother who sits in the amen corner is always there; so is the graceless young fellow who has come for the sole purpose of interviewing the old brother's daughter. Old and young and all other kinds, however, are, so to speak, run in the same mould, or more exactly, are crowded into the same rooms, where they endure each other's society with as little show of impatience as could be expected until the glad hour of parting comes, creating an enthusiasm that can not be mistaken. But whether tired or not, whether the sociable is a success or a failure, the preacher must stay to the last. The sociable would not be a sociable without him, and even though young and unmarried, he must pay just as much attention to old Brother Biffins and to old Sister Biffins and to Biffins' daughter Peg, as to the young and interesting Miss Flora De Luce, who with her rich papa and fashionable mamma, looks in on the menagerie a moment from the door.

But if the sociable is a delusion and a snare, what shall be said of the donation party? Not all preachers are compelled to endure this form of legal-

THE MAKING OF PEARLS.

Lustrous Gems Are Only the Tombs of Worms.

Pearls are the product of decay. A French naturalist says, in Cosmos, that the free pearls found in the common pearl-bearing mollusk are little tombs surrounding the bodies of the marine worms known as distomes during a particular stage of their life.

In the month of August certain mollusks are found having numerous small reddish yellow points in the spot where pearls usually form. Then begins the imprisonment of the creature. In the beginning the surface of the distome is sprinkled with tiny grains of carbonate of lime. These granulations grow and take the form of crystals which group and interlace in different patterns, and end by forming a calcareous deposit around the creature's body, which can still be distinguished by its yellow tint.

The calcareous deposit takes on polish and luster; and at this moment the

nucleus of the young pearl is seen only as a little black point, which soon disappears. The pearl has now a beautiful luster, and it keeps on growing in contact with the membranous pouch surrounding the calcareous cyst.

The distome remains there until the following summer. At the beginning of the season the pearl loses its polish, decays and falls to pieces. There remain only a gelatinous mass, and these are known as gelatinous pearls. The parasite then resumes its active life, reproduces its kind, and the young distomes become in their turn encysted, forming new pearls.

There are pearls that escape their physiological fate, and may grow to larger size because their distomes are dead, killed by another parasite, or because they are sterile.

So the most beautiful pearl is nothing but the brilliant tomb of a worm.

"Out of the Mouths of Babies."

Edward Terry tells of a pretty incident which occurred during one of his tours: "Do you know what I consider the most glowing tribute I ever received? The compliment came from a child. There was a crowded house—an intent audience—and humor had, for the instant, given place to pathos. You might have heard a pin drop, and I felt the tension of the house was at breaking point. The intense silence was broken by a childish voice—a girl's—who, turning to her parent, asked in a broken voice: 'Father, is it real?'

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