

THE WHEELS OF CHANCE.

In a certain section of society Lady Verity's ball was undoubtedly one of the events of the season, and though this point was disputed by some one of the ladies present, it was generally allowed that Lady Verity's lovely daughter was the star of the evening.

"Who is that very handsome man dancing with Pauline?" inquired a guest.

Lady Verity put up her eye-glass. "Oh, that is young Markham Aubrey," she said. "A clever fellow; he writes, you know, and I believe he is making his way; he belongs to a good family, too—the Downshire Aubreys. A year ago he had no prospects at all, but the death of a cousin had made him heir to the Cranbury estates; he will come into the property when he is twenty-five, or on the death of his uncle, if that comes first, which is not likely. He is a lucky fellow."

But Markham Aubrey was at that very moment wondering whether the tide of luck which had turned so far in his favor was about to recede, for Pauline was cold tonight.

They had stopped dancing, and stood in the recess of a window, behind the curtains, which hid the glittering whirl of the dancers, but admitted enough light for Markham to watch Pauline's proud beauty and to see the glimmer of the jewels on her arms.

"Won't you listen to me now?" he was saying. "I know I was a fool a year ago, but—"

"If I listen to you now," she answered, "I am afraid you will repeat the folly."

"But why is it a folly?"

"You called it so yourself just now."

"Yes, it was folly once; but now—"

"I fail to see what constitutes the difference; if you were a fool then, I suppose you are one now."

"Pauline, I am in earnest. I love you."

"You said that last year, and I gave you your answer."

Her first refusal had been so kind, so considerably worded, that he had hoped some day for a different answer, but he was grievously disappointed. He muttered something about circumstances being different now. She caught up the words with a laugh.

"Circumstances! Under the circumstances you are really doing me an honor. I am really obliged to you, but let me assure you once for all, that your 'circumstances' can never make the slightest difference to me."

He remembered having heard that Pauline was ambitious. Some of her acquaintances asserted that nothing less than a duke or an earl would satisfy her.

"There is no hope for me, then?" he said.

"No—not even under the circumstances."

She moved to go.

"Wait," he said—"one moment. My hopes are destroyed. May I make one request?—I shall probably never see you again. Will you give me something—anything—a bit of ribbon off your fan—one of these violets?"

He spoke in low, passionate tones. Her beautiful cold face was immovable. The deep grey eyes, which could flash with soft fire some times, looked steadily into his face for a moment.

"Really," she said, "you have no right to ask it, and as for your not seeing me again, you know that is ridiculous." She pushed aside the curtain, and he followed her mechanically into the light and gaiety of the ball room.

"Ah, Captain Lawes—yes, it is our dance—number six, isn't it? I'm so glad it is a waltz." She floated away, and Aubrey heard her soft, clear laugh.

Fortune is proverbially fickle, and the fortune which is in any way dependent upon the caprice of an individual is particularly uncertain.

No one ever knew why Sir Walter Aubrey disinherited his nephew. People said he must have been a little queer in his head when he made his will, but there was no evidence forth coming to support the supposition, and though it was morally a gross injustice, the document which made over the whole of the Cranbury property to strangers was technically indisputable.

When once one is started to the downhill path it does not take long to get to the very bottom. Markham Aubrey's first misfortune was followed by one piece of bad luck after another.

It was a dark December afternoon. The east wind was biting and harsh. Pauline, alighting from her carriage in Regent street, looked keenly in her furs. "You may go home, Chivers," she said.

"And shall I call for you, miss?"

"No, I will walk; it is really too cold for the horses to stand about, and there is no knowing when I shall have done my shopping."

An hour later Pauline, coming out of the warmth and brilliancy of the shop, almost ran into a tramp who was standing at the door. He touched his hat and was about to move on, but Pauline stopped him.

"Wait," she said, taking out her purse, and thinking with a shiver that it must be dreadful to stand about the streets, and hang about shop windows, and perhaps be hungry, "here is something for you."

He turned round, and she held out a silver piece, but in a moment she had withdrawn her hand. Aubrey was changed, but not unrecognizable, even in his disreputable habiliments. After the first flash of surprise she regained her self-possession.

"Ah, Mr. Aubrey, in the dark I did not recognise you!"

He laughed. "A good many people won't recognise a fellow in the dark—that is to say, in the shade. Thank you for that much."

"I was going to give you half-a-crown," she continued; "how absurd! We have not seen you for so long; why haven't you called?"

"Isn't it pretty evident?" he said, with a painful kind of laugh.

She changed her tones, and spoke seriously.

"I really must talk to you. I am going home; will you come with me?"

"I am scarcely a respectable escort," he said, "but if you will give me sixpence I will carry your parcels; I can scarcely accompany you on any other footing."

She laughed uncomfortably.

"I'm looking out for a job," he said, as they moved on, "if you want your door-step swept, or anything of that sort—"

She gave a sort of gasp. "We heard of that extraordinary will," she said, "but we

did not know it would affect you to—this extent. What does it all mean?"

"Only that I've been unlucky."

"But your literary work?"

"It failed."

"Then what are you doing now?"

"As I said—looking out for a job. I have different things. I got a clerkship, but I was turned off—suspected of embezzlement. I nearly got a position as secretary to a literary man, but another man was an hour before me. Since then I have been looking for work, but all this will not interest you."

"But how is it possible—in your position—with your abilities?"

"Abilities don't always count."

"But where are your friends?"

"I have none."

"You used to have scores."

"I have none now."

There was a pause.

The wind is icy," she said, shivering even in her furs, "and it is getting dark. It is a miserable time of year in London; when the east wind goes the fog will come. I think the fog is even worse than the east wind."

They had left the brightly-lighted thoroughfare and entered the great empty square.

"Here we are at the door," she said, but don't ring yet, please. Am I really to give you sixpence?" She could not help smiling at the idea.

"I shall be grateful for it," he said.

The smile died away. "Not really?"

He smiled. "I have no money at all."

"Then how are you going to live?"

"I shall work my passage to Australia; I am going to start tomorrow. I shall join a fellow there I once knew—a sheep farmer—and offer myself as a laborer."

"But to-night?"

"I shall have my usual quarters."

Pauline had read of the cold out-of-door quarters of the unemployed. She shuddered.

"You have often promised us a visit—let it be now; my mother will be delighted," she said.

He shook his head. "It is impossible."

"You are too proud," she said with a sigh.

"Not too proud to take sixpence."

She took out her purse with a queer sort of a laugh. "I can't open my purse with these gloves on," she said; "will you undo this button?"

His numb fingers took some time over the operation, but at last her hand came sliding out of the warm glove.

"Sixpence," she said; "here is one. Do you remember the ball, Markham?"

She wondered if he would remind her of an ungranted request, but he only looked straight before him into the dingy air, in which flakes of snow were beginning to fall and said "Yes."

"You asked me for a violet," she said, "and I didn't give it to you."

"My requests are more practical now," he said; "I ask for sixpence."

"You must hate London, I should think," she said. "You will be glad to forget everything in Australia, and make a sort of fresh start."

"I shall make a fresh start, I suppose; but one can't forget everything very easily."

There was a pause.

"Your hand will get cold," he said foolishly, looking down at its whiteness.

"I have an objection to being altogether forgotten," she said, lifting her hand. "Would you mind taking off my ring—the one with sapphires in it?"

"Taking it off?"

"Yes; I want you to keep it as a sort of remembrance of our old—of old times."

"I was going to keep the sixpence," he said.

"But you might want to spend it."

As Aubrey was at that moment destitute of a farthing, this contingency did not seem altogether improbable.

"I shall never do that," he said.

"Take the ring," she said faintly.

He looked into her face, and found out something.

"At last!" he said—"now that it is too late, Pauline!"

"How too late?" she said hastily.

"How do you ask? Of course it is too late. Circumstances are too strong for us; we are parting."

There was something utterly dejected and hopeless about him.

"Love is stronger than circumstances," she said.

The door opened from inside, and a footman appeared at the top of the steps. The voice of Lady Verity came from the hall—

"Ah, Pauline, you are there, my dear child. I was just sending Chivers to look for you; but who is that? A tramp? Send him away, Chivers."

"He carried my parcels, mamma. I must give him sixpence." She went a step nearer to Aubrey, and held the unglued hand with sixpence in it. "I will wait for you," she whispered. "You will come back some day; I will wait if it is fifty years."

A new fire leapt into his eyes; he slipped off the ring, and their hands touched.

Later in the evening Chivers entertained the servants' hall with the account of how his young lady had dismissed the carriage in Regent street, and returned with a tramp. He swore that she had given the tramp one of her rings, and that he had kissed it. The lady's maid confirmed the story, for undoubtedly the ring was gone.

The wheels of circumstance are slow, especially to impatient lovers, but the day came at last when Markham Aubrey returned from Australia and claimed his bride.

At a plantation wedding—Glimpses of a Negro Carnival in the Pine Woods of South Carolina.

"Next to an exciting coon hunt last autumn in South Carolina," said a New Yorker recently returned from a visit of seven months in the South, "the most pleasurable incident in my study of negro life was a plantation wedding I attended near Jamison in the Palmetto State. The family name of the bride was April, and her christian name was not May, as might be expected, but Lovey. She was very dark, with hair in tight little woolly kinks all over her head. She was born and raised right on the 'old place,' and had never been any further than a mile or so over the creek, or occasionally to the country town, where her 'daddy' went once a year to sell the cotton.

"Sancho, the bridegroom, was somewhat of a foreigner in those parts, having appeared for the first time about six months previously in search of work. He said he had kintook and a birthplace in some indefinite neighborhood, 'up de road' Sancho was a field hand, but he had a good-natured face and polite manners, never omitting to doff his cap and scrape his foot when receiving a plate of victuals or other favors at the hands of the 'buckra people,' and when he invited us to attend the wedding we agreed to witness the ceremony.

"April's small farmhouse in a belt of pine woods was all ablaze with excitement and light wood fires when we approached. Long before we got there we could hear the laughter and see the torches, and on our arrival we had difficulty in making our way through the throng of mules and vehicles attached to the fence. Through the open gate a stream of guests passed. Some came to talk over 'de times' with their neighbors and others crossed the yard to the lighted piazza of the dwelling, where glimpses of white-robed forms and much hurrying betokened the importance of the occasion. The fires outside lighted up the neatly swept yard. The small outbuilding known as the 'fodder house' was transformed into a dressing room for the bridegroom, who, we were informed, was with several of his best men, engaged in solving the mysteries of a toilet which was to be unusual enough to do justice to the occasion.

"We sat in the carriage and waited. Interest centred in the appearance of the bridegroom. The colored preacher had arrived, and the bride and her ladies-in-waiting were ready. The moments of expectancy were lightened somewhat for us outside by occasional bulletins as to the progress of the eventual toilet. We were cheered from time to time by hearing just how much had been accomplished towards arraying the bridegroom in his nuptial garb, and finally, when some privileged person who had gained access to the apartment announced that only the gloves were to be put on now, the guests brightened perceptibly. Presently the door of the fodder house was opened, the bridegroom descended in full regalia, and, escorted across the yard by two of his attendants, was shown into the presence of his bride, who with the rest of the nuptial train, awaited him at the doorway of her father's house. The contracting parties placed themselves before the small table which had been put in front of the clergyman to support his prayer book and his dignity, and thus grouped in the middle of the torch-lit yard the wedding party made an interesting picture.

"We left our seats and drew near the friend of the family, who was holding high above his head a flaring torch of fat white wood, so its rays might fall on the page from which the minister read the marriage service. Before beginning he said peremptorily—

"Mr. Glass, I desire to require of you, if the lady you are about to jine in wedlock is the lady of your choice?"

"Mr. Glass questioned something in response to this question and the ceremony proceeded. The bride wore a white cross-barred muslin dress, liberally starched and punched up about her buxom form, while from beneath the wreath of white artificial roses which adorned her kinky hair depended the bridal veil, which was short as to length and narrow as to width, falling only to her chin in front and a very little way down her back. Her five bridesmaids were similarly attired without the distinction of the veil, their costumes being white, not neglected as to starch, and white flowery embellishing each woolly head, and all wore the regulation white cotton gloves. Most of the gloves reached only to the wrist bone, but this deficiency the bridegroom had striven to obviate by a display of white cuffs starting to behold. A journey had been accomplished by Sancho to town two days before to get a little something for the occasion, and the tallness of his collar and the unwanted brilliancy of his neckwear gave evidence that his personal appointments were not neglected among his purchases. When he had dutifully promised to bestow all his worldly goods on his beloved, which possessions consisted of two blankets and an iron skillet and spider, he was told to salute his bride.

"There was much giggling on the part of the maids in waiting and much loud laughter among the groomsmen when Sancho evidently did not comprehend the nature of the command until a friendly hand lifted the bride's veil and signified the privilege which was intimated. After the congratulations were we invited to step inside the house and see 'how it was dressed.' The appearance of the living room fully compensated us for our peep. Newspapers hung as draperies lent their whiteness to the rough walls, while sprays of holly and cedar gave a festive air to the space over the big chimney places. The group was gathered around the walls, each young man displaying his white teeth in good humor and endeavoring to make his

company agreeable to the lady at his side, and on the small table, now covered with a red cloth, and standing in the centre of the room, was placed a kerosene lamp, on either side of which was a much-iced cake, ornamented with striped pink candy cut in small pieces. Bits of arbor vitae gave an air of elegance to these triumphs of confectionary. The odor of fried bacon penetrated from the inner room, and private information was conveyed of the pots of rice and pans of sweetened bread which were presently to be served up for the delectation of all present, many of the guests having brought with them gifts of this kind for the happy pair."

Why he was silent.

A physician describes a remarkable case of a patient's confidence in his physician: When I was a student in Philadelphia I had a patient, an Irishman with a broken leg. When the plaster bandage was removed and a lighter one put in its place I noticed that one of the pins went in with great difficulty and I could not understand it. A week afterward in removing this pin, I found it had stuck hard and fast, and I was forced to remove it with the forceps. What was my astonishment, on making examination, to find that the pin had been run through the skin twice instead of through the cloth.

"Why, Pat," said I, "didn't you know that pin was sticking in you?"

"To be shure, I did," replied Pat, "but I thought you know your business, so I hit me tongue."

Was Really Fomberg.

Worth was not the first of the line of Parisian man-milliners. As long as 165 years ago, M. Romberg, who had emigrated from Munich, opened a dressmaking shop in the French capital. Over his shop window he placed a "coat-of-arms" made up of scissors, thimble, etc., and a similar sign adorned the back of a delivery wagon. This vehicle was then a novelty in Paris. Romberg, waxing rich, died at the age of 60.

FULL OF ALL DECEIT.

NAPOLEON I. died of cancer of the stomach developed from acute inflammatory dyspepsia—of which he had, in his latter years, frequent attacks. Yet he was not a gourmand nor a drunkard. From this illustration—which is but one out of thousands—the casual reader may judge what great risks of suffering and death may grow from the little acorns of indigestion, which most people think are merely matters of a day or so.

A prominent physician says: "A near relative of my own has for the past fifteen years suffered from dyspepsia, complicated with pseudo-phthisis (false consumption), and over and over again the best of doctors have predicted his early death. He has spent a small fortune at various resorts for consumptives, but is at present perfectly well, and has not the smallest sign of present or past disease of the lungs. Cases such as these I am constantly coming across."

Mrs. Ann Lancaster, of Bedford, a few years ago used to have attacks in which she would fall to the ground insensible. Her nerves were so disordered that she habitually trembled her head to foot. Sometimes her nerves were so uncontrollable that the bed shook under her. Her sleep was, of course, disturbed and broken, and she became so weak that she could walk only a few yards at a time.

The malady first showed itself in the summer of 1887. She felt strangely tired and languid, and was not able to obtain rest, either by the use of medicines or change of bodily positions. Her mouth was filled with a thick, disgusting slime which clung to her teeth so strongly that she was compelled to wipe it off with a cloth or a handkerchief. Her mouth tasted so badly that she fancied that such a taste might accompany certain poisons. She could eat but very little on account not merely of want of appetite, but because of a resulting pain in the chest and sides.

In October of that same year she went to the Bradford Infirmary, but received no benefit from the treatment at that institution. The physicians not seeming to know what her ailment really was, and finally she returned home discouraged and very feeble. Her mind suffered from that form of melancholia which the ancients considered to be due to the circulation of bile through the body.

These facts thus hastily and crudely stated, will indicate in some measure her forlorn situation when—

But let her tell the rest herself. She says: "One day a book was left at my house describing the nature and success of a preparation called Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup. I procured a supply of it from Mr. Dobson, Bolton Road, and after a faithful use of it for a comparatively short time I felt better, and not long subsequently I was completely restored to health. It is yours truly. (Signed) Mrs. Ann Lancaster, 16, Back Spinkwell Terrace, Bolton Road, Bradford, December 15th, 1892.

The leading, and indeed the only, point we desire to make on these cases now is this: Indigestion and dyspepsia the real complaint in all of them—is the most aggressive, dangerous, and deceitful of all the ills we are heirs to. It killed Napoleon the Great by producing cancer, an outgrowth of blood poisoning; it deluded the doctors who attended the relative of a doctor, and in Mrs. Lancaster's case it imitated epilepsy.

Moral: Watch its first symptoms keenly, and keep Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup within easy reach.



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