

POETRY.

WHEN POLLY HAS HER CALF.

I hadn't had nothin' good to eat since our old cow went dry. But now says I'll wait awhile, 'Till be different by-and-by. Hain't had a taste of custard pie Nor a cup of milk to quaff; You bet I'll drink a quart right down When Polly has her calf.

SELECT STORY.

AN UNBROKEN PROMISE.

A CASTAWAY.

PART III.

CONTINUED.

CHAPTER X.

THE LONDON LAWYER.

Margaret, listen to reason, and bring that plain common sense which we know you possess, into play. No informal steps can be taken; all our proceedings henceforward must be taken under legal guidance, and nothing can be done to rescue this unhappy young man from the position in which he is placed, until his public examination."

know how secretly I will guard your name and fame, that this matter in which life and more than life, are at stake, requires the fullest and calmest consideration."

Just then the servant, tapping at the door, announced that Doctor Chenoweth had arrived, and was waiting to see Mrs. Pickering. And the rector took his leave of Madge, promising to be with her early the next day.

During the various phases of sorrow through which the Rev. Oneiphorus Drage had passed in his lifetime; when his lot was cast amongst felons, who either openly jeered at his ministrations, or pretended to believe in with a view to the improvement of their position; when the wife of his youth was gradually fading away before his eyes; when he himself was wrestling with temptation, striving to do what he imagined to be his duty to his dead wife by blotting Madge's image from his mind, he had never spent a night of greater agony than that which he went through after quitting Wheatcroft. Not once throughout the night did he miss hearing the clock's weary record of the passing hour; and as he lay tossing restlessly on his bed, the difficulties surrounding the case, which he had taken under his charge, seemed to become increased and magnified. How George Heriot was to be saved, except by the sacrifice of Philip Vane, the rector could find no means to discover; and though Margaret had not absolutely told him the name of the murderer, he had learned it under such circumstances as would render it almost impossible for him to disclose it to the law. Harassed by these two contending emotions—now nearly driven to madness by the reflection that the young man of whom Margaret thought and spoke so highly, was lying in prison, accused of an atrocious crime, of which he was wholly innocent; now racked with fear at the idea of being compelled to divulge the secret gleaned from Margaret, whom he deeply loved—the wretched rector became thoroughly worn out towards morning, and fell into a deep slumber.

From this he was aroused by a loud knocking at his door, and by his servants informing him that a gentleman, whose card he had brought with her, was in the study very anxious to see him. Taking the card from the servant's hand, and reading it to his intense astonishment, "Mr. L. Moss, Thavies Inn," the rector bade her say that he would be down in a very few minutes, and at once plunged into a cold bath which was awaiting him. Much refreshed in body and brain by this proceeding, Mr. Drage, on emerging, was yet unable to understand the object of Mr. Moss's visit.

"Moss," he repeated, glancing at the card, "is the name of the gentleman who was the name of the firm of London attorneys, so celebrated for their conduct of business, whom Mr. Drew said he had retained. What on earth has the man come to me for? The last person in the world to give him any information or help, more especially situated as I now am. What on earth can he have come to me for?"

Then Mr. Drage thought that perhaps the best way to obtain this information was to finish dressing himself, and go down and see.

The rector had not formed much idea of what a London criminal attorney would probably be like, but on entering the study, he was certainly astonished at the comparative youth of the gentleman whom he saw before him. Leopold Moss was a man of apparently not more than thirty years of age, with sharp aquiline and keen bright eyes. He was dressed very plainly, wore no jewelry, save a thin strip of gold watch chain, and, until warned to his work, spoke in a soft voice and with a certain amount of what was almost diffidence. But, if you inquired among those who knew, you would learn that there was no man in the legal profession who was so well prepared to defend his manner of grasping a subject, or in his method of dealing with its details. In the conduct of certain great legal commercial cases, with the woe of which a strong criminal war was intermingled, he had held his own against the ablest men at the bar.

But although Leopold Moss, by the exigencies of his profession, was compelled to devote a large portion of his time to study, which in itself possessed a fascination for him, he by no means led a hermit's life. A knowledge of man, as he rightly imagined, as useful to him as a knowledge of law, and he went a good deal into society, where his strange experiences and conversational powers rendered him a great favorite.

Such was Mr. Leopold Moss. He rose from his chair as the rector entered the room, and returning his host's salutation, commenced by saying: "You are doubtless surprised to see me, Mr. Drage, not having any intimation of my coming. The fact is, I have come down here about that bad business that happened last night, and have called upon you to ask for certain information and advice on behalf of my client Mr. Heriot."

"Your client Mr. Heriot?" exclaimed the rector, in surprise. "Why, Mr. Moss, I understood that your firm was instructed to get up the case for the prosecution."

keeper to the late Sir Geoffrey; and I determined coming down by the first train and seeing you before I took any further steps in the matter. And now, if you will please, tell me, as briefly as you can, all the facts of which you are in possession, but not stating any impressions which you may have formed."

CHAPTER XI.

THE LAW OF EVIDENCE.

The rector had been talking for more than an hour. What had been sarcastically remarked of him at the public showing "he lacked the power of compression," was certainly proved to be true by his attempt at secular narrative. He told the story of George's first quarrel with his father as he had heard it from Sir Geoffrey; of the manner in which he had been discarded; of the long period during which he had supported himself; and of the manner in which Sir Geoffrey received him on his return. Then Mr. Drage becoming more circumstantial, repeated what Riley had said, and what Mr. Drew's servant had said about what had occurred."

"Yes," said the rector, "I think so." "It is now," said Mr. Moss, quietly looking at his watch, "half-past eleven o'clock; the express for London leaves at twelve twenty-three. Please to tell me, my dear sir, whether I am to return by that express or not?"

"Mr. Moss—" cried the rector. "Mr. Drage," interrupted the gentleman addressed, "my time is valuable to me and others; I cannot afford to—pardon the expression—fool it away. You might have spared yourself the whole of the long story you have told me, and all my speculations and enquiries, if you had merely informed me that Mrs. Pickering had talked with you about last night's occurrence. I now ask you plainly, what you have to be made acquainted with what Mrs. Pickering has told you or not; if I am not so to be informed, I shall throw up the case and return to London immediately."

"Not the least in the world," said Mr. Moss, with the nearest approach to petulance which he had yet shown. "The only way of establishing the man's innocence without establishing another's guilt, is by proving an alibi, which is impossible in this case, where the man is taken on the spot. I tell you plainly, Mr. Drage, I must have no half measures now; my proper course would be to go to Mrs. Pickering and endeavor to get her to tell me to you, and as she is probably too weak to repeat it with safety to herself, I look to you for it."

"And if I decline to tell it?" said the rector. "If you decline to tell it, I throw up the case and return to town. It will be for the gentleman who replaces me to tell you what will be the probable result."

"What the information I possess was imparted to me in the strictest confidence," said the rector, after some little deliberation. "What would you say to that?" "Suppose this innocent man is hanged because his friends declined to come forward and state what they know, what would you say to that?" said Mr. Moss. "God heavens, such a thought is too awful; such a misarrangement of justice could never take place."

"Ten minutes to twelve, Mr. Drage," said the lawyer, again referring to his watch, "and it will take me twenty minutes to drive to the station."

"What am I to do?" cried the rector. "This is a matter of the most vital importance. Of course a secret will be safe with you?" "Mr. Moss smiled quietly. "If you know all I know, my dear sir, or had heard half what I have listened to in my life, you would have no doubt about that."

"TO BE CONTINUED."

"Then the source of this conviction cannot have been supplied by him. Very sad thing about this Mrs. Pickering, and concession of the brain you say. I suppose that she was at once removed to her own room?"

"Certainly, as soon as the first excitement was over." "When did the doctor see her last?" "Late last night, I believe." "Have you heard what was the latest report?" "No, I have not." "When did you see her last, Mr. Drage?" "She sent for me last night, just before the doctor's visit."

"Sent for you," said Mr. Moss. "Oh, then the concussion of the brain was better?" "Yes," said the rector, growing very hot and uncomfortable. "Sufficiently better to enable her to talk to me about what had occurred?" "Yes," said the rector, "I think so."

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"TO BE CONTINUED."

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