CHAPTER XVI.—(Continued.)

That night is still as death itself, and the sparkling brilliance of the slow moving waters contrasts with it in tender fashion. Strangely attracted by it, Vera goes forward, moves down the stone steps that lead to the garden, and with eager footsteps gains the little pathway, steep and sudden, that leads to the beach.

Suddenly she draws in her arms, and a shiver runs through her; she turns her head—to see Dysart.

"You are going to marry Lord Shelton?" he says, his tone more assertive than questioning.

"It is an impertinent question," says Miss Dysart, calmly.

"You are disingenuous. If he has not yet asked you, you know he only waits the opportunity to do so. When he does——" He checks himself abruptly, knowing he has gone too far.

A little flame leaps into Vera's eyes.

"Has it occurred to you that I am very forbearing?" she asks, with a curious smile. "Does it not strike you as very remarkable that I do not on my part question you back again? that I do not ask you whom you are going to marry?"

He looks as if he was about to make her an angry rejoinder, but she checks him.

"No—don't be afraid, I am not going to put the question," she says, coldly; "and after all, why should I?"

"Do you mean," he goes on, "that you know of someone I want to marry?"

"Let there be an end to this hateful hypocrisy," cries she, turning to him with a burst of passionate anger. "You acted your part for Griselda this morning most admirably."

"Vera!" cries he, hoarsely.

She turns as if startled by that impassioned cry, and then, he hardly knows how it is, he hardly dares remember afterward, but somehow she is in his arms, and he is looking down into her frightened eyes with a terrible entreaty in his own.

"Do you know what you are doing?" he says, his miserable voice scarcely above a whisper. "My darling, my soul, have pity!" More closely his arms bind her. He bends his face to hers—nearer, nearer still, and then, suddenly, a great loathing of himself fills him. He draws back with a sharp shudder, and almost pushes her from him. "Go!" he says, vehemently; and in another moment she has turned the corner of the winding stairs, and is gone.

Gone!

With a heavy groan he flings himself face downward on the cool sweet, shifting sands, that moon-smitten lie trembling, waiting for the dawn.

CHAPTER XVII.

As Mr. Dysart takes his way slowly around the house, the sound of running footsteps coming toward him from a side walk attracts his attention. It is Grunch, wild-eyed, haggard, her thin gray locks, unbound through her unusual haste, flying at each side of her lean, forbidding face.

"More haste, worse speed," says he, sarcastically. "Is the house afire, or my precious nieces dead, that you rush upon me with such indecorous abandon?"

"Hush," says she, sternly, with a glance behind her, "this is no time for words like those. Think only of this, Dysart," pausing and panting for breath, "that I have seen a ghost."

The old man laughs.

"Be silent!" hisses the woman savagely; "cease your gibes, I tell you. The ghost I have seen is—is——"

"My worthy father, for example," suggests he, with a sneer. "No? Well, come, who, then?"

"Michael Sedley!" The words fall from her as though they burn her lips in passing.

The sneer dies from Mr. Dysart's lips; a dark flush suffuses his face, turning it almost black for the moment, to fade presently beneath the ashen hue that makes him look like a corpse—a corpse with eyes of fire! He staggers back against a tree, and his hands catch convulsively at the bark of it.

"You are mad, woman!" he says, in a terrible voice.

"Ay, may be. So I say. Mad I am, if it was his ghost I saw. But if I saw him in the flesh, how then, Dysart? Why, sane. Well," with growing excitement, "shall it be mad or sane?"

"Mad, mad, mad!" shrieks he, furiously. "All my life you have been my bane, my curse, and now, now ,what is this news you would tell me? Sedley! Why, he is dead, woman—dead, I tell you! Where have you seen him? Speak, I command you," cries he, seizing her arm and shaking her violently.

"On the avenue. I was there watching Miss Griselda, as you told me to, lest she should go into the woods again, when he came slowly toward me through the trees, prowling about. He's changed, he's gone to bone a deal; but I'd know him still among a thousand. Ay, and you'll know him, too."

It is characteristic of the iron nature of the man—that rose above all petty cringings to a miserly fear—that as he enters the presence of the one creature whom on earth he dreads, he does so with a calm visage and one expressionless. His step is slow, methodical as usual; his face, gray in its pallor, a very mask. His brilliant eyes alone betray the keen life that still lingers in the gaunt old frame, and they look through and through the unwelcome visitor with an unblinking gaze.

"You!" he says, softly, nay smilingly, extending a graceful hand, with a good deal of languid indifference.

"Just that," says Sedley, in a tone so loud and common as to contrast painfully with the polished accent that had gone before. "Years since we met, mate."

"Many," says Mr. Dysart, sinking carefully into a rickety old chair near him. "And yet it seems like yesterday—that we parted."

"Take it like that! it shows what a downy nest you've been lyin' in," says the large, coarse-looking man, with a distinctly aggrieved air. "There's the injustice of it. You've as much right to this place as I have, when all's told. And if I can't get my share——"

"'Sh—!" breathes Mr. Dysart, softly, lifting one hand. "And—well, so you have come back? Pining for the old country, eh?"

"To look you up," doggedly. "To see whether you were in the grave or out of it, partner."

"Partner?" repeats Dysart, as if in gentle interrogation.

"In crime!" roughly, as if angered by the other's tone. "That's what they'd call it, Dysart, at the Old Bailey, or whatever court it might come before. I'm not particular."

"No—no," assents Mr. Dysart, with gentle encouragement.

"I never blamed you, mind you that. But a lawyer's a worriting sort o' varmint. A man should stick to his word, sez I, and when the old gov-ner refused to stick to his, after all his promises to you, why, if you kept him to it, in spite of him, when he had no longer power to kick—well, who's to say you were wrong, eh?"

"You are very good; very—sustaining," says Mr. Dysart, slowly. His tone is, perhaps, a little fainter.

"Ay, that's what I am to them as stands by me. And you and I are in the same boat, Dysart; never lose sight of that. I don't. I'll back you up as fresh as though it was only yesterday we'd agreed on—on—you know what. Ha, ha, ha!"

The old man suddenly stiffens himself, and looks straight at Sedley.

"And now what is it you want?" he asks, tersely, his tone ringing cold and clear through the room, though very low.

"Now, I like that. I want part o' the swag. Five thousand pounds," says the other, coolly.

"Five thousand pounds! You must be mad."

"Not one penny less. My silence is worth that—and more. Come, don't imagine you can impose on me. I tell you, I would think as little of going into that room out there and telling your nieces of that first will, as——"

"Hush—hush!" says Dysart, in a sharp tone, wild with fear. "Not another word, not a breath on that subject here. Walls have ears. You know the old ruin at the end of the far garden? Meet me there to-night, and I shall see if we can come to terms."

With a last word or two he succeeded in getting Sedley to the door, and there summons Grunch, who in truth is marvelously handy.

"Grunch! Will you see to Sedley? He is as old a friend of yours as of mine, I think," says Mr. Dysart, in so genial a tone for him that Grunch involuntarily glances at him. "He is tired, and no doubt hungry. Make him comfortable in every way."

"Yes, sir," says Grunch, respectfully. She leads Sedley down the passage, and then, with a muttered word to him that she should get the keys of the cellar, runs back to Dysart, who stands staring after them with an unfathomable expression in his eyes.

"Your will—quick!" she says, in a low tone.

"Keep him out of sight. Let no one see him, or guess at his presence in this house," whispers Dysart, fiercely, after which he steps back into his room and slams the door, and locks it behind him in a frenzied fashion.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It is [illegible] shroud Peyto[illegible] the up[illegible] to the [illegible] Saf[illegible] house, [illegible] await will b[illegible] a des[illegible] enter [illegible] in the [illegible] to squ[illegible] letter [illegible]

Voic[illegible] The s[illegible] sart. The second voice is strange to him—coarse, vulgar and dictatorial, and very threatening.

The voices grow in wrath; the unknown one being loud in vituperation. And now, all suddenly as it were, the voices cease; there is a strained silence, as if each man waits with drawn sword for the other's next word, and then—a sickening sound. A dull, awful blow, as of oak meeting flesh and blood, a ghastly groan, and then—silence.

Great heaven! What has happened? Has he killed that old man? Peyton springs forward, looks upon the inner room, he stops short, as if shot, to stare aghast upon the scene before him.

Upon the earthen floor lies a huge figure, apparently dead, while standing over it is Mr. Dysart, his face alight with a ghastly hope, his wild eyes gleaming. A heavy oaken stick is in his hand. The murderous bludgeon is uplifted to complete crime already begun—to finish his work, to make sure of the helpless victim at his feet, when Peyton, uttering a loud cry, rushes from the spot where until now he lay concealed.

There is an instant's hush, a strange hush, and then a convulsive shiver runs through the old man. An ashen grayness has risen from chin to brow. He flings up his arms, for a second or two, clutches foolishly at the air, and then falls with a dull thud across the body of his enemy.

Peyton runs through the garden, never pausing or drawing breath until the house is reached. Knocking impatiently with his knuckles and receiving no answer, he so far gives way to the agitation that is consuming him as to smash a pane with a stone. This brings Seaton to the window in a minute or two, partially dressed.

"It is I, Dysart—Tom Peyton. Come out, come out quickly. Your father," panting, "is hurt—is very ill!"

"My father!" says Seaton, as if not believing. "But where—how?"

"In the garden—up there in the old ruin. Oh, hurry, man, hurry; you can hear all afterward!"

Seaton hardly dares to venture a remark, but, having with trembling fingers clothed himself, follows Peyton out through the window in the chill night air, and soon the two young men are tearing like hunted things through the gardens to that fatal old ruin at the end of them.

Here everything is just as Peyton left it. The old man lying dead, with a more peaceful expression on his face than had ever been there while he lived—the other, the stranger, almost as motionless as his enemy, save for a faint quiver of the lips and nostrils every now and then. Who was he? What had brought him here? Peyton turns to Seaton with these questions on his lips. It is imperative that something about the stranger be discovered—and at once.

Seaton is still holding his father's body in his arms, inexpressible grief upon his countenance. The old man had been stern, hard, begrudging, but he had loved his son well, and the son knew it. Peyton touches him lightly on the shoulder.

"Rouse yourself," he says, in a low, earnest tone. "You know this man?"

"No—not at all. I never saw him before."

"What! you can tell me nothing? Oh, think, Dysart!" says Peyton, with increasing anxiety. "If you know nothing we shall scarcely be able to see how to act. Exert your memory, man."

"It is useless. I swear I never saw him before." He compels himself to look again at Sedley, and a shiver of disgust shakes him. "I know only this—that he has killed my father."

"You forget," says Peyton, very quietly. He would have been thankful, glad, to be able to leave his friend in this belief, but he knew it would be impossible. "I saw the whole thing. There was a quarrel, about what I did not hear, but it was your father who knocked that fellow down."

"Well, it killed him," says Seaton, excitedly. "The excitement of that quarrel was too much for him. I still maintain that that man caused his death." He covers his face with his hands.

"Nevertheless, we cannot leave him here to die. Come, Seaton, take your courage in your hands. Think if there be no way to avoid the scandal that must necessarily arise out of all this. For—for the sake of your poor father's memory, bestir yourself."

It is a potent argument. Seaton flushes hotly, and the old touch of power returns to his face.

Together they carry the two bodies into the house, under cover of the silent night. Mr. Dysart to his own room, and then up the stairs, and through the endless corridors, that other groaning, scarcely living burden; up always until a disused chamber in a remote corner of the old tower is reached, where it is beyond probability that any one in the house save these three who know, will ever seek to penetrate.

(To be continued.)

HATS OF OUR ANCESTORS.

Changes that Have Taken Place in Manufacturing Headgear.

"Speaking of the hat business," said a veteran of the business to the local historian, "most wonderful changes have taken place since 1850. In olden times soft felt and derby hats were not known, and it was as late as 1843 when silk dress hats were first introduced in this country, this being a French invention, and all silk plush used for hats in the world was, up to this time, made in France. When Kossuth came to America he introduced the soft felt hats, wearing one himself. It did not take American hatters long to take up the idea, and in less than one year old and young Americans covered their heads with Kossuth hats. They were in shape nearly the same as tourist hats now, only being trimmed up with a nice, long ostrich plume. Along about 1858 an English tourist came along with the derby hat, and in a very few [illegible] they became the general head- [illegible] in the country, and up to the present date the demand for soft hats and [illegible] hats is nearly evenly divided.

[illegible] those days all the best class of [illegible] hats were imported from France, [illegible] stiff derbies from England. This, [illegible]ver, has taken a material change, [illegible]merican hats are now sold in all [illegible] of the globe, and it is a known [illegible] that we produce the most tasty [illegible]st hats made. Before the arrival [illegible]ssuth and the English tourist, [illegible]ver, the Americans did not go bareheaded, but contented themselves with napped otter and napped beaver hats, for the more expensive, and the so-called scratch-up or brush hats for the cheaper. Brush or scratch-up derive their name from the fact that nap was raised on them by means of a stiff brush constructed of whalebones. The first manufacturers who made American production in those goods popular and world-renowned, and who forced French and English hats out of this market, were Rinaldo M. Waters, John B. Stetson, J. D. Bird and B. J. Brown.

"During the early periods of 1840 and 1850 a dealer was a hatter in fact, else there would have been no room for him, as all made the hats they sold, all handwork, no machines of any kind, and one who knew how to make a napped otter or beaver hat was an artist, earning $40 to $60 per week being nothing unusual, many making from $75 to $100."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Hardly So.

In no situation, probably, is the stammering infirmity more calamitous than in making a proposition of marriage. An exchange gives us this dialogue:

Mr. Stutterly to Miss Grace ——: "M-m-m-iss G-G-G-G-G-G-Grace, I-I-I-I w-w-w-w-w-want you to b-b-b-be m-m-m-m-my——"

"What did you say, Mr. Stutterly?"

"W-W-W-W-W-W-Won't you b-b-b-be my wu-wu-wu-wu-wife, I-I-I-I-I s-s-s-s-said!"

"O, George, this is so s[illegible]dden!"

MAKING MAPLE SUGAR.

Method of Gathering the Sap and Boiling the Sirup.

Maple sugr and sirup are favorite sweets the country over, and this fact gives a general interest to some information about the maple sugar industry which has practical value also for the sections where this particular kind of sugar-making prevails. An American Cultivator correspondent supplies the following details:

The evaporator is the first and most important consideration. The point to be considered in an evaporator is the one that can make the best sugar in the least possible time with the least amount of fuel. Evaporators are made of galvanized iron or steel, copper or tin. They are usually supported on iron arches lined with brick, but sometimes the arches are made entirely of brick. Storage tanks, draw tanks, sirup tanks, buckets and pails are of galvanized steel, tin or wood. We consider galvanized steel the superior article because it will not rust. Bucket covers can be of wood or tin; spouts, steel or tin.

Take a sugar place of 3,000 trees or, rather, one that uses 3,000 buckets. When the "boss" thinks it is time to "sugar," the men are set to tapping the trees. A three-eighths or one-half inch bit is used, and in large trees the hole is bored about two inches deep, in smaller trees only about one and a half inches. Spouts are driven or screwed in, buckets hung to each spout and covers, if they have them.

Some trees are tappepd in two or three and oftentimes four places, hanging a bucket to each spout, of course. Then, the weather being right, the sap runs, and the teams are started as soon as possible, for the quicker the sap is made into sugar the better the sugar is.

BOILING THE SYRUP AT THE CAMP FIRE.

Men with pails holding sixteen quarts go to each tree, collect the sap and empty it into the draw tank, which is being hauled about on a "sugar sled" by a pair of horses. These tanks hold anywhere from twenty five to fifty pail-fuls. When a load is secured, the team [illegible]s driven to the sugar houses, and the [illegible]ap, by means of four-inch pipes, is drawn from the draw tank to the storage tank.

The storage tanks are placed on a staging on the outside of the sugar house and connected with the evaporators by rubber hose or iron pipe, the flow of sap from storage tank to evaporators being regulated by automatic valves. Thust he sap enters one end of the evaporator, working back and forth through partitions and corrugations till it reaches the other end of the evaporator, when it is drawn off as "sirup."

TAPPING THE MAPLE TREES.

The sap is not "handled" any from the time the men pour it into the draw tanks until it comes out a finished article, i. e., made sirup at eleven pounds to the gallon.

This may be put away in sirup tanks and allowed to cool and settle, and then, if the sugar is wanted, this sirup is put into the "sugaring off" pan on a separate arch and boiled down until the right pitch is reached, when it is taken from the fire, stirred gently and allowed to cool and then put into tin cans or wooden tubs, and it is then ready for market in the form of maple sugar.

THE POWER OF SUPERSTITION.

The Gypsy Charm and Its Alleged Miraculous Cure.

Superstition is a force to be reckoned with and not despised by those who labor for the good of the poor in the large cities. A philanthropic woman of New York tells the following experience:

"A poor Italian housewife, living in Mulberry street, had a swelling of the knee. She told me of her trouble and I gave her the address of a free dispensary, where she went for treatment. The treatment did not cure her and she drew out from the savings bank a large part of her little hoard of savings, and, in spite of all my protests, paid it to a gypsy woman on the outskirts of Brooklyn for a charm. This charm consisted of a piece of parchment, on which were written some queer characters. The whole was tied up in a little bag and was suspended by a string around the patient's neck. When she showed it to me I laughed the thing to scorn and tried to show her how foolish she was to pay hard-earned money to a miserable quack. I could not convince her of the folly, however, and so gave up the effort, trusting to time to prove me right.

"The neighbors of the woman with the swollen knee soon heard of her gypsy charm, and one of them who had an eruption of the skin which had long defied the power of medicine to remove it begged for a copy of the charm. The first woman was ready to do this favor to her fellow-sufferer, and as neither could read nor write they used a 10-year-old son of one of them to make the copy. This boy had been attending a public school, and his parents were exceedingly proud of his ability to read and write 'American.' But the lad could make nothing of the gypsy writing on the parchment. He was equal to the occasion, however, and showed he had the making of a true American, for he would not acknowledge defeat. What he wrote was 'This is know good.'

"It was not until some time afterward that I heard of this, when the woman with the skin trouble was showing me the copied charm. When I saw the trick the boy had played on both of them I thought my vindication had truly come. But when I explained it all to her she met with the knockdown argument:

"'Well, miss, it cured us both.'

"What could I say to that?"

When a Man Falls Down.

Slippery sidewalks tend to bring out emphatically one of the peculiar sides of human nature. No matter how much the fall injures a man physically, it seems as nothing to the damage to his self-esteem if perchance his misfortune happens to be witnessed by some one else. The first thing the unfortunate does after picking himself up is to look all about him with an idiotic smile on his face, just as if he took the whole thing as a joke, but anxious to see if any one has seen his tumble.

If there happens to be some one near by who has witnessed the fall the smile vanishes, and there is a display of temper that is ludicrous. It is his hat that suffers. It is pounded instead of brushed, as if that hat was responsible for the humiliation, or as if he could get square with the hat by a "roughhouse" sort of brushing. If, however, no one is in sight, and no face is seen at a window, the unfortunate goes his way after a few preliminary limps, as if the thing was a matter-of-course incident that must be taken good-naturedly in common with the other trifling affairs of a lifetime. The result is about the same when a soft, slushy snowball, hurled by a small boy, finds its mark on the broad back of an otherwise dignified person.—Washington Star.

The Origin of "Buck-Board."

"There are few persons," says a soldier who, long since returned to civic ranks, "who know how the name of buck-board came to be applied to a vehicle. It was way back in the '20s, when the transportation of goods, wares and merchandise was principally all by wagons. Dr. Buck, who for long years after was the military storekeeper here, was then in charge of stores en route to army posts in the Southwest. In east Tennessee difficulty was experienced by reason of the rough roads, and there were frequent mishaps, mostly from the wagons overturning. Dr. Buck overhauled the outfit, and abandoning the wagon bodies, long boards were set directly on the axles or hung below, and the stores were reloaded in such a manner that there were no further delays from breakdowns, and the stores safely reached their destination. The idea doubtless was not new, but Dr. Buck's example was followed, especially when roads were rough, and soon much hauling was done by the use of wheel, axle and boards only. Now the fashionable buck-board recalls the old gentleman to some of us."—Washington Star.

Perilous.

In the higher regions of the Cordilleras refuge huts have been erected for the postmen who have to make their rounds till late in the winter. Even thus some of these men perish every winter, if overtaken by a storm lasting several days.

The nearer a girl approaches the age of 30 the more anxious she is to lose her self-possession.

A girl's love for pickles doesn't necessarily sour her disposition.

FOR WINTER AND SUMMER USE.

In many parts of the country there are variations in the temperature sufficient to produce good sleighing or remove the snow entirely in a few hours' time. As a consequence the driver is often at a loss to decide whether to hitch up his sleigh or carriage. A partial relief from the dilemma is afforded by the runners design with hubs to slip on the axles in place of the wheels, after the latter have been removed, but then the problem for the wheels arises, it being difficult to dispose of them in the wagon. George Glascock, of Veedersburg, Ind., seems to have solved the question very satisfactorily with his new runner, an illustration of which is here presented. As will be seen, each runner is provided with forked ends, which slip over the rim of the wheels and are held in place by bolts. When not in use these runners are easily stored in the carriage, being perfectly flat and occupying little space. This device will be found especially advantageous on long journeys, or when the owner of the vehicle intends to stay away from home for several days at seasons where there may be a freeze or thaw, as the driver may happen to be sensitive about running a sleigh on bare ground, or a wheeled vehicle when the sleighing is good.

BUGGY ON SLEIGH.

SUPERSTITIONS DYING OUT.

No. 13 and Haunted House Vagaries Are Fading Away.

"Real estate men are gradually forgetting most of the old-time superstitions which used to cause us much trouble," said a dealer the other day to a reporter. "The number of houses which cannot be rented or sold on account of being haunted or because some terrible crime was committed on the premises is rapidly decreasing. We run across only a few people who balk at living in house No. 13. Even elderly men who have made big fortunes are beginning to believe that there is nothing in the old saying that the aged rich man builds a mansion to die in it. New Yorkers are entirely too practical to hold to old superstitions; besides, the big apartment houses which we are building all over town are blotting out the old houses, which may have had histories."

"Tell me something about the haunted houses which are still standing in this city," the agent was requested.

"Now you are getting on dangerous ground. In these days of well-defined libel laws you can't talk about a man's property in a way that will depreciate its value without paying well for your fun. Circulating ghost stories about particular houses is not calculated to improve their renting value, and the owners might be able to show that we had done them real damage. There is one house in West Eleventh street that is never more than half filled, because years ago some one thought the house was haunted, and the story of terrible ghosts that walk about the halls at night has been handed down from tenant to tenant. There are other haunted houses, but we are trying to forget where they are, hoping that the stories will be forgotten. It is generally difficult to rent or dispose of houses in which sensational crimes have been committed. Long murder trials in which the houses figured prominently usually cause them to rmain vacant for a long time."—New York Tribune.

About the Hand.

Strength in the fingers is a sure token of mental aptitude. One of the most common signs of want of good breeding is a sort of uncomfortable consciousness of the hands, an obvious ignorance of what to do with them and a painful awkwardness in their adjustment. The hands of a gentleman seem perfectly at home without being occupied: they are habituated to elegant repose, or if they spontaneously move it is attractively. Some of Queen Elizabeth's courtiers made playing with their sword hilts an accomplishment, and the most efficient weapon of the Spanish coquette is her fan.

Slow Traveling.

Some Florentine experts in snailology, finding time hang heavy on their hands, conceived the idea of accurately calculating the traveling speed of snails, and, with this end in view, it was decided to make a series of more or less elaborate experiments. Half a dozen of the molluscs were permitted to crawl between two points ten feet apart. Exact time was kept from the start to the finish, and thus the average "pace" was ascertained. The experimenters reduced their figures into tables of feet, and thus found that it would take a snail exactly fourteen days to travel a mile.

Telephones in San Francisco.

San Francisco leads the American cities in the matter of telephones, there being an instrument to every sixteen persons. In greater New York there is one to every forty-eight persons.

Increased Yield of Cod.

As a consequence of artificial propagation, the yield of cod in the coastal waters between Maine and New Jersey has in ten years increased 50 per cent.

With her first engagement ring a girl imagines life for her has just begun.