

The Minister's Wife

By MRS. HENRY WOOD

CHAPTER XXIII.

Richard Maude-Dynevor, Doctor of Divinity, Canon and Subdean of Oldchurch, was seated in his study at his sister's house, Eaton place, when two young men were shown into it. The sight of the first, Charles Baumgarten, was sufficient to make him spring to his feet, his very shoe buckles sparkling with wrath.

"Again!" he stuttered. "Do you dare appear in my presence to beard me with your insolence? But for the memory of your father, I would order my servants to put you forth."

"Why, you are more peevy than you used to be, doctor," cried a voice from behind Charles—that of Cyrus, who had about as much reverence for a high church dignitary as for a native savage of his adopted land. The canon stretched his stern, dark face round, to see whose bold voice might be thus addressing him. Charles spoke.

"When I assured you I was not at the Haymarket Theater the other night, sir, you might have trusted my word, after knowing me all these years. It was my brother who was there; and Miss Dynevor was deceived by the resemblance."

The subdean gazed at both of them. "What, is it you?" he exclaimed. "Come back to trouble England!"

"I am here to honor it and its natives with a visit: you among the rest," cried the undaunted Cyrus, as he shook the subdean's reluctant hand. "Glad to see you in robust health and voice, sir."

The reverend gentleman coughed. Cyrus, years ago, had gone in and out of his house as one of his own boys, and been on the same familiar terms with him. He turned to Charles:

"Then am I to understand that you were not at the theater, Charles Baumgarten? She insisted that you were there most positively, you know, and she did not allow me to doubt her assertion."

"To be there under the circumstances described would be very unlikely for me," returned Charles. "I think you might have known, sir, that I was not capable of it."

"I'm sorry I offended Aunt Ann," said Cyrus. "I hear she looks upon my nodding to her as a personal insult. What if I had a lady upon my arm when I nodded? Aunt Ann never liked pretty women, I remember, and that one is pretty beyond common, a star, doctor, of the first water."

For once in his life the subdean's fancy was tickled. He enjoyed a side fling at his sister. And Cyrus was, in his opinion, so very lost a sheep that had he appeared at the play with an army of ladies instead of one, it would have given the subdean no manner of concern.

"You had better go to the drawing room and make it right with them," he said, when the young men had explained about Mrs. Carrington and one or two other matters. "Tell Ann all this, and re-establish yourself in her favor."

It chanced that Miss Dynevor was this morning in an exasperated mood, brought on by her ineffectual endeavors to induce Mary to say she would give up Charles Baumgarten.

"It seems to me that the world must be coming to an end," she said, haranguing all three girls in general, but Mary in particular, "and the sooner the better, if this is the order of things. In my younger days we modest maidens never so much as looked at an unmarried man; as to talking openly of one, as I have seen you girls doing over and over again, we should have been shut in our rooms for a month after it. While you, Mary Dynevor, scruple not to uphold Charles Baumgarten's conduct the other night!"

"What I say is this, Aunt Ann—that Charles could not behave in the manner you have related," responded Mary, a sound of tears in her voice.

"How dare you insult me by doubting my word?"

"I don't doubt your word, aunt; I doubt your eyesight. You mistake some one else for Charles."

Miss Dynevor shrieked. "You insolent girl—mistook him, did I? When he turned his face impudently toward mine and grinned and nodded to me? He winked, too; I vow and protest he winked!"

"He assured me in the presence of papa that it was not himself; that it was a mistake; for he was not out of his chambers at all that night."

"And you believed him!" scoffed Miss Dynevor.

"With my whole heart," warmly returned Mary, a glowing color dyeing her face. "I would rather die than disbelieve Charles Baumgarten."

"That's a pretty modest avowal," gasped Miss Dynevor.

Aunt Ann's wrath was arrested midway, for Charles and his brother at that moment entered. She knew Cyrus at once, and pushed up her wig a little in astonishment. Cyrus advanced to the young ladies to greet them in what he called New Zealand custom, which they found meant neither more nor less than kissing.

When the noise and laughter had subsided, Cyrus turned to Miss Dynevor. "May I venture to touch your fingers with the tips of mine, Aunt Ann?"

No response. Miss Dynevor had not recovered from her petrification.

"It's only right to ask, before presuming," went on Cyrus; "because, you know at the play the other night you looked as though you wanted to annihilate me."

However annihilating Miss Dynevor might have looked the other night, she looked very foolish now. Cyrus standing before her with his gaiters, Grace and Regina enjoying her discomfiture, and Mary drawing nearer to Charles as if it were her own sheltering place, a happy smile on her eye and lip.

Miss Dynevor's temper was exceedingly acrid just then. "The subdean forbade you the house," she said sharply to Charles. "Do you set him at defiance?"

"The subdean!" interrupted Cyrus. "My dear lady, we have been making ourselves comfortable with the subdean in his study for this half hour. He sent us to you here that we might do the same with you."

"Why, you are more peevy than you used to be, doctor," cried a voice from behind Charles—that of Cyrus, who had about as much reverence for a high church dignitary as for a native savage of his adopted land. The canon stretched his stern, dark face round, to see whose bold voice might be thus addressing him. Charles spoke.

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breakfast. He had squared up his accounts and would sail the following day, leaving a promise that when he came again his wife should be with him.

The subdean condescended to perform the marriage ceremony for both parties; and Miss Dynevor honored the company in a new flaxen wig and a bird of paradise; a very magnificent specimen which Cyrus had specially procured for her from some island in the southern seas with an unpronounceable name.

(THE END.)

SPANISH WEDDING DANCE.

Music and Attendants—The Dress of Women and Men.

The wedding dance was being held in a long, narrow building near a fountain, and we entered on a smooth earth floor; seats were ranged about the sides of the whitewashed room, and the low rafters were draped and festooned with fancy wall paper with gold scrolls in it.

The music was furnished by a piano organ at one end of the long room, turned in rotation by a number of boys in their clean, blue blouses and brown corduroy breeches, who felt their importance, and at the other end of the room a table was spread with cakes and bread and a wine concoction very sweet and pleasant, but seductive.

The women, some bringing their babies, were a pleasant set, but not beautiful, although a few, with their large dark eyes, came very near to it. They did not wear the gay costumes of my imagination, but their dresses showed great care and conscientious patching. A gay handkerchief was often folded around the neck and across the breast and large earrings and big breastpins were the vogue even among the young women.

The men wore broad-brimmed black felt hats and clean blue blouses, corduroy trousers, either light tan or brown, and the long red or black sash belt called a "faja," wound many times about the waist, the folds serving as pockets for cigarettes, tobacco pouch and the villainous knife that everyone carries.

The dances were "round," interspersed with a square dance, where four people comprised a set—a sort of fandango, with lots of stamping and attempts at lithe, serpentine motions, with the hands raised above the head. There was a very old man who danced with great gusto and amused the crowd of young people, who encouraged him with clapping of hands.—Scribner's Magazine.

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DOOMED.

By WILLARD MacKENZIE

CHAPTER I.

The lookout from Penrhiddyn was grandly picturesque. The ancient granite wall of the uncouth, straggling building rose upon the summit of a steep and thickly wooded hill, around the base of which slumbered a pleasant valley, encircled by mountainous heights of undulating moorland, gilded with masses of yellow gorse, and purpled with heather bloom.

Nature, in her wildest beauty, reigned supreme over the scene. Man and his works, save in the walls of the old castle, which, from a distance, appeared rather fashioned by human hands, were not there—might have had no place in the world.

In a small chamber, situated at the top of the tower, which flanked the building upon the west, sat a fair-haired, thoughtful looking boy, with dark violet colored eyes, in whose dreamy depths there lurked a world of passion. He might have been eleven years of age, certainly not more.

This boy was Arthur Penrhiddyn, the only child of Sir Launce Penrhiddyn, the owner of the castle. The room in which he sat was a disused one. Two old worm-eaten chairs, of antique form, faded with the dust and cobwebs that veiled the whole place, and one thing else, was now the only furniture.

That other thing was the full-length portrait of a woman. Dust and damp had played sad havoc with what had once been a fine work of art; the colors of the dress could scarcely be distinguished beneath the mildew and dirt that encrusted them.

As it stood upon the floor leaning against the wall, the sunlight blazed full upon it, strangely illumining the face, which, unlike the rest of the picture, was as vivid as though it had been painted but a few years, instead of nearly two centuries back.

Strangely it seemed to have fascinated the violet eyes of that fair-haired boy as he sat there contemplating it with a rapt look of awed wonderment. This contemplative reverie was broken in upon by the opening of the room door and the appearance of a second person.

"Why, Master Arthur, I've been looking everywhere for you!"

The speaker was an elderly man, evidently a superior servant. The boy, hot moving his position, beckoned him to come close. "Whose picture is that, Daniel?" he asked.

"Mercy on us, where have you ferreted out that ill-omened picture?" cried the old man, a look of almost consternation disturbing his iron face.

"I found it in that closet," answered the boy, pointing to a half-opened door. "I want to know whose it is; and why do you call it ill-omened?"

"I never did know such a boy for ferreting about," answered Daniel, half angrily. "Why, I've never seen that picture since I was a boy; I thought it had been done away with long ago."

"It is the first time I have ever been in this room," replied the boy. "I never could turn the key before, nor persuade any one to do it for me."

"There's a wicked little lives up here, who eats up curious people," said the old man, gravely.

"Oh, I don't believe in fairies!" answered Arthur, quietly. "I know all that sort of thing is not true. Never mind the fairies; I want to know who that beautiful lady was, and I am determined to know."

Daniel looked perplexed. As far as his own feelings were concerned, he had not the slightest objection to tell what he knew. But Daniel had the fear of his master before his eyes.

A strange man was Sir Launce Penrhiddyn—a studious, stoical, severe man; but just, and even generous, when duty dictated.

A good master, a good landlord, and a humane man. The tidings of a vessel in distress, of a shipwrecked crew—and such incidents were of continual recurrence upon that dangerous coast—would summon him from his bed even upon the stormiest winter's night. He had had a lifeboat built, and many scores of lives had been saved from the hungry sea.

His great desire was to inoculate young Arthur with all his own ideas and prejudices. The boy had been left motherless in his second year; but, although thus brought more entirely under paternal control, education could not destroy a naturally poetic temperament. And to listen to the wild stories of fairies and wizards, that abounded among the fishermen, was his especial delight.

Daniel knew very well that the legend of the picture was well known to several besides himself, who would willingly tell it, and thus deprive him of the pleasure.

"A fine row you'll get me into if it's known as I've told you what your father would call a foolish story," he grumbled.

"Daniel," said the boy, earnestly, "I give you my word of honor that I will never breathe a word of what you tell me to any one, without your permission."

Instead of repeating the prolix narrative of the old servant, we shall place the story before the reader in a more terse and simple form.

Among the gentlemen who, after the battle of Worcester, followed the fortunes of Charles Stuart to France, was Sir Arthur Penrhiddyn, whose estates had just before been seized upon by the commonwealth. He was a perfect type of the Cavalier.

Soon after his arrival in Paris he became deeply enamored of the beautiful Mademoiselle de Soissons, one of the ladies in waiting at court. Of a noble but impoverished family, this post had been bestowed upon her at the death of her father.

Hurried out of all prudence by the violence of his love, he proposed a private marriage, to which, after great solicitation, she yielded. The event was kept a profound secret from all. After a time she retired from the court, and resided in a small house near Versailles, whither her husband used to repair as frequently as he was able to enjoy her society.

Years passed away, and but few knew their secret. Two children were born to them, and still there appeared to be no diminution in their love.

At length came the Restoration. Sir Arthur accompanied his sovereign to England, leaving his wife, however, at their old home until such times as Penrhiddyn Castle could be rendered fit for her reception. But that he might still be able to have before him the image of his beloved wife, he took away with him a portrait of her that had been painted a few months after their union.

Several months passed away, and although he wrote to her long and frequent letters, full of love and anticipation, she yet remained in France. After a time he came over to visit her—loving, tender as ever, but still he made good excuses to delay her departure for England.

He returned home, but she was again left behind—only for a few weeks longer, he said. But the weeks passed into months, and yet she was not sent for, and, worse still, his letters grew brief, cold and infrequent.

Leaving her children behind in the care of her servants, without one line of warning to her husband, she set out for England. Alone and unprotected, she accomplished the whole of the then formidable journey from Versailles to Cornwall.

It was night when, worn out with fatigue, she presented herself at the gate of Penrhiddyn Castle. Some grand festivity was evidently going on, for lights shone from every window, sounds of music and of many voices came from within; the door of the grand entrance stood wide open, and people and servants were hurrying hither and thither, so that for a time she could get no reply to her inquiries for Sir Arthur Penrhiddyn.

"You can't see him to-night, madam,"

as beautiful and picturesque legends of the old Greeks and Romans.

"I boarded for five years a Creek Indian who had been educated at Carlisle. He knew the Indian legends and used to tell them to me and my children as we sat around the fire of an evening. You know, the Creek have a legend that they are one of the lost ten tribes of Israel. This legend was the son of a medicine man, was once great and powerful in his tribe. All his knowledge of Indian came from his father, the medicine man."

"He repeated the tales to me, and that the impressiveness of the legend, with his long, trailing eagle quills, the conjuring wand and the Indian tepees on a lonely plain absent. The elements must be right mood for the medicine man to close the secrets of his race."

"The storm spirit and the thunder god must be abroad when the legends of the Creeks were repeated. The medicine man would send out his summons, the likeliest and the bravest of the would be gathered in his tepee in unfrequented gulch."

"This medicine man said that the Creeks were one of the lost ten tribes of Israel. The legend ran that they were once associated with the other tribes and that they had wandered years far to the north until they came to a sea. There they built boats and embarked. They steered their course toward the south again."

"The Creeks have a covenant of the tribe which is kept with the chiefs, one but the elect is ever permitted to see this guarantee of the genuineness of the Creek faith and origin."

Many Bible students and ethnologists believe that they are the descendants of the "lost ten tribes of Israel." These tribes wandered away from Palestine and were never heard of. Some believed that they wandered to the west shore of the Pacific and northward along it to the Aleutian straits, which crossed to Alaska and then wandered southward where dispersed throughout America the ages that followed."

"Would seem so. Gunner—Wasn't it odd about the Flasher?"

Guyer—What? Gunner—Why, she had four hands and each one's first name William.

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