

The Minister's Wife

By MRS. HENRY WOOD

CHAPTER XVII.

On the following day Sir Everard called at Eaton place. He saw Mary, and they went straight to Dr. Dynevor. There, after shaking hands, he quietly said that differences had arisen between himself and Miss Mary, and they had mutually agreed to part.

Never, perhaps, was a canon so astounded, never did one feel more outraged, and never was one in a greater passion, though he controlled it.

"What was the cause?" he demanded. "The precise cause, he and Miss Mary Dynevor had agreed to keep to themselves," was the answer of the baronet. "It was sufficient to say that they were both fully convinced a union between them would not conduce to their happiness, and they had come to the conclusion not to carry it out."

"I will know the truth," foamed the canon. "Why do you part?"

"Differences," gasped Mary, who had taken her cue from Sir Everard. "Nothing that I can particularly explain. We found that a marriage between us would not lead to happiness, and we parted."

"Won't you speak out?" cried he, bringing down his clerical shoe upon the carpet.

"That is all I have to say," she answered, drooping her head.

"Very well," cried Dr. Dynevor, as he quitted the room and shut himself into his study. This gave Miss Dynevor and the girls an opportunity of inquiring on their own account. Question after question they poured out on the unhappy Mary, but they did not succeed in getting from her any solution to the mystery; which, of course, bore an ill appearance.

"I very much fear it is a case of jilting," groaned Aunt Ann. "If the days of dueling were not past, one of your brothers ought to go out and shoot Everard Wilmet. Dishonorable craven. Your father may enter an action against him."

The possibility of concealment was all over now, as Mary saw; and she dragged herself in fear and sickness to her father's presence. "Is it true that you have done it?" she gasped; and the subdean was at no loss to understand her meaning.

"It soon will be true. The man shall be held up a spectacle to the world."

"Oh, papa, you must undo it, you must undo it! Do not lose a moment. It was not Sir Everard who broke off the engagement; it was I."

The subdean stared at her through his great ugly spectacles, for he had been reading a letter when she interrupted him. She laid her arms upon the back of a chair, and seemed to lean her weight upon it; he saw that she was trembling. "The truth, papa, is that I refused Sir Everard; so that if an action might be brought on either side it would be on his. He came home to marry me; but I—could not marry him; and he was so kind as to let it appear to you that it was as much his fault as mine."

"You broke it off? Of your own accord? Your reason? You do not stir from my presence till you have given it to me."

"Papa," she breathed, bending her face down upon the arm of the chair, "I—I liked some one else better than Sir Everard."

"You liked—?" The canon stopped; indignation and astonishment overmastered him.

"Who is it?" he demanded, in an awful tone.

She did not answer. What he could see of her face looked as crimson as his own sometimes was. "Who is it, I ask?" he repeated, and shrink and shiver as she would, there was no evading that resolute question.

"Charles Baumgarten."

A curt letter, couched in the haughtiest of terms, reached Charles Baumgarten's chambers in Pump Court, from Dr. Dynevor, forbidding him all further intercourse with the Dynevor family.

"I know the old boy can do the thing in style when he brings his mind to it, but this is super-extra, Charley," remarked Richard Dynevor, who chanced to call soon after the massive was delivered. "Cheer up, lad; things may take a turn."

And a few weeks passed on. Mary Dynevor was not dying, no one said that; but every one did say that she was wasting away. The subdean, haughty, cold and implacable, would not see it; Miss Dynevor had begun to speak of it complainingly; Regina and Grace grieved. She had a touch of low fever, and seemed unable to struggle out of it.

Mary chiefly lay upon the sofa; she was too weak to sit up throughout the day. Smarting under the displeasure of her father, obliged to submit to the querulous remarks of her aunt, who rarely ceased to grumble at the rupture of so desirable a marriage, suffering in a less degree from the covert reproaches of her sisters, who felt it as a grievance upon them, Mary had a sad time of it. As to Charles Baumgarten, he had gone on circuit, and seemed to be done with forever. Even Richard never heard from or of him.

"It is of no use, madam, my coming here day after day to see the patient," somewhat testily explained Dr. Lamb, the family physician, one day to Miss Dynevor. "The disorder is on the mind; some trouble, I believe, is weighing upon her. If it cannot be set at rest, I can do no good."

Miss Dynevor, now very uneasy, sat down to write an epistle to the subdean at Oldchurch. It had the effect of bringing Dr. Dynevor to town. Though harsh and stern with his children, he was fond

of them at heart, and he did not like to hear that Mary might be in danger of dying. He traveled up at night, reaching Eaton Place in the morning. Breakfast over, he shut himself in with his sister.

"And now, Ann, what do you mean by writing to me as you did?" began he, in his sternest manner.

"I said to you, Richard, what Dr. Lamb said to me. And I gave you my opinion—that she had better be allowed to marry Charles Baumgarten."

"I dare say," exclaimed the haughty canon.

"There's not a shade of a chance now for Sir Everard Wilmet," went on Miss Dynevor. "It's of no use thinking of him. Of course girls ought not to be given away to under ordinary circumstances. But when it comes to this point, that the girl may be dying, to give way may be nothing less than a duty."

"Let her see him then, and have done with it," spoke the canon sharply.

Miss Dynevor was surprised at the concession, but hastened to repeat it to Mary. It made her pale and agitated.

"I shall write a short epistle to his chambers in Pump Court and let it await him there," said Miss Dynevor. "No doubt he will call here as soon as he reads it."

"Mind, aunt, I must see him alone," said Mary, a strangely heightened color lighting her wan cheek.

"You need not fear that any of us will covet to be present; we are not so fond of him," retorted Miss Dynevor.

She sent the "epistle" to Pump Court. It lay there for some little time. Charles was on the Home Circuit, and when his business was over, he turned to Great Wharton to spend a day or two with his mother and sister, who were staying at Avon House. But he lost no time in obeying the summons, when he was back in London.

Mary received him alone, as she had wished. She sat back upon the large, old-fashioned sofa in the drawing room, her head supported by a pillow. Charles was shocked to observe the change in her, and thought she must be dying.

"No," she said to him after they had spoken for some time, "I am not dying. They think, at least they say, that when once my mind is at rest, when we shall have parted for good, suspense exchanged for certain misery, that I shall begin to get well again. It may be so."

Her head lay passively upon his shoulder; and they had just settled themselves into this most interesting position, when the door opened with a crash, and in marched the subdean. Mary's head started back to its pillow; Charles stood up, folded his arms, and looked fearlessly at the intruder.

"So you are here again, sir?"

"By appointment, Dr. Dynevor. And I am grieved to see what I do see. She is surely dying."

"You think so, do you?" cried the canon. "Perhaps you imagine you could save her life?"

"At any rate I would try to save it. If I were allowed. What is your objection to me, sir?" he hastily added, his tone one of sharp demand. "My connections are unexceptionable; and many a briefless barrister has risen in time to the woolpack."

"I am glad you have the modesty to acknowledge that you are briefless."

"I did not acknowledge it, and I am not briefless," returned Charles. "I have begun to get on."

Dr. Dynevor looked at his daughter. "Would you patronize this sort of 'getting on'?" asked he.

There was a strange meaning in his tone, which struck on Mary's ear. She rose in agitation, her hands clasped. "Papa, I would risk it. Oh, papa, if you would only let me, I would risk it and trust it."

"If you choose to risk it and trust it you may do so," responded the subdean, coolly; "and that is what I have come in to say. But, recollect, I wash my hands of the consequences. When you shall have gathered all kinds of embarrassments about you," he added, turning to Charles, "don't expect that you are to come to me to help you out of them. If you two wish to make simpletons of yourselves and marry, go and do it. But understand that you will do it with your eyes open, Mr. Charles Baumgarten."

The subdean strutted out of the room, and Charles caught the girl to him, for he thought she was fainting.

"How good he is to us!" gasped the young man in the revulsion of feeling which the decision brought him.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Charles Baumgarten sat in his chambers enjoying an animated discussion with his friend, Jephson, the great chancery lawyer. About a week had gone by since Charles had come home from the circuit and held that momentous interview with Mary Dynevor which had been broken in upon by the subdean. Mary had now gone, with some friends, to Brighton for change of air, and Charles was, so to say, a bachelor at large again. The change from despair to hope had so elated him that he had somewhat rashly likened it to Elysium. But now a certain ugly looking bill for eighty-one pounds, bearing Charles' acceptance, had been presented to him for payment.

Charles declined to pay it, on the ground that he had not accepted it. He repudiated the bill altogether. It was held by that eminent legal firm, Godfrey & Herbert Jephson; the latter of whom had now come to Pump Court in person, bringing the bill with him.

"I never saw it in my life until to-day," protested Charles Baumgarten. "You have been imposed upon."

Mr. Jephson laughed. In days gone by they had been very intimate at the university together, and had there formed a close friendship; though Herbert Jephson was the elder by some years. "Stupid and nonsense!" quoth he, "would you deny your own signature? Look at it. Charles had looked enough at it, but looked again."

"I don't deny that it's a clever imitation, except in one particular. This is signed 'C. Baumgarten.' I always sign 'Charles' in full. Look over my notes to you, Jephson, should you have kept any, and see if I ever signed myself in any other way."

"If you never did it before, that's no reason why you might not have done it on this occasion," was the unanswerable response.

"How do you say it came into your hands, Jephson?" he asked.

"We received it from White, the engraver and jeweler," was the reply. "Some property White is entitled to get thrown into Chancery, and we have been acting for him. The expenses are draining him, and he had some difficulty to pay our last bill of costs. My brother pressed for it; one can't work for nothing; and Mr. White brought this bill of yours, and asked if we would take it in payment. Godfrey did so, and handed White the balance."

"You ought to have doubted how a bill of mine should get into a jeweler's hands."

They came to no satisfactory conclusion. And Mr. Jephson departed, taking the bill with him, declaring to the last, in his idle, joking manner, that the bill was undoubtedly Charles Baumgarten's and might have been accepted in his sleep.

Charles was busy all day. After snatching his dinner in the evening, he went out to call upon the elder of the two Jephsons; for, in spite of his assertion that he should do nothing, the affair was giving him concern, and he determined to look into it. Godfrey Jephson was in his dining room, but came out of it at once to Mr. Baumgarten.

"It is incomprehensible to me how you can deny the signature," he said, entering upon the matter at once. "If you saw my signature or Herbert's, you would know them. And we in the same way know yours. I recognized it the moment I saw it. White is a respectable man; there's not a more upright tradesman in the city of London; he is not one to say you accepted the bill if you did not. It is most strange that you should disown it, Mr. Baumgarten."

"Did White tell you I had accepted it?"

"He told Herbert. I have not had time to see him."

"Go with me to him now," suggested Charles. "He will not say to my face that I have bought jewelry of him and paid him with a bill. I never saw the man in my life to my knowledge and never was inside his shop."

Godfrey Jephson, his interest and curiosity aroused, agreed to the proposal; and they proceeded in the dusk of the evening to the jeweler's, in one of the leading thoroughfares.

"You go forward first," whispered Charles, "and enter upon it. I should like to watch his countenance. I'll come and confront him at the right time."

A smile that caused Charles to knit his brow crossed Mr. Jephson's face as he advanced to the jeweler. The shop was brilliant with gas. Charles sat down near the entrance, as if to wait for his friend.

"This bill," began Godfrey Jephson, taking it from his pocketbook, "was due to-day, and presented for payment. Mr. Baumgarten refuses to take it up. He says it is a forgery."

"But how can Mr. Baumgarten say that?" returned the jeweler. "He accepted the bill in my presence."

"Mr. Baumgarten says that he does not know you, and that he never was in your shop to his recollection," continued the lawyer.

Charles Baumgarten walked slowly forward, and the jeweler's eyes fell upon him. "Why, that—that is Mr. Baumgarten!" he uttered, though in a tone of hesitation.

"Yes; I am Charles Baumgarten. There's some mistake here, Mr. White, that I cannot understand. How is it that you told Mr. Jephson we have had dealings together?"

"Because we have had them," returned the jeweler. "The question is, how is it that you deny it? I recognize you fully now, sir. You purchased several articles of jewelry of me and paid me with this bill."

"I never bought a shilling's worth of jewelry of you in my life," replied Charles Baumgarten. "But if I had, I should not have been likely to pay you by a bill. If I had bought jewelry, I should pay you in cash for it."

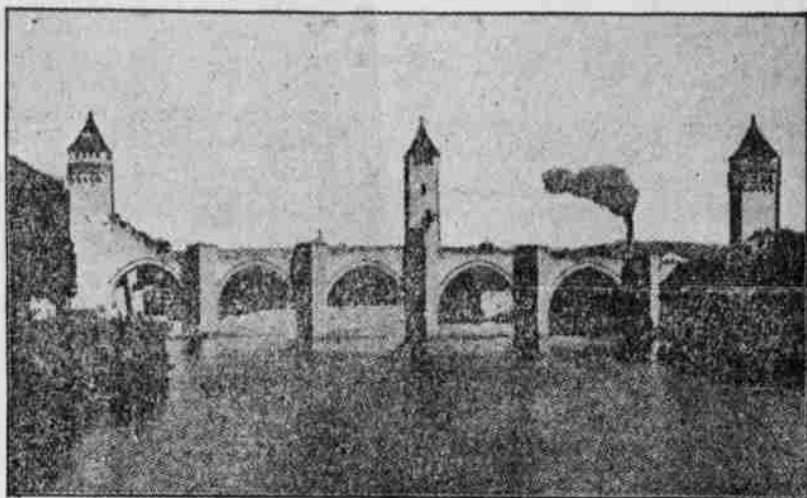
"And that is what you were going to do, sir," returned Mr. White. "You asked me to make the account out, and I did so. You laughed when you looked at the sum total, it was so much more than you had thought for; and you took out your pocketbook and counted the bank notes in it, and then said you had not much more than half enough with you and the shortest way would be to draw a short bill, say at a month's notice. I had no objection. I took a bill stamp from my desk, drew out the bill, and you accepted it at this very counter."

"It's all news to me," replied Charles. "I repeat to you, Mr. White, that I never was in this shop before to-night. I never signed or saw the bill; I never bought any jewelry here whatever."

(To be continued.)

For every ton of genuine Ivory imported into Great Britain there are imported three tons of vegetable Ivory. The latter comes chiefly from the republic of Colombia, in South America. It is obtained from the seeds of the Ivory-nut palm.

BEAUTIFUL BRIDGE IN FRANCE IS THREATENED.



HISTORICAL STRUCTURE AT CAHORS TO BE DEMOLISHED.

Great indignation has been aroused in some quarters in Europe by the announcement that the beautiful towered bridge of Cahors in the department of Lot is to be demolished. This is one of the most wonderful medieval relics of the country and has long been noted for its beauty and picturesque quality. It appears that there is no chance of preventing the vandalism, which is said to be exceedingly unusual in France, where historical monuments are generally regarded as sacred. This famous structure over the river at this point has figured in many of the early wars in France and has been a favorite topic with romantic novelists of ancient and modern times. The bridge has stood for centuries and is now in a very fair state of preservation, but the people of the city have come to think they want a more modern structure and so it must be torn down. The three towers of the bridge are remarkably fine specimens of early architecture and the high arches are also features of unusual beauty. It is said that the towers were erected for purposes of defense and that from them the citizens of Cahors have in times past kept close watch on the movements of enemies who have threatened them. Some romantic legends are associated with the bridge.

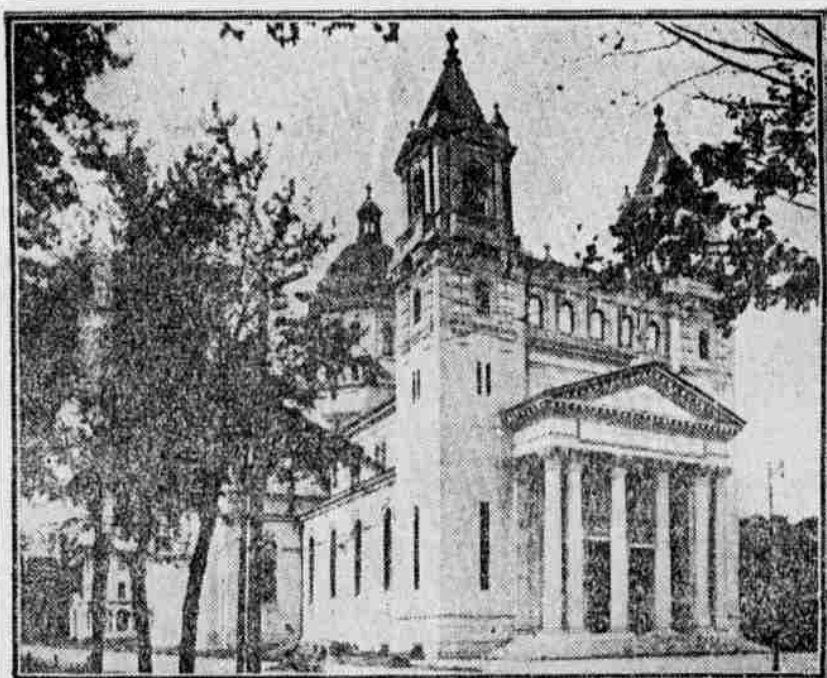
CHURCH AND MAUSOLEUM.

\$1,000,000 Cathedral, the Gift of Wealthy New York Couple.

The new Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, erected by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Ryan, of New York, and in which their bodies, together with those of the Catholic prelates of Virginia, will rest after death, was recently consecrated in Richmond with all the impressive ritual of the church. Monsignor Falconio, the apostolic delegate, was present, and Bishop Augustin Van de Vyver, of Richmond, saw realized the results of thirty-six years of effort in

rightly demands that it shall bring him a larger return than is made to him by the savings banks, wants to know what return he is likely to receive from investments in the stocks of all these companies now offering their shares through the newspapers all over the land.

How many of these companies, in the advertising of which the English language is drained of superlatives, are going to live and pay dividends? The same question was asked five years ago about a mass of new companies advertised with the same reckless use of superlatives. During the winter of



CATHEDRAL OF THE SACRED HEART IN RICHMOND, VA.

Virginia, in the completion of the finest house of worship in the entire South and one of the greatest four cathedrals in the United States.

The corner stone of the cathedral was laid in 1903. The immense stone pile occupies an entire block in the heart of the fashionable quarter of the city, and facing Monroe Park. At the east end of the edifice is the organ loft, in which one of the largest organs in the country has been installed. At the south end is the choir, surrounded by a great iron grille, and the simple altar. To the right of the altar, facing the east, stands the bishop's throne and the stalls for the priests, while on the opposite side is set the pulpit. Massive bronze gates separate the choir from the transept. The cathedral is lighted with electricity. There are five altars and two chapels.

The actual cost of the cathedral can only be estimated. On this point the dignitaries of the church in Richmond will not talk. It is known, however, that the statutory in the church, the gift of Mrs. Ryan personally, cost about \$50,000. Architects and builders who have looked over the structure say that the cathedral, including the houses of the church dignitaries, cost in the neighborhood of a million dollars.

HARVEST FOR PROMOTERS.

Present Prosperity Offers Great Field to Dealers in Wildcat Stocks.

The promotion boom is here. It would warm the cockles of Colonel Mulberry Sellers' heart to read the Sunday newspapers these days, for they carry page after page of advertisements of "millions-in-it" schemes, such as the colonel never dreamed of. This promotion boom already exceeds in proportions the memorable one of the two years following the flotation of the United States Steel Corporation. The man who has money to invest, and who

1900-01, the investors of the country went mad over stock speculation. The shame of it was that the debauch was led by men of standing in the community, who were intoxicated by their greed for gold. Investors were credulous as they had not been since the days of the South Sea Bubble, and the promoters—good, bad and indifferent—reaped a harvest.

How many of all these one hundred and fifty companies of 1901-02 are making money to-day and paying dividends to their stockholders? One—just one! In all this brave array of wonderful ventures that were to make fortunes for the credulous, one company is paying a dividend—and a dividend smaller than that paid by the savings banks. One other is a going manufacturing concern, that ignores my request for information; a third is a going real estate company, that repurchased from investors the stock sold to them; a fourth is a plantation company waiting for its rubber trees to grow up; two are struggling oil companies in need of money; eighteen are gold mines, still hoping to strike it rich, and nearly all are in need of money. Of the one hundred and twenty-six other ventures, twenty-two may be classed as moribund, while the remaining one hundred and four are dead and gone, forgotten by all but the investors who bravely put their money into them.—Frank Fayant, in Success Magazine.

A Cynical View.

"What are the 'tormentors' on the stage?"

"That depends. To stage hands they are the first scenes on the sides of the stage; to the audience they are often the people in the middle of it."—Baltimore American.

A mother is in jail while her children are little, but isn't it a fact that a father's sentence is longer?