POETRY.

SULPHUR AND MOLASSES.

When I was young, they had a way
Of keeping all disease at bay,
And rend'ring changing of the spring
As innocent as anything.
Just as the soil was waking up
And out peeped slyly little grasses,
Why, mother'd give us all a dose
Of sulphur and molasses.

I see it now, that pewter spoon
That always got heaped up too soon,
Half sulpur almost bright as gold,
And half molasses, black and old;
And then we children, one by one
Would open mouth with many passes,
And down our gullet swift would go
That sulphur and molasses.

They said it kept the chills away,
Prevented bilious fever's sway,
Would make the liver hump and get
And keep the blood out of a fret;
Would make the stomach feel at ease,
Free of poison-laden gases;
Was cooling, healing, soothing, all—
This sulphur and molasses.

But truly, it was bad to take,
And awful faces we did make,
Bnt 'twa'nt no use to beg nor cry—
That was the law, when spring came by;
To put the system in good trim,
Instead of pills and other masses,
Our mother gave us lib'rally
Of sulphur and molasses.

SELECT STORY.

AN UNBROKEN PROMISE.

—OR—

A CASTAWAY.

PART II.

CONTINUED.

CHAPTER V.

"SCENE: A STREET IN LYONS."

Had Sir Geoffry been married? Captain Cleethorpe thought undoubtedly. Was the lady dead? Captain Cleethorpe thought no question of it. Had there been any family? Yes. A girl? Not that Captain Cleethorpe knew of. A boy, who had died? No, Captain Cleethorpe could not say he had died; the fact was—shy of mentioning these sort of things generally, don't you know, but between us, intimately connected with Sir Geoffry, Mrs. Pickering, it don't matter—the fact was the boy had gone to grief, and nobody had even known exactly what had become of him.

Gone to grief? Captain Cleethorpe meant that the young man had deserted his home, and perhaps been discarded by his friends. Madge found herself frequently cogitating about this boy. His position must be like Gerald's, she thought, as Gerald was when she knew him; but, according to Rose's account, Gerald had now been restored to his friends, and was living in happiness and affluence. Could not a similar reconciliation be effected between Sir Geoffry and his son? From what she could make out from Captain Cleethorpe, sufficient time had passed to dull the keen edge of such injuries as either father or son might have imagined they had received. She would try her influence with Sir Geoffry, but first she must find out who the young man was, and where and what he was then doing.

This discovery she made in an unexpected manner. Sir Geoffry had begged her to go through the contents of an old bullock trunk, which, on his arrival, had been stowed in the housekeeper's room; but which, when he came upon it in the course of a tour of inspection, he pronounced mouldy and broken, and only worthy of being got rid of. The contents were many and various. Some books, damp and musty smelling; several suits of light clothing intended for a hot climate, but now stained and mildewed; two or three faded uniform sashes; bits of dull and tarnished lace; a number of Indian newspapers tied together in a roll; and many letters and memoranda huddled together in hopeless confusion at the bottom of the trunk. Madge went carefully through this heterogeneous mass, and had put aside a certain number of papers for destruction, and another lot to await Sir Geoffry's decision, when, in taking up a letter, an enclosure dropped from it. It was a water-color sketch, roughly but cleverly done, of a street in an old French town. Looking at it, she seemed to recognise the place at once as one perfectly familiar to her. There was the great two towered cathedral, with the market-place at its base, full of life and bustle; there were the cafes and the estamtnet, with a big wooden barrel as a sign swinging over its portal; there was the cooper's with the billets of wood lying in front of his door; the glove-maker's, with the great wooden hand; there were even the hooded cabriolets, in which the peasantry had come in from the rural districts, and the dogs dragging the produce-laden barrows. Here it all was, just exactly as she had seen it. Seen it? she had never been abroad, and yet every detail in the picture was perfectly familiar to her.

Thinking it over, she had a strange recollection of Dobson, the manager at Wexeter, in a uniform and cocked hat, and Mr. Boodle also in uniform, and old Minnekin in tights and Hessian boots, with tassels to them—yes, now it all came back to her! Dobson was General Damas, Boodle was Claude Melnotte, and Minnekin was Beauseant, the play was the Lady of Lyons, and the scene was one which Gerald Hardinge had painted for the Wexeter theatre! They had all admired it, she remembered; they had all said, such of them as knew anything about it, how wonderfully true to nature it was. And Gerald had laughed, and said he had drawn it from an early recollection. "Nay, more, if she had wanted further corrobation, there were the initials "G. H." in the corner of the sketch.

How did Sir Geoffry Heriot come into possession of a sketch done years ago by Gerald Hardinge? The letter would tell her that. She took it up and read it. It was written in a boy's round hand, dated from Lille, and commenced, "My dear father." Dull and uninteresting enough, written as though to order, detailing the course of his studies, and the unvarying manner of his life. It expressed a hope that the person to whom it was addressed would return in good health, and that they should soon meet. The last paragraph ran thus:

I think you will say that since I addressed you six months ago, I have made some improvement in my drawing; I take great interest in it, and am very fond of it. I send you a sketch of our market-place, which I copied from nature, and which, the professor says, is very good.

Your affectionate son,

GEORGE HERIOT.

As the letter fluttered to the ground, Madge Pierrepoint knew that Sir Geoffry Heriot's discarded son, and the scene painter, Gerald Hardinge, were one and the same man.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WOMAN OF THE WORLD.

A country cousin taken by his metropolitan host down Biffen-street, Park-lane, and told that the houses in that narrow and somewhat dingly locality were among the most tempting lots offered by fashionable house-agents to moneyed commerce desiring to establish-ed itself in the regions of fashion, would surely be very much surprised. True that there is about them that surrounding of mews and small public-house seemingly inseparable from desirable residences. True that they are situate in the heart of that exclusive quarter, which is, as it were, the Faubourg St. Germain of London, concentrating within its limits the old families, and looking down with contempt upon Belgravia and Tyburnia. True that the drainage is imperfect and that the rates are enormous. Granting all these advantages, the country cousin might yet be excused for wondering at there being anything like a struggle for the possession of a residence in Biffen street.

For what he would see would be short rows of high-shouldered, tall houses, separated by a narrow, ill-paved street, in which are horse dealers' yards, and small chandlers' shops, and struggling dairies, and other attempts at domestic commerce on a very small scale. The doors of the houses in Biffen street are so tiny, that one wonders how the enormous giants in plush, who, on fine summer evenings, are to be seen sunning themselves at the portals, manage to squeeze through them; the windows looking upon the street are old-fashioned and airless, with small panes frequently not too clean, and sashes from which the paint is worn away; the areas are deep and narrow black tanks, and the houses, so far as outward appearance is concerned, are certainly not more desirable than those to be found in the lodging-letting purlieus of Russell-square.

But once inside, our supposed country cousin would find everything changed, and would speedily be able to understand why Biffen-street commands such high rents, and is so eagerly competed for. For on the west side, at least, the facade to the street is merely a brick delusion or a stucco snare, the fronts of the houses being, Hibernically speaking, at the back; the narrow-paned windows are either dummies, or might be, for all the use that is made of them, enshrouded as they are in bowers of luxurious creeping plants, or hidden away behind ferneries and acquaria; the rooms in the houses are not numerous, but nearly all are large, lofty, and well-proportioned, with great bay windows, which, chiefest charm of all, overlook the broad expanse of Hyde Park.

In a large room on the first floor of one of the best of these houses, on a sofa of peculiar make, with stuffed handles at either end, and small covered wheels in place of the ordinary castors, a woman lay with her face turned towards the window, and her head thrown back to catch as much as possible of the soft evening air. The lower half of the walls was fitted with book-shelves, the upper half hung with a few rare prints and engravings; the mantlepiece was above the height of an ordinary man's stature, the fireplace was tiled, and the space which in winter was occupied by the "dogs," was filled in with looking-glass, in front of which were pots of rare flowers. The furniture, which was massive and antique, was in black oak and dark blue velvet; the thick carpet was of a sombre Persian pattern, and the whole room had the appearance of a studious man's library. But it was a woman of the world's boudoir, and its owner lay on the sofa at the window.

A tall woman, of some three and fifty years of age, of whom the young men of the day are accustomed to say that "she must once have been good-looking." If clear cut features, soft dark hair, and eyes, and shapely figure, constitute beauty, she is more than good-looking still. Her complexion is very pale, and constant suffering has left a half worn, half irritable expression visible in tell-tale lines round her mouth and brow; but her eyes are full of fire, and no physiognomist would fail to mark the firmness and determination evinced in the tight-closing of her lips, as she wrestles and battles with the sharp spasms of pain, which from time to time assail her. Unmistakably well-born and well-nurtured; dressed in a long flowing black cashmere robe, which, hanging in folds over her feet, is confined by a girdle round her waist; with a line of soft white muslin round the throat, and with a piece of handsome black lace brought down in a point, after the fashion of a modern widow's cap, on to her forehead, and falling gracefully over her shoulders.

Twilight has deepened into darkness, but the occupant of the sofa still lies at the window, gazing out wearily and listlessly over the broad expanse before her. A shaded reading lamp stands on a small table by her side, and a book, with a library ticket pasted on it, has has fallen to the floor from the hand which hangs in weariness on the back of the sofa; but since that access of pain which had caused her to drop the volume, she has made no attempt to move, and there she lies, still and mute and uncomplaining.

Through the darkness glides a small, neat, womanly figure, until it reaches the sofa side, where it stops. There has been no sound of footfall, no rustling of dress, but the lady seems aware of the presence, for she turns her head quietly and says in a full, rich voice, "You there, Willis?"

"Yes, Madam, I came to tell you it had struck eleven."

"A work which exceeds the call of duty, and as such to be avoided! The neighboring churches are of use to me in one way at all events; I learn the flight of time from their clocks, if not from their preachers. What then?"

"Are you not ready for morphia and for bed?" said the girl. "Are you not tired, madam?"

"Tired!" echoed the invalid. "Good Heaven! if you only knew how tired I am of everything, and yet unwilling to give it up! Yes, Willis, I am tired, but I don't intend going to bed just yet."

"Doctor Asprey begged me to see that you were not up later than eleven."

"When you are Doctor Asprey's lody's-maid, you will attend to what he says; while you remain with me, you will obey me alone. I shall not leave this room until Mr. Gerald returns."

The girl had been too long in her mistress' service to attempt to argue with her, so she merely bowed, and was about to retire when the lady stopped her by a gesture.

"Stay," she said, "do not leave me, Willis; I have been alone now for a couple of hours, and there is no society I get so soon sick of as my own. That was a bad attack I had just now."

"It was, indeed, Madam," said the girl, earnestly, "a very bad one."

"You thought I was dying, Willis?" said the lady, looking fixedly at her, with a smile upon her lips.

"I confess that I was very frightened," said Willis.

"As frightened as you were three years ago when we were in Greece?"

"Yes! You looked so exactly the same, Madam, this evening, as you did then."

"I felt exactly the same, Willis; that curious languor, that sense of my hold on life gradually, but surely, relaxing; that impossibility to fight against the icy numbness stealing over me; all those sensations I had before. I had almost forgotten them until they were renewed tonight. Now tell me, what did Doctor Asprey say to you on the stairs?"

"He said——" and the girl's voice hesitated, and her cheeks flushed as she spoke, "he said that—that you had been very ill; but that you were better."

"That was oracular indeed," said the invalid, smiling. "Did you come into my service yesterday, Willis? or do you take me for a fool, that you think to put me off with such nonsense? Tell me plainly, what did the doctor say?"

The girl hesitated again, but the invalid's eyes were fixed upon her, and she proceeded. "Doctor Asprey, said, Madam, that he had only arrived just in time to—to 'pull you through,' were his words, and that if you had another attack he—you——"

"I should die in it, I suppose," said the invalid, quietly.

"He would not answer for the consequences, was what the doctor said."

"It is pretty much the same thing! And you were frightened to tell me this? Have you not seen me for years looking death in the face, as it were, and do you think that the hint if its nearer approach could have any effect upon me? I told you, when you first came to me, that there was a chance of my dying at any moment, and that you would probably have to get your character for your next place from my executors, and now——. Did I not hear the street door shut? Mr. Gerald is returned, he will come straight to this room. There are tears in your eyes, Willis; dry them at once, and get away before he comes; you know how quick and observant he is."

Obeying this order, Willis hurried from the room. She had scarcely done so when Gerald, entering, walked straight to the sofa and seated himself in a low chair beside it, taking one of its occupant's hands between his.

Rose Pierrepoint was right in saying that Gerald's personal appearance had greatly improved since the old days. His voice, always soft and refined, sounded singularly sweet, as, bending over the figure on the sofa, and lightly kissing its forehead, he said, "Why do I find you up so late, tonight; is not this dissipation against all orders?"

"This dissipation, as you call it, has occurred wholly and solely on your account. I sat up to see you."

"It is all very well to say that," said Gerald, "but you were always addicted to frivolity, and you have been amusing yourself, I know, with watching the people in the Park."

"My dear Gerald, even the philanderings of tall guardsmen with short plain nooks, and the pastimes of dirty children, have ceased to inspire me with much interest. That was all to be seen while daylight remained, and it has been dark for the last two hours."

"And yet you have remained here—I was going to say reading, but the position of the book," pointing to it, "is scarcely complimentary to the author."

"The book," said the invalid, glancing at the fallen volume, "is the usual accurate description of fashionable life from the scullery maid's point of view. No, I have been amusing myself in thinking."

"Thinking of what?"

"Many things and persons, you among the number; but I will not inflict upon you an inventory of my thoughts, at all events just now. You dined with Doctor Asprey. Had you a pleasant party? Who were there?"

"Only two other men, neither of whom I think you know, a Mr. Delabole and a Mr. Vane."

"I have met Mr. Delabole, a coasre, common vulgarian, pushing and presuming. Who is the other man, one of the Northumberland Vanes?"

"I should think not," said Gerald, laughing; "a pleasing, rattling, agreeable kind of fellow, who talked very well. He had to do a goodish deal of talking, by the way, for the doctor was sent for early in the dinner, and was away for an hour."

"What was his summons?"

"To a patient of course, and an urgent case I fancy, for he rose from the table directly his most mysterious butler whispered in his ear. I need not tell you that he did not mention the name or the case."

"Doctor Asprey is a model of discretion," said the invalid, with a faint smile; then leaning a little towards her companion, and laying her hand on his, she added, "Would it surprise you, my dear Gerald, to hear that it was to see me that Doctor Asprey left his friends?"

"You!" echoed the young man.

"Me. After you left the house, I had warning of a bad attack, and when its imminence became certain, I thought it better that the doctor should be here to stave it off, if possible."

"And you hadn't a thought to send for me at such a time," said they young man, bending tenderly over her, but speaking in tones of reproach.

"What good could it have done?" she asked. "I knew you were enjoying yourself, and life is too short to let slip any such opportunity. You could have done me no good, and the sight of you, and the thought that I was leaving you, would not have rendered death more pleasant to me."

"You must not speak like that," said Gerald, gently.

"And why not?" said the invalid, with a smile; "the fact will not be averted or postponed by our ignoring it, and I have a strong conviction that my hold on life, which of late years has been sufficiently feeble, is gradually relaxing altogether."

"What makes you think that?" he said in a low, tremulous voice.

"I do not think it," she replied; "I know it. Five or six years ago I went for a tour in the East alone, that is to say with Willis for my sole companion; while in Constantinople I had a severe attack of rheumatism, and was recommended by a French physician, who attended me, to try the baths of Vassilica, in the island of Mitylene, which, at one time, were famous for their cure of such disorders. I went to Mitylene, and found it paradise; and when you have no longer this old woman to tie you to this detestable place, you must go there, Gerald, and recompense yourself for having given up a portion of your youth to her love of your companionship."

"If it pleases you to speak in this way, of course it is not for me to check you," said the young man, shrugging his shoulders.

"There," said the invalid, "I will say no more on that head sinces it displeases you, but will continue my story. The baths did me good, and the climate rendered me quite another being; it seemed to me that, for the first time I knew what life was, as distinguished from existence. I forgot that perpetual gnawing pain which had never left me for so many years, and I began to think it not impossible that in time I should have some toleration for my fellow creatures. Willis thought the golden age had arrived, and I had some idea of taking up my quarters there for good, when something happened which changed all my intentions. Close to Mitylene is a place called Lovochari, or the Village of the Lepers, a terrible place, where the people so afflicted are herded together. I had been warned not to go, but I persisted, and dearly I paid for my obstinacy. The sight was terrific, and once seen, was impossible to be got rid of. All day, after my return, I tried to shut it from my mental vision, but there it remained, and at night the hideous objects which I had seen, rose before me more terrible than ever; I suppose the fatigue and the horror under which I labored had something to do with it, but that night I experienced a new phase in my illness. During Willis' temporary absence from the room, I fell into a comatose state, a kind of trance, in the commencement of which I felt my life, as it were, gradually slipping away from me; I seemed to be growing weaker and weaker, pulseless, dead; for I was dead so far as power of motion, thought, or feeling was concerned. I need not tell you how I was brought round, or bore you with the details of my recovery, which was as sudden as had been the attack. I need only say, my dear Gerald, that this evening I have gone through an exactly similar phase of my illness, and that I know that Doctor Asprey thinks that the wolf, whose approach has been so often announced, is about to come down upon me at last."

Overcome by emotion, the young man sat silent, only pressing the hand which he held between his own.

"Do not think that I am going to be sentimental, my dear Gerald," continued the invalid, "or that I intend saying to you any 'last words,' or any nonsense of that kind. Notwithstanding all my ailments, I have amused myself sufficiently about such low creature comforts as good eating and drinking, warmth and luxury, not to be over-joyed at the prospects of of having speedily to give them up; as for parting from you, I never intend to hint at the subject. I hope that one evening we shall say good-night as usual—there, now, I am drifting into the very sentimental nonsense that I wish to avoid. What I have to say and must say, is purely practical. It will be no surprise to you to hear that I have left you all I have in the world."

His head was averted, and for an instant he made no response; when he turned round his cheeks were burning.

"It seems horrible to talk to you in this cold-blooded way," said he, "after all your goodness to me, and at such a moment, but you have given me an opportunity which I have long wanted, and which I must not miss. What I want to say is, to say in all gentleness and affection, that I cannot, accept any further kindness at your hands; that I cannot take this legacy from you at the exclusion of others who have doubtless claims of blood upon you."

The invalid smiled faintly as she said: "Persons with claims of blood I suppose are relations. Providence has kindly spared me any such annoyances! And I think you will allow, before we part tonight, that I have not been acting, nor am I going to act like a stupid old woman, as the world most probably believes, but that, at all events, there has been method in my madness. Now, Gerald, take this key and open the middle drawer in that cabinet; close to the front you will find a small soft paper parcel—bring it to me."

The young man obeyed. The invalid was about to open the paper, but she refrained.

"Open it yourself," she said.

Gerald took off the outer wrappings of paper, and came upon a miniature painted on ivory, in the style so much in vogue half a century ago.

"Look at it well, and tell me if you know for whom it is intended."

Gerald took the portrait to the lamp and examined it carefully. It represented a young man of about five-and-twenty years of age, with whiskerless cheeks, and clear blue eyes, and fair hair, curling in a thick crisp mass on his head. He had on a scarlet uniform coat and white duck trousers, and his hand rested on the hilt of a sword.

Glancing at this portrait, Gerald started; bending down to observe it more closely, the color left his cheeks, and his hand trembled.

TO BE CONTINUED.

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I guess my hat's my own! I paid for it! snapped the young woman at the matinee, turning round and addressing the two men who were making audible remarks about her towering head-dress, and I paid for my seat, too!"

But you don't pay for all the space between your seat and the ceiling, my dear young lady, mildly observed the elder of the two men.

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Lady (to Pat, who has just tendered her his seat)—You have my sincere thanks, sir.

Pat—Not at all, mum; not at all. It's a duty we owe to the sect. Some folks only does it when a lady be pretty; but I says, says I, the sect, Pat, not the individool.

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25 boxes Steel Cut Tacks, put up in small wooden kegs,
2 rolls Rubber Packing
1 case Spiral Packing
5 barrels Raw Linseed Oil
2 ton Genuine Elephant White Lead.

Just to hand.

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Lead Pipe.

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6 COILS LEAD PIPE, 2 barrels Pipe Fittings in endless variety; 1 box Globe Valves, Stop and Waste Cocks, Hose Bibbs and Brass Fittings; 40,700 feet Plain Iron Pipe, 15 dozen Steel Snow Shovels, 4 boxes Mrs. Potts' Sad Irons; and for sale by

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