

# DOOMED.

By WILLARD MacKENZIE

## CHAPTER XII.

As soon as Stafford had completed his task, he summoned one of the servants to show him to Mr. Wylie's apartment. He was most eager to learn what his visit boded. Mr. Wylie was discussing an excellent cold collation. The evening was drawing in fast; but although the weather was very warm, a bright fire blazed upon the broad hearth.

"Ah, here you are, Mr. Stafford!" cried Wylie. "Surprised to see me here, no doubt. Very seldom I get away so far from town; indeed, I may say, that since I entered my profession, I have never been so far away before. Our business is so very confining—so unlike yours. Very delightful to be able to roam about all the lovely spots of the earth, and to combine profit with pleasure."

Here Stafford's impatience broke through all bounds. "Excuse my interrupting you, but you told me in the picture gallery that you desired to speak with me on very important matters. May I inquire what those matters are?" Unable to hold back the thought that lay upon his lips, he blurted out, "Do you know anything about that picture in the gallery, Mr. Wylie?"

"Which picture?" inquired Mr. Wylie. "The one of Circe."  
"No; I told you so before. But you evidently know something of it, or want to know something of it." Mr. Wylie had been asked the very question he had been fishing for.

"Who, I?" stammered Stafford, who could have now bitten his tongue for giving utterance to his blundering impatience. He knew sufficient of the family affairs to be aware that Mr. Wylie was no friend to the Griersons; and he had, by his indiscretion, aroused in him suspicions of a mystery which might hereafter work mischief to Constance. "I was only thinking of the strange resemblance it bore to Miss Grierson."

"Very strange, and so like that, one might be almost tempted to suppose that she sat for it," answered Mr. Wylie, with marked emphasis. "And now to business; for I can perceive that you are growing very impatient. I have come down here to consult with Sir Launce about his son's marriage with my ward. Now, Mr. Stafford, I know that there have been certain love passages between you and that lady. Suppose, instead of her marrying Arthur Penrhuddyn, I could so bring matters about that she should marry Edward Stafford instead?"

"I do not understand you," said Stafford, bewildered.  
"The explanation is simple enough," answered Wylie, in the same sharp, decisive tones. "First, answer me honestly and honorably, without disguise, is it Miss Constance Grierson you are in love with, or the heiress?"

"I do not consider myself at liberty to answer such a question," replied Stafford.  
"Ah, then, it is the fortune, and not the lady!" sneered Mr. Wylie.  
"How dare you speak such words to me?" cried Stafford, starting up, hot with passion. "Miss Grierson would be the same to me were she penniless."

"That is exactly what I want to get at," cried Mr. Wylie, rubbing his hands at the success of his ruse. "Then you would be equally ready to marry her with or without her fortune? We will take that for granted. Now, as you are, doubtless, aware, were Constance to become your wife, she would forfeit her entire fortune, with the exception of a small annuity; but as you are indifferent to the money, and only want the girl, that would not matter to you. Get her into the same way of thinking, and I will assist you to the utmost to forward the match, and give you a couple of thousands to start housekeeping. As to my motive in making this proposition, that is not your concern. Do not answer now; think over what I have said, and give me your reply in the morning."

But Stafford, who had sat motionless during this last speech, now rose from his chair, and gave way to the indignation that was boiling within him; and in a burst of passion that positively electrified Mr. Wylie, refused to be a party to the bargain proposed.

"If I cannot win her without fraud and treachery—without assisting her enemies to rob her of her fortune, let me never look upon her face again; and should you ever again dare to hint such a proposition to me, I will chastise you upon the spot!"

So saying he strode out of the room, slamming the door behind him.  
Mr. Wylie had encountered two astonishing phenomena that day—a servant who refused a bribe, and a lover who refused to marry for a scruple of conscience. In all his experience he had never encountered the like. He felt inclined to exclaim with Hamlet, "Is doomsday near?" He had committed two serious errors—shown his cards to two persons who had refused to play his game. But he trusted to the fertile resources of his scheming brain to quickly redeem these mistakes.

"As to that idiot, Stafford," he muttered to himself, "he may change his mind by the morning. Still, I am sorry that he knows so much. What is this story about Eleonore de Solsons? Some silly legend, I suppose; but they attach great importance to such things in these barbarous places. One can never know too much. How came the picture of a De Solsons here? What a strange re-

semblance, too! There's a mystery here that I must fathom." Thus, with the red firelight glowing upon his face, and the dark shadows of the night gathered round him, did he sit planning and revolving new schemes and combinations.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Edward Stafford did not leave Penrhuddyn on the morning after his interview with Mr. Wylie, as he had arranged to do. Harassed by anxious doubts and fears, he had lain awake until daybreak; then, worn out with mental fatigue, he fell into a deep slumber, from which he did not awake until an hour after the time of the train starting. Upon reflection, he did not regret the circumstance. His immediate presence in London could effect nothing; he might be better employed in keeping an eye upon Mr. Wylie's motions.

Sir Launce was surprised to see the guest whom he had taken leave of the night before, and whom he thought was by this time whirling along the iron road to London, enter the library next morning.

"Sir Launce," said Stafford, "I am about to trespass upon your hospitality for another day or two."

"If you are at leisure for a moment, Mr. Stafford, there is a subject upon which I would speak to you. Pray be seated."

Stafford took a chair, wondering what was coming.  
"You are, no doubt, aware of the proposed alliance between Arthur and Miss Constance Grierson. Perhaps you know the lady?"

"Very well," answered the artist; "I painted her portrait, and gave her some instructions in water color painting."

"And is the very high praise I have heard of her deserved?"

"It would be impossible, sir, to praise her beyond her deserts," answered Stafford, warmly.  
"To the young lady I can form no possible objection. I would that I could say as much for her family—more particularly of that member who is at present honoring me with a visit. Have you ever met him before?"

"Once or twice during my visits to Harley street. The man is an unscrupulous schemer; be on your guard against him."

"You have expressed my own opinion, Mr. Stafford. I am on my guard; and before I permit the matter to proceed any further, I shall make a journey to London. I am but half reconciled to an union that would ally me to such a man."

Just then a servant entered with the letter bag.  
"Where is Daniel this morning?" inquired Sir Launce.

"He had an attack of rheumatism in the night, and couldn't get out of bed this morning," answered the man.  
"Poor Daniel! I must go to see him. Who went for the letters this morning?"

"His grandson, Jim Starkie, Sir Launce," replied the man, hesitatingly.

"And why was that careless boy sent upon such an errand? See here! There is a cut in the bag, quite large enough to allow of a letter passing through," exclaimed Sir Launce, who had been emptying it of its contents; "and the letters are crumpled and battered. Here is one for you, Mr. Stafford. Send Jim Starkie to me, immediately."

In a few moments a shock-headed, mischievous looking boy, dressed in a fisherman's blue guernsey, sidled into the room, with a most guilty expression of face.  
"What have you been doing with this bag? It is cut and probably some of the letters lost," said Sir Launce. "You have knocked it about in some way. Run back all the way you came, and look well over the ground. If a letter has been dropped, I have no doubt you will find it."

In the meantime, Stafford had read his epistle with the most delightful feeling of satisfaction. It was from Constance; and although it was the briefest, it was the pleasantest he had yet received from her. It ran thus:

"All is broken off between me and Arthur Penrhuddyn. I told him that my heart was already engaged; and in the most noble manner he at once relinquished his suit."  
"Yours ever,  
"CONSTANCE."

"God bless him for a noble, generous fellow!" murmured Stafford; "and if ever I can repay him by any sacrifice in the world, I will do it!"

Mr. Wylie had risen at sunrise that morning. He walked down the narrow footpath, beneath the foliage of the dwarf oak and beech, through which glanced the red sunbeams. He passed into the village, and thence down upon the rocky coast. As he returned he thought that he would wait for the arrival of the mail before going back to breakfast. So he called in at the postoffice.

Presently the mail cart drove up with its epistolary burden. There were several letters for him, among others were one from his wife, and one from Fig, the confidential clerk, which he attended to first. Jim Starkie soon overtook Mr. Wylie, and strode along, whistling, and swinging the letter bag from side to side. The pace at which that gentleman was walking kept a little in the rear of the boy the whole way through the walk.

Master Jim indulged in various eccentricities during his progress, such as toss-

ing the bag up in the air and catching it, whirling it round his head by the string, and knocking it against the trunks of the trees. When about half way up the path that led to the Castle, spying a bird upon one of the lower branches of a tree, he gathered up the unfortunate bag into a ball, and hurled it at the bird. The bag lodged upon a branch just above his reach, and obliged him to climb the tree to recover it, which he only achieved by much stretching and pulling. After this, he performed the rest of his walk somewhat more sedately.

Mr. Wylie had been a witness of all this. As he reached the top of the path he caught sight of something white upon the pathway. It was a letter. He picked it up and read the address: "Sir Launce Penrhuddyn, Penrhuddyn Castle, near Bodmin, Cornwall."

"That was dropped out of the bag," he muttered, turning it over. "I wonder who it is from? What is this 'A. P.' in the corner? That is Arthur Penrhuddyn; and in the further corner, 'Immediate.' I wonder, now, what that letter contains?" And Mr. Wylie scanned it with his lynx eye. He put the letter in his pocket, and walked slowly towards the Castle, in deep thought.

Two hours afterwards, he again issued from the Castle to take another stroll. Down among the rocks he came upon a lonely fisherman's hut. At the door, basking in the warm sunshine, was an aged man, over whose withered face was spread a network of wrinkles. There was a wild, half-insane look in his eyes, as he sat vacantly staring at the waves, and muttering to himself.

Mr. Wylie regarded him for a moment, mentally observing to himself, "Here is an old seer, now, who must know plenty about Penrhuddyn, if he has got the brains left to tell it. We'll see."

So, by way of a beginning, he wished the old man good-day and found him quite inclined to talk. By and by a hale looking man, about sixty, and another of about forty, who saluted the old man respectfully as father and grandfather, came up and touched their sou'-westers to the gentlemen, and then they fell into the conversation.

After about an hour and a half spent thus, during which he sucked the three men dry of all the information they could give, Mr. Wylie put half a sovereign into the grandfather's hand and wished them all good afternoon.

"Rather fortunate I came this way," he muttered to himself as he walked back. "So, Master Daniel, I've learned a great deal more than I should have bargained with you for, and for just ten shillings less than I offered you. A very strange story that. It almost makes one believe that curses may be realized—at least, there is every probability that this one will. Pshaw! absurd! A mere coincidence."

Early next morning Mr. Wylie sent a servant to Bodmin for a chaise to convey him to the station; and when it arrived, took his departure. But before taking his way to the station he desired the coachman to drive him over different parts of the estate, especially where the mines were situated. "I will take a survey of my property that is to be before I leave," he said to himself.

Stafford remained Sir Launce's guest. Constance's letter he regarded as having removed those scruples of honor which had at first determined him to leave the Castle; it had also removed the necessity of his immediate return to town.

He did not give Sir Launce the slightest intimation of the contents of the letter he had received. "Of course Arthur himself will immediately acquaint his father with the state of affairs. Strange he has not done so before!" he thought.

Sir Launce wondered greatly when another day passed away without bringing a letter from his son. He had written to him, however, on the previous evening. A reply to that letter must arrive by the morning mail.

(To be continued.)

## Where Mahogany Grows.

The tree which produces that beautiful and well-known wood, mahogany, is one of the most elegant, if not the largest, of the country in which it is found, and frequently grows in the crevices of rocks. The appearance of so large a vegetable production in such a situation is extremely curious and picturesque, and it is to be accounted for from the construction of the seed, which is like that of the thistle, winged, or capable of being blown along by the action of the air and in that manner deposited in holes and fissures in the rocks, where it speedily vegetates and springs up. As long as the plant remains young the place in which it is found is sufficiently large for its growth, but as it increases in size the roots gradually but irresistibly force asunder the walls of their rocky prisons and throw off large portions of stone.

It is not always, however, found in these situations, the largest timber being produced in some of the flat and marshy spots on the coast of America. Such is the Honduras mahogany, which is much looser in texture and of less value than that from the mountainous districts of Cuba and Hayti.

## Dust Protectors.

Gunner—That is a very polite porter they have on this train.  
Guyer—So?  
Gunner—Yes; before he begins to brush you down he hands you a pair of automobile goggles.

## Out of the Ordinary.

Gyer—Higgins is a remarkable man.  
Myer—In what way?  
Gyer—Why, he can wait at the telephone without making pencil marks on the desk pad.



## CHARACTER BUILDING.

By Rev. William C. Stimson.  
To-day I must abide at thy house.— Luke 10: 5.

When Christ entered the home of Zaccheus the publican, it meant not only a changed life for Zaccheus, but for his wife and children and every one connected with that home. It meant alteration of habits, associations and environment.

Why is it that you can detect a Christian home almost as soon as you enter it? May it not be that the Christian lives, the Christian customs, the Christian conversation of the occupants give to it a sort of sacred atmosphere? A man told me once that a rebuke which he could never forget came from the lips of his saintly father, who, upon entering the new-made home, said: "My son, this house is beautiful, but I see nothing here to indicate distinctively that it is a Christian home."

The lowest conception of home is to speak of it as a place where man's material wants are satisfied. We can obtain this satisfaction in a hotel. A man living in one room in a hotel or boarding-house seems like a grapevine in a flowerpot, movable, shifted from place to place, doctored at the root and short at the top. No doubt it is an inevitable condition to which many people must submit, but this "cubined, cribbed, confined" home life of the cities is militating against the best interests of the family institution.

Whatever the material shape or accommodations of the home, it should be the place where hearts and lives are united in loving compact. The home has been called "the institute of the affections." Where does the home begin? At the marriage altar. When should a home begin? When the hearts and lives of a man and a woman feel that each is made for the other and can enter the marriage relations intelligently, resolutely, hopefully, with the spirit of bear and forbear, deeply mindful of all the legitimate consequences of such a relation.

Blessed is the home that is established on the basis of love, and no home can be a home, however attractive or comfortable or abundant its material environment, where love is not the regnant principle, the unifying bond.

There is no other educative agency comparable to the home. The parent is both teacher and priest. The father and mother there make vows for the child. The child, knowing the love, the care, the compassion, the wisdom of the father on earth, soon passes into larger knowledge of the heart and character of the great father in Heaven. Human fatherhood is a divine trust.

An eminent business man recently said that if he had his life to live over again he would perhaps accumulate less wealth, but he would spend more time at home with his sons, so that the relations between them might be more intimate and that he might determine in them as none others can, the great issues of character.

What a child between the years of 7 and 17 learns from the parents, and especially from the mother, of duty, honor, love, sympathy, obedience, can never be wholly misplaced or lost.

Oh, for the home of the Bible, the family altar, the blessing at the meal, the sacred song, the home that is joined hard to the church! Such homes are the true domestic commonwealths. From such republics have come the men and women into the larger republic, winning honor in every sphere of life, devoting time, strength and money to the service of God and their fellow men.

## LIFE'S SPRINGTIDE.

By Henry F. Cope.  
Who satisfeth thy mouth with good things so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle.—Pa. 103: 5.

Everywhere the leaves break forth in obedience to the call of spring. Everywhere the bird song starts again; everywhere the flowers come out into the sunshining. There is no rebellion, no anarchy here. All nature is in tune. Out of the depths of the past springs the life of the present. Slowly, imperceptibly, all nature develops, because there is life. There is a new life. Each springtide marks a tide a little higher than the one before.

Is there anything in man's higher, moral life that corresponds to this? Can it be that while all nature is in tune with the infinite, singing his praises, and finding new life, man alone is out of harmony? As truly as there is a tide when life springs upward in the woods and fields, so truly is there a tide that reaches the depths of a man's life.

The years of youth return to none;

the elasticity goes forever from the step; and yet man may renew his youth; his finer self may come under the power of the returning tide of life. There is a springtide for the heart. So long as hope and faith remain there is always the possibility of new beginnings, the shedding of old leaves, the breaking into new beauties of soul and of deed.

If there were no new beginnings how drear the prospect of living. Though we may have long ago given up the possibility of finding the fountain of eternal youth, that hope was but the outer evidence of an eternal, inner fact. There is a fountain of eternal youth for the heart. The head may become frosty, but the sun shines warm once again, new hopes spring up, new and better ideals are born, wherever there is a heart turning toward love and light.

Is there anything more desolate than the life that seems to have settled down to perpetual winter? With some it comes before the days of youth are ended. The cynical spirit, the world worn attitude, or the heart crushed by moral failure and seeming dead to all hope, lie buried beneath the snows of despair.

Yet there may come, through the wonderful awakening to the fact of the everlasting, all inclusive love, through the vision of the brooding hope and longing for new life that beats in the heart of the most high for us all, there may come the beginning of new life, the bursting of the bonds of the old lethargy and the dawn of a new year for even the dreariest lives.

Hope is the only measure of age. Your years are many as your ideals and aspirations are few. The forward, upward look, the anticipation of better things farther on, the determination, despite past failures and wanderings, to find the best, to begin again, give promise of life renewed. Lift up your heart. To have fallen once is not, must not be, the end. Begin again. Infinite love is on your side.

Sitting in the days of gloom, never believe that there are no others. Know that the love that makes a world so fair never meant that our hearts should be forever desolate. Life's winter may be long; but in the wonder of the springtide that follows all its weariness shall be forgotten. Joy waits for all who look up and go forward. God is over all; he who brings again the glory to nature will restore your life.

## TAINED WEALTH IS POVERTY.

By Dr. Polemus H. Swift.  
Many a man thinks that he is adding to his inheritance when he is making himself poorer day by day. True riches consist not in what we have but in what we are, and no man can commit a wrong without wronging himself more than he wrongs anyone else. He who adds to his property by falsehood, trickery and dishonest methods has made himself infinitely poorer than he was before, no matter what may be the result of his speculation. It is a good thing to get property if it is got honestly, but to get property at the expense of manhood, integrity, a good name, self-respect, a blunted conscience and a blighted moral nature is the worst thing a man can do. No man can do a wrong without wronging himself more than he wrongs anyone else. A dishonest deed will mar the beauty of an honorable name, and when once the inheritance has been marred it is well-nigh impossible to restore the gem to its former brilliancy.

EVIL IN HASTY JUDGMENT.  
By Bishop Fallows.  
This is the short, sharp, imperative command of the one absolute teacher of truth and righteousness. It is a positive forbidding of a harsh, censorious, uncharitable opinion of another and of its expression in word or deed. It has been said with a great show of truth that men have not only many of the physical features of their lower relations in their own faces but also their evil characteristics. It is a sure sign of the lurking or open depravity of human nature. Especially in judging of men in public life everything should be weighed. Broken hearts, unjustly ruined reputations and the unwillingness of good men to serve in official life would then be far less frequent than now.

## Short Meter Sermons.

Honest methods wait for honest men. Trials are to build us, not to break us.

The truly strong never ignore the weak.

The man who dare not fall is sure to do it.

Heaven sees our gifts in the light of our gains.

The full hand often goes with the empty heart.

It is not far from winking at sin to working for it.

The flame of lust quenches the pure light of love.

Faith for the future is the undying hope of man.

If you really have the light of the world in your heart every one will get some of your sunshine.