

GOING TO THE B.A.D.

BY EDMUND YATES.

CHAPTER IV.—MINNIE'S LOVERS.

The sun was shining brightly on a brisk autumnal morning about three weeks after the occurrence just related, when Dick Phillimore, stepping jauntily along Jermyn street, St. James, stopped at the private door of a house, the lower portion of which was occupied as a boot-maker's shop, and rapped thereon loudly and consequentially.

Although for many nights previously Dick had not retired to rest until the small hours, and until he had partaken of an amount of drink and tobacco, considerably above the average, there were no traces of excess in his personal appearance. His face was plump and rosy, his eyes bright, his step light and free. He came with a little brandy and soda-water to fortify me in breaking it to you.

He went into the sitting-room, and returning shortly after bearing a tumbler of the foaming beverage, seated himself by the bedside.

"You know, dear Fred, I am one of those old-fashioned fellows who always like to take time by the forelock, and to be as much prepared as possible for any contingency that may arise; so, knowing that our joint bill for five hundred pounds would be due in about three weeks, I thought I would just look in upon Samson, who holds it, and ask him to renew it for another three months."

"You could not have done anything more stupid," growled Sir Frederick; "that was just the way to awake their suspicions."

"Of course," retorted Dick Phillimore, "according to you I never do anything that is not stupid; but I did it for the best, and I am still glad I went."

"What did Samson say?" "Samson said that he would not renew it for another minute, and that he is tired of being put off. If the bill is not paid when it is due, he will put into effect the judgment he holds over you, and you will be arrested the next day."

"The decoy!" cried Sir Frederick. "And do you think he will do this?" "I am sure he will," said Dick; "Samson is a strong man, and we have not found out the proper party to cut his hair. He means mischief, dear Fred; and depend upon it, you will have to suffer."

"And why not you, pray; your name is also on the bill?" "Yes, dear Fred, but I am not worth powder and shot. I'm not a swell baronet, with the chance of drawing on his title in the matrimonial or some other market. I am only a poor devil, who, if I were in prison, means stay there and do nothing; whereas, being out in the world I have a chance of looking about me, and picking up a little money at cards and billiards and betting, and thus earning enough to pay Samson his interest. No, sir, he will leave me alone; but he will go in for you, you may depend upon it."

"He shall not have the chance," said Sir Frederick, suddenly sitting upright in the bed. "You mean to say you will bolt before the bill is due?" "Nothing of the kind. I mean to say that the money shall be paid. I don't promise it within three weeks, mind; but if I can give a good guarantee to Samson, make it clear to him that it is all right, and that he will have it, he would hold it over for a short time."

"Do you!" said Dick, doubtfully; "but you are going to get the money I cannot see—but by betting; there is only the Liverpool stephane to come off now, and your book on that is as bad as it will ever be; you will lose out rather than win."

"How I shall get the money is my business; you don't care, I suppose, so long as you're all right?" "Not the least in the world, dear Fred; I am by no means proud. So long as I have a clean shirt on my back, and a pound in my pocket, I don't care who pays for them; but I am curious to know how it is to be managed, nevertheless."

"Are you?" said Sir Frederick, with a jeering laugh. "Well, then, I don't mind telling you. The money with which Samson is to be paid, and on which I intend to live like a prince for the rest of my life, is to come from the place where fortunes are more quickly made and more quickly spent than anywhere else in the world."

Frederick. "Haviland and Crawshaw dined here, and we played cards after dinner, and I lost money to both of them; but later on we went into Moss and had some hazard and roulette, and my luck must have changed, for at one time I nearly broke the bank, and though I lost some of it again, I came away carrying what you see there."

"What I see there is one hundred and twenty-five pounds," said Dick Phillimore, carefully counting the notes and gold. "A nice little sum to carry you on for a week, but not enough, dear Fred—nothing like enough, I'm afraid, to gild the pill which I have brought with me for you to swallow."

"What is it?" said Sir Frederick, looking anxiously at him. "Not bad news!" "Very bad news," replied Dick; "so bad, that I must take a little brandy and soda-water to fortify me in breaking it to you."

He went into the sitting-room, and returning shortly after bearing a tumbler of the foaming beverage, seated himself by the bedside.

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"What's the matter with you, Fred?" said his companion with a jolly laugh. "Who is to sink—who is not to be touched—that is all about it!" "I was drinking," said Sir Frederick, rubbing his eyes. "I thought that Kitty and I were out in a boat together, and that the boat upset and she was thrown into the water."

"And a very rough time she would have had of it, if whoever you were talking to had followed your advice," said Dick. "You told them to let her sink, and—"

I usually pay my visits, will probably be at home and alone. I don't think I shall have much difficulty in carrying out my object, for the girl is good and honest, and I believe, in love with me for myself, and without any thought beyond; while the old people are so tickled with the notion of having a baronet's lady for their daughter, that they will interpose no objection. Once through with that I must then look after Kitty. I thought at one time that would be a nice little job, but I have come round to Dick Phillimore's opinion, and fancy she may turn rusty. If she does—well, it's a desperate game to play, but with ruin staring me in the face there is no other way out of it."

The cab stopped at the door of the hotel, and after speaking to the hall-porter, Sir Frederick was shown up to an elegant suite of rooms on the first floor.

[To be Continued.]

The horse under ordinary circumstances is entitled to our respect and even gratitude but when he becomes by deed or action a worker in the cause of temperance, although his efforts should prove futile, he is worthy of something more. We are led to this conclusion by recalling an episode on the plains. It was in Northern Kansas about 150 miles from the Missouri. We had stopped for dinner by the side of a nicely wooded stream, when the grateful shade of the fine cottonwood trees was duly appreciated after hours of fatiguing travel over the rolling prairie under a June sun.

Extended on the grass we were taking as much comfort as possible, and were just going off into a doze while the bacon was being fried when much noise in the shape of shouting and swearing brought us to a sitting position. Soon after a queer looking specimen of the genus homo put in an appearance, announcing without ceremony or preamble, the fact that one of his horses absolutely refused to pull a pound.

The stubborn animal over refused to walk by the side of his mate. If he could do this much it was possible the latter could draw the load which consisted of only a couple of barrels of whiskey which he was taking to Marysville a village, by the way, thirty or forty miles ahead. Would we come and help him. He would give us a drink of strong waters round. It may be supposed that far as we are from this prime necessary of life the offer is irresistible. The cook at once leaves his bacon to take care of itself without so much as deigning to look at the offer which was in imminent danger of toppling. Our funny man Walsh leads the way at a smart run. We are soon at the wagon. The hill is quite sharp, yet there is no doubt that a united effort of the sorry-looking team would bring the load to the summit. Walsh declares that whiskey, however, is much heavier than its specific gravity would seem to indicate. "He had seen a strong man crushed to the ground by a gallon and had actually staggered under less than a quart himself."

"Still there was a difference between a man and a horse." "They ought to haul it." "Hi up Jerry" said he seizing the reins. Jerry switched his tail wickedly, set his ears back and gets as near the wagon as possible. The promise of a drink, and the cut of a whip by the way of instalment, is treated with the utmost contempt and stoicism.

"Shove boys," says Walsh. "We shove, but whipping and swearing are ineffectual in inducing our equine friend to get out of the way of the wagon. "Did you allow him to drink while in the river?" says the funny man turning to the saddas coloured veteran of liquor. "I did," says he in evident wonder at the simplicity of the question. "Ah! that's it!" says Walsh; "I've seen just such another horse as this in my time."

"A temperance horse, boys," says he turning to us. Failing to see the point he ventures further explanations. "You see," began this solemn-looking fellow, "a temperance horse is a very rare horse, when he can get whisky, if left to himself, when he can get whisky."

We unanimously accede to this assertion. "Might not a horse have a conscience," he continued, "Some horses have more hearts than conscience I'll admit but this quadruped is not one of them. He's found the benefit of cold water pure and simple and doesn't want to let this good man to poison his decent neighbors in Marysville or turn their brains till their heads are as chockful of moroseities as the British Museum, as changed as if a Kladiscope, or whatever you call it, and as an Indian barber who is the slickest cutter known. My ladies, we'll lighten the load, and the horse's conscience at the same time. We'll have the drink now. Then, boys, stand from under, the thing has got to go."

The owner is passive. He has tried everything and can't be worse. Walsh drinks the health of the horse with many trite observations on the extreme narrowness of his views in regard to liquors and a caustic remark or two on laziness. This important part of the performance being completed he proceeds to business.

"You'll not haul whiskey," said Walsh, addressing the animal. "What business is it of yours?" "The driver evert this way before" (turning to the leather coloured, upon another's owner). "The person addressed answers negatively but explains that he has had him only a short time.

"Well then I've applied to his reason and he don't mind me. I'll operate on him as far from the brain as possible," at the same time proceeding to tie his tail to the whippletree.

The horse is uneasy and suspicious. The renewal of this simple ancient method of attaching an animal to his work is evidently not to his mind. The stubborn element of his nature keeps him set doggedly back till the fastening is complete.

"Here may make the reins." "Hi up Jerry" roars Walsh pulling the wagon back till the tension of the horse's tail was like that of a violin string. The effect was miraculous. On he started pulling the entire load and making it quite an effort for the other horse to keep up with him and in spite of all the endeavours of "sassafras" who tried his "best" to stop him, being afraid he would pull his tail off. The astonishment and terror of the owner was ridiculous. His droll antics furnished us in material for merriment during many a day. Going over the top of the hill at a dead gallop was the last we saw of the temperance horse. The fact that the coffee was upset and the dog had finished licking the frying pan when we returned filled completely to dampen our spirits.—On the Plains by G. J. Forbes.

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