

SIR GEOFFREY'S DEED.

There were excellent reasons—there have lost force now—for rushing up the story of the fire at Portal Abbey. That Sir Geoffrey Steyne caused it was known in a very few hours, for several of Mr. Hudson's servants overheard his angry reproaches. But the facts have not been published and they are worth noting.

It was hinted at the time that the Steynes had never forgiven the purchasers of their ancient seat. This is absurd. The families were friendly enough till, thirty years ago, Mr. Hudson, father of the present, began to "improve" the Abbey. Among other dreadful deeds he transformed the private chapel into a billiard room. Sir Herbert Steyne took proceedings, under an old statute, to prevent this outrage; but he had to drop the action, finding himself unable to prove that the building had ever been consecrated. Then the acquaintance broke off, naturally. As a matter of fact I believe that none of the present generation had so much as seen each other until this story opened.

Sir Geoffrey Steyne, his fortune recruited by a long minority, spent abroad for the most part, led a shooting expedition from the Zambesi right up to the domain of the East African Company, where Captain Hudson, R. E., was surveying at the time. A quarrel arose with the natives—the camp was attacked—and Hudson arrived only just in time to save the party. He spent but a few hours in their company, sending them down to the coast next day under an escort. But Sir Geoffrey's character struck him.

"I never saw such a fellow," he wrote home; "it's absurd to suppose he was drunk; a drunken man doesn't fight in half a dozen places. But it isn't anything spirituous which flows in that boy's veins, it's quicksilver." And he proceeded to details which interested his sister—Madeleine. She was not a pattern young lady—much too fond of fun, which seemed all the more delightful if it had a spice of mischief.

Some weeks afterward Sir Geoffrey reached England and called on the family of his preserver. The conversation opened with all decorum. But when the young man had expressed his thanks—very nicely too—he broke loose, just as Captain Hudson described. He had no space for samples of his humor, which in truth was little more than the outburst of abnormal vivacity, amusing enough to any hearer but especially to young people as thoughtless and as ready to laugh as Madeleine—not adapted for transcription, however. That sort of man makes acquaintance rapidly. George Hudson begged him to call whenever he had time, and Madeleine seconded the invitation with her eyes.

When he had gone she looked at her brother, and both laughed. Mr. Hudson expressed their thought. "So early in the afternoon!" he murmured. "Dear, dear! such a fine young man, too!"

The call was returned of course. Then Lady Steyne made advances. Her son had passed the age when, as she thought, a young man ought properly to marry, but hitherto, in the literal sense of the word, he had regarded no young lady seriously. Madeleine on her best behaviour seemed a most desirable match, and she was very pretty.

So the acquaintance grew; not with Mr. Hudson's approval, but that signified nothing. As time went on the first natural explanation of Sir Geoffrey's high spirits became rather doubtful. He refused to drink anything besides water and tea. Most people would have felt quite sure that the suspicion was unjust. But Mr. Hudson had drunkenness on the brain, as they say. He regarded that as the mainspring of events at large, public and private, in this realm of England. And Madeleine, of course, had imbibed something of his fancy.

Sir Geoffrey was telling stories one day, when he was interrupted; "Do you mean literally that you can jump off a horse going at full gallop, and shoot an antelope right and left? Can you do it in the park?"

"Trot out the antelopes, and I will try!" "That's not necessary. Let us see you jump off, and we'll imagine the antelopes." "Do you offer any prize?"

"Yes, I'll believe every word you say hereafter."

"Oh, this is the listener I have prayed for from my youth up! I will reward you, Miss Hudson, with adventures never yet confided to mortal. Where's the horse? Give me a Winchester, George, and I'll throw the shooting in. The brook meadow would be a good makeshift for a velvet, I think."

As they walked thither Madeleine began to quake; George overtook them with a groom and a led horse.

"Oh, the wretched boy has brought Rasper," she exclaimed. "He's much too spirited!"

"We take them as they come. Now, Miss Hudson, here is the first trial of the confidence you have sworn."

"You have not earned it yet!"

"Well, if you're so punctilious, for a few minutes more you may cherish the fancy that those two objects," pointing, "are young trees, not antelopes."

"Rasper approached, fretting and tossing. 'Oh, don't try it, please!' Madeleine cried; 'I'll accept your word.'"

"Heaven will forgive you the fib, I hope. Now, George, the rifle!"

"I say! There are men working yonder!" "Tell them not to get behind those young trees. A Winchester hits hard!" And he sprang into the saddle.

"Behind the trees!" George murmured. "Well, he has a cheek!"

Madeline was white with alarm as Sir Geoffrey returned up the long meadow full gallop. He unsling the rifle—she clutched George's arm; suddenly with a cheer he drew his feet from the stirrups—Madeleine saw no more! But on the instant shots rang out, one after another, till the magazine was emptied.

"Now, Miss Hudson!" Sir Geoffrey laughed. "Prepare to change all your views about everything under my direction. You were not frightened, surely? Why, Afrikander boys can perform that feat at ten years old."

George whispered in a stage aside: "My dear, he has begun to reward you with thumpers already."

Sir Geoffrey only laughed. That was the explanation, of course. But a few days afterward Madeleine spent an afternoon with Lady Steyne, who, getting very hopeful now, recited her son's virtues; among them was total abstinence. Madeleine could no longer doubt.

Instantly a mischievous thought arose. If he was so lively on tea and water what would be the result of a glass of champagne? The very same idea struck George when she told him, and at the first opportunity he made an attempt.

"My dear fellow," said Sir Geoffrey, "I don't think it would be like testing some new explosive of which one can't calculate the force."

This comparison was not likely to deter George. Feeling himself unable to work the oracle, as he said, he urged his sister to try. She resisted laughingly, though as curious as himself to see the issue.

The growing intimacy which delighted Lady Steyne alarmed Mr. Hudson. He gave Sir Geoffrey a hint—a pretty strong one. Now this young man, though easy and careless, had an intense pride of family, and at the bottom of his heart lay an undying grievance against the men who had not only bought the home of his forefathers, but had vulgarized it. Some sharp words passed. He chanced to meet George on his way to the billiard room, and told him of his leaving, requesting Sir Geoffrey to wait. A sister, requesting Sir Geoffrey to wait. A sister, requesting Sir Geoffrey to wait. A sister, requesting Sir Geoffrey to wait.

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THE WIDOW'S ARRIVAL.

It was "steamer day" at Sitka, and amid all the joyous stir and excitement that the monthly boat brought was one forlorn, unhappy man. Tom Douglas watched his friends as they eagerly opened their letters and listened with amused interest to the bits of news they were anxious to share, for at Sitka the population throngs to the wharf when the steamer's whistle is heard and waits the coming of the ship and the distribution of the mails. The people crowd into the tiny postoffice on the dock and watch impatiently for the longed-for home letters.

But Tom's home letter was not a comfort to him. "Well, she is really coming," he thought, "a month from to-day, if the steamer is on time. I will be a married man—worse luck. How can I ever tell Natalia, dear little girl! I wouldn't willingly hurt her tender feelings for a million dollars, as hard up as I am," and Tom whistled ruefully.

Tom Douglas was a naval officer, and before being stationed at Sitka he had been on duty a winter in Washington, where he plunged into society with the gay abandon that only a sailor knows, for after three years at sea a young fellow is quite ready for the rush and whirl of the gay capital. All houses were open to the handsome Lieutenant, but there was one where he was especially welcome. The hostess was a pretty widow of some twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age. Her husband, who had died soon after their marriage, seemed not to have laid a very strong hold on her affections, for after mourning him decorously for a year she blossomed into the gayest of the gay, and her house became a centre for the young officers who had been the friends of her husband.

It was there that Tom spent most of his time. He dropped in during the morning and discussed the newest gossip or latest magazine and came in for a cup of tea in the afternoon and remained till her cozy parlor was empty save for himself and her.

"Are you going to the assembly to-night?" he would ask.

"Will you be there, Tom?" Mrs. Deering had such a good-fellowship way of using her friends' first names.

"Yes, I presume so."

"Well, then, I am going," the little widow would reply.

And that was the way the winter passed—Tom running in at all hours, privileged to smoke or read, to talk or listen, the most indulged of all her callers. When his orders came for his immediate removal to Alaska he put the document in his pocket and went as usual, to the cheery home of Mrs. Deering. He told her the news, and was really surprised and flattered by her reception of it. She took both his hands in hers, and the tears gathered in her bright eyes.

"Oh, Tom," she said, "I hate to have you go."

Now it never had occurred to Lieutenant Douglas before, but at this moment the idea did come to him that he was in love with the widow. He drew her to him and kissed away her tears, and before he knew it he was engaged to Alice Deering.

He soon left, after arranging to have Alice join him later in the summer, but owing to the loss of a distant relative, the heir of whose modest estate she was, her coming had been greatly delayed. It was now more than a year since she and Tom had parted in Washington. In the meantime Tom had whiled away his leisure hours in the somewhat narrow circle of Sitka society, but in that narrow bound he had found a fair Russian flower that he knew blossomed for him. Though Tom had not made love to Natalia—he was to honor her for that—they had been together constantly, and each knew instinctively what was in the other's heart.

"I believe I'll go and tell Natalia all," Tom continued to muse. "Right now, for, of course, as a gentleman and officer I am bound to keep my word, and my word is given to marry Alice. She, too poor girl, may discover that my love has somewhat cooled. It is over now, never was the same feeling I have for dear little Natalia, bless her loving heart."

So Tom went to Natalia and told her that he was engaged, and that another month would see him married.

Her delicate face whitened, but controlling herself, she said:

"I congratulate you, Mr. Douglas." Then bursting into tears, she turned away. The sight of her tears was too much for Tom. Embracing her tenderly, he said: "I love you, Natalia, darling. Oh, that I had met you first! My fondness for Alice was but a fleeting thing, and my love for you will last forever."

Pressing warm kisses on her lips he held her close.

"Leave me, Tom. It is right for you to keep your word, but you should have told me of your engagement before. We had best part now. Good by."

"But can't I come to see you, Natalia, as usual?"

"Why, certainly not, Mr. Douglas. It would only be painful, for we can never from this time forward be anything but the most formal of friends."

Tom was touched by the simple dignity of the young Russian girl, whose quiet life had been spent by the seashore under the shadow of the mountains, far from the noise of city or town, so he bowed to her will. There parting was a heart-breaking one to both.

"Natalia, I can't bear to leave you. I must have you, dearest."

"There, go now. This is only foolish."

"Well, then, let me kiss you for the last time, darling," pleaded Tom.

Natalia put up her little tear-stained face and Tom silently kissed her and went away.

That month passed only too quickly for poor Tom, who looked with dread toward the coming of the steamer. He studiously avoided Natalia, denying himself the regu-

lar afternoon walk to the Indian River, which is the event of the day to all the white people at Sitka. He kept close to his rooms when not on board ship, cursing the mistake of his life, which was soon to make an unwilling bridegroom of him.

To Natalia, whose soft brown eyes were red with weeping, life seemed a dreary blank now that the daily visits of Tom had ceased. There appeared in her mental horizon nothing for which to live. She wondered how she had existed before he came to Sitka. But then she had been busy with her lessons, and now, in the idea of her old-fashioned father, her simple education was complete, and it was time for her to marry one of the Russian lads who sought her hand.

The next "steamer day" Tom Douglas was seen rushing madly to Natalia's home. The neighbors, who, of course, had noted his long absence, were greatly surprised.

"Natalia! Natalia!" he cried, as soon as she came into the quiet drawing room to receive him. "I've come to ask you to be my wife. Dearest, say yes at once."

"Why Tom, are you crazy? What has become of Alice?"

"Well, by George, Natalia, she is married! Just think of it—married! And I am the happiest man on earth. A pardoned convict's feeling of relief is not to be compared to mine. You see, soon after she left Washington she met an old sweetheart whom she had cast off to marry Mr. Deering, whose position and prospects were better. In the meantime this fellow had made a fortune, and as he was on his way to Alaska for a pleasure trip they decided to make it also a wedding trip and break the news to me in person. Rather awkward, you might think, but I congratulated them with all my heart and thanked my stars for freedom. Come, little girl, put on your hat and I'll take you down to the steamer to see the bride and I'll introduce to her my fiancée, because you say 'yes,' don't you dear?"

"I suppose so, Tom, but it's all so sudden. Shall I wear my leghorn hat?"

HOW A CHINESE DIES.

The Way a Disciple of Confucius Waits for the Final Summons.

A heathen died 9,000 miles from home, in Los Angeles the other morning. Although he was so far away from his native land, he was tended in his dying hours by some of his "cousins," for in China the cousin is any member of the same family, no matter how remote the kinship, and the manner of his death was as it would have been if he had died at home. His name was Hong Toi. He had just been taken away from Santa Ana to die in this city.

According to a certain Chinese superstition it is unlucky to allow a man to die in the same house where he lived. Consequently, as soon as the attending physician pronounced the case hopeless, a room elsewhere in the city was hired for him to die in, as was done in this case.

Hong Toi was born in Guang-Tung-Foo in 1867 and came to America when he was twenty years of age. Like so many of his countrymen, when he arrived here he sought employment in a laundry, and set himself to make a fortune. His savings after a time were large enough to enable him to buy an interest in a grocery, and before he died he had laid up \$5,000.

His hopes and plans, however, all perished with him. Four months ago he contracted an illness common among the people of his race. He coughed, grew thin and lost his appetite. This was pneumonia.

Within the last two weeks of his life he was never left alone. His friends and cousins relieved one another in the pious task of cheering the dying man, and ministering, in their heathen fashion, to his spiritual as well as his physical wants. They read long passages to him from their national books, such as the works of Confucius and Mencius, the Tripitaka of Buddha, and the verses of Lao Tse and other famous poets. They fed him with the strange delicate dainties which the Chinese only can concoct, and talked of home when he was strong enough to listen.

Then, as the end came nearer, they brought out and spread around him numerous queer looking objects, such as had been familiar to him in childhood, evidently seeking, as they might amuse a tired child, to bring some pleasant memory of happy thought into his mind while yet life might be made a little brighter.

They spread out little squares of sugar candy, looking not unlike the "butter scotch" American children like so well. Queer cakes were laid around on tables and chairs, and even on the bed—some with fruits and some with spices in them, some with meats and some with unfamiliar ingredients to the Caucasian; very few of them were alike. Then they brought even dolls, fashioned as nearly after the babyhood of China as the pictures of their native artists are like nature—grotesque, quaint, and richly garbed, odd and pretty. From the ceiling they hung kites and queer umbrellas, and some of the elegant, fantastic paper lanterns that aesthetes delight in. A smile would sometimes come over his wasted features, but for the most of the time his face was calm and grave, as is the wont of Chinamen.

It is a look not unlike that of babies, wise beyond their days, who look at all things with a quiet attention that seems to speak a tolerant half approval.

His bed was a narrow bunk, covered with white matting, and the pillows were long, narrow boxes, covered with a upholstery in an old English church. Around the walls hung silken banners of vivid scarlet and rich embroidery tracing the hieroglyphics that stood for verses from the poet. Over the mantelpiece were religious pictures not unlike those that hung over the altars in the Chinese temples. In the center was a representation of God as the Chinese picture Him, seated on a throne of barbaric magnificence, while on either hand were pictures of the beings whom they suppose to personify the powers of destruction and reparation. On the opposite wall hung the words of the Christian

hymn, "Nearer, My God, to thee." On the mantelpiece underneath the religious pictures were a dozen or more artistic photographs of ballet girls in the extreme nudeness of the modern stage.

In one corner was a bamboo table, on which were pots of coal kept constantly burning and of tea kept always hot. Other smaller tables supported bronzes vases, some of them very costly and artistic; bronzes bowls of clean white sand, in which were stuck joss sticks, to be turned to from time to time, in devotional exercises, and some forty or fifty volumes of the writings of Chinese poets. These were huge and cumbersome, but of rare workmanship, and must have been expensive purchases.

He confronted death with all the calm courage of the true fatalist, evidently in full possession of all his mental faculties and firm in his Oriental faith. There was not the faintest evidence of any fear in his manner or his words, nor did there seem to be any longing for life or desire to supplicate for it. To an American whom he knew well, and whom he had learned to regard as a good friend, he said, as he grasped his hand before he died:

"Mayhap die one week, maybe one month; die alle same. No sorry myself. All right. Sollo my mother, my mother."

To one of his Chinese friends he said only a few hours before he breathed his last, and when he was almost unable to articulate: "I think I see the dragons." It was the last he said. Soon after he sank into what seemed a peaceful sleep, and save for his labored breathing he gave no further evidence of suffering. Slowly and more slowly he breathed, until with a long gasping sigh he gave up the struggle and rested.

There was no lamentation nor any evidence of grief, though it was plain enough that to many of his friends his going was a real sorrow. Five or six of these friends were in the room when he passed away, and as soon as they saw he was dead they began the preparations for his final disposal.—Los Angeles Correspondence to Philadelphia Times.

Wants the Whole Truth.

When investigating the Vatican records Pope Leo XIII said to Dom Gasquet, the librarian: "Publish everything of interest, everything, whether it tends to the discredit or credit of the ecclesiastical authorities, for you may be sure that the gospels had been written in our day the treachery of Judas and the denial of St. Peter would have been suppressed for fear of scandalizing weak consciences." So Lord Halifax told the English Church Union the other day.

Clocks on the Locomotives.

Clocks have been placed on the outside of the locomotives on the Paris-Lyons-Mediterranean Railway Company. They are fixed on the side of the engine, that is, towards the station platforms, for the benefit of both passengers and station agents who wish to note the instant of arrival and departure of the trains.

He Wanted to Know.

Mother—I am not whipping you because you went in swimming, but because you told me a story about it.

Boy (blubbering)—Well, if you didn't want to whip me anyhow, what did you ask me about it for?

Merely Relative.

Teacher—Tommy, what do you understand the author to mean when he says that riches and poverty are merely relative? Tommy—I guess he means that some have rich relatives and some have poor ones.

BORN.

Halifax, July 22, to the wife of M. C. Grant, a son.

Annapolis, July 8, to the wife of Oscar Lewis twin boys.

Halifax, July 19, to the wife of William Dennis a son.

Morristown, July 12, to the wife of Norman Wilson a son.

Moncton, July 14, to the wife of R. B. Milne, a daughter.

Annapolis, July 5, to the wife of J. A. Laugille a daughter.

Yarmouth, July 12, to the wife of Dr. Portman a daughter.

Kentville, July 15, to the wife of J. E. Neary a daughter.

Windsor, July 7, to the wife of Howard Shaw a daughter.

Parabro, July 17, to the wife of Albert Miller a daughter.

Halifax, July 12, to the wife of Charles E. Myles a daughter.

Wolfeville, July 18, to the wife of R. F. Reid, a daughter.

South Eastern Passage, July 19, William Glazebrook, 67.

Summerside, July 7, to the wife of I. F. Schurman a daughter.

Parabro, July 17, to the wife of Ralph Hodgson a daughter.

Quoddy, N. S. July 21, to the wife of Samuel Smith, a daughter.

Lower Stewiack, July 16, to the wife of Dr. Haliday a son.

Salisbury, July 18, to the wife of Rev. Milton Addison a son.

Parabro, July 14, to the wife of Alexander McElroy a son.

Halifax, July 12, to the wife of Dr. W. H. Bannister, a daughter.

Port Maitland, July 15, to the wife of Charles Forbes a daughter.