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The Viper of Milan.

A ROMANCE OF LOMBARDY.

BY MARJORIE BOWEN.

(Continued.)

"Aye, leave after the Duke has entered, but now, clear yourself away; my lord comes apace, some allies with him—" and with a wave of his halberd he swept them back.

Valentine flushed at his tone, yet drew back, her hand on the page's shoulder.

But Isotta struggled free and again rushed forward.

"I will pass!" she cried wildly. "I will! I have not got so far to be stopped now!"

"Oh! thy madness!" murmured Valentine.

But Isotta had rushed to the very gate itself, and was only forced back by the pikes at her breast.

The officer looked at the group with mistrust.

"What is this?" he said. "What means this passion?"

"She is half distraught," said Valentine. "Beggary is no small matter, messer. We will be quiet, though I promise you, until the Duke is past——" And to Isotta at her side she whispered, holding her hand tight, "Thou wilt ruin all; control thyself."

But the unfortunate Isotta was calm enough now; she followed Valentine without resistance.

And now Carrara's army had reached the gates, and fell back to await Visconti. The whole city was in tumult, the streets filling with excited people; there was mad shouting, the clash of arms. "A Visconti! a Visconti!"

"We shall be crushed to death," said Adrian. "I must find you shelter, lady," and he looked around eagerly.

"The Duke—the Duke!" and the great gates began to open.

"It is useless!" cried Valentine, "and as well die this way as another."

"There is a door here," said Isotta; and turning with difficulty, they saw indeed a door, deep set in the wall and closely shut.

In desperation, Adrian knocked loudly. "A Visconti!" shouted the soldiers. "A Visconti!"

They were fast being hemmed in by the crowd, soldiers were pouring through the gates in companies, strange soldiers, the new allies; and as Valentine beheld them in strength and numbers, and heard them shout her brother's name, she felt her last desperate throw was lost.

"A Visconti!"

"Knock on the door again," cried Isotta, "knock again."

Cavalry was passing, going at a trot, so close, the hoofs were almost in their faces, the foam flew over their mantles.

Then in wild confusion they pressed back against the door; passing close, a host of pennons waved from glittering spears, the tossing of horses' heads, the champing of their bits, a clamor of noises, deafening shouts, a hurry of the calvacade, and then—suddenly a horse drawn up close to the shrinking group in the shadow of the doorway, and a rider looking down at them.

Wild with terror, Isotta flung herself against the door, which yielded, Valentine looked up at the man who had stopped—saw her brother's face.

"Ah, my sister," he said between his teeth; and Valentine, scarce knowing what she did, fled after Isotta, the page behind, closing the door upon Visconti.

In the pleasant courtyard was a girl, dressed in scarlet, who rose, surprised at their disordered aspect.

"'Tis only a moment gained," cried Valentine, hoarsely. "He will follow!"

Isotta turned to Graziosa in an agony. "For the love of Heaven hide us—for the love of Heaven, from Visconti!"

"Hide us!" said Valentine bitterly. "Hide us from Visconti!"

And Graziosa thought of the secret passage.

"I will help you," she said. "I and my father do not love Visconti——"

"Quick, maiden," cried the page. "I see the spears are motionless outside. I will guard the door."

"They will kill thee," cried Isotta. "Thou art too young."

But Valentine turned to the boy and gave him her beautiful hand. "Guard the door, gain us a moment, Adrian—for me," she said, and hurried across the sunny courtyard, followed by Graziosa and Isotta.

"For me!" repeated Adrian, and set himself before the door very proudly, with flashing eyes and dagger drawn. He was only a boy, a page, she a princess, but he could set his life against her smile, and think himself well paid.

Graziosa, panting with excitement, hurried them into the house, and into the lower room from which the secret passage opened. The pleasant home was still half dismantled from the recent attack of the Germans, the neat trimness of the cool chambers was gone.

At their entrance Agnolo came forward in alarm, but at his daughter's hurried explanation, turned willingly to the secret door he kept well concealed. For the little painter took no thought of what it must mean to shelter any from Visconti's wrath.

"Quick!" cried Valentine imperiously. "How long can one page keep that door?"

"The poor boy!" moaned Isotta, hanging half lifeless upon Valentine's arm. "Unhappy boy—they will kill him!"

Valentine looked at her with scorn.

"Canst thou think of a page now?" she cried. "Think of Della Scala. Quick!"

But the door would not yield, and while Agnolo struggled with the spring, a crash was heard, a cry, the ring of armor and the tramp of feet.

"The door is down," said Valentine. "We are lost."

"I cannot move the spring," cried Agnolo.

"Quick! quick!" shrieked Graziosa, but even as she spoke, the chamber door burst open and a man stepped in; there were others at his heels, but he entered alone.

Agnolo starting back, dropped his concealments into place and trembled for his secret and these poor folk who had not escaped Visconti.

The man who entered was in black, it was all that could be seen in the dark, disordered chamber, but Valentine needed no light to tell her who it was. Isotta sank to the ground, shrieking wildly.

"Oh, father, father!" cried Graziosa, agonized, "save them!"

The newcomer laid his hand on Valentine's shoulder, she standing calm and erect, and turned his face to Graziosa.

"From me?" he said, and his voice was very sweet. "From me, Graziosa?"

"Ambrogio! Ambrogia!" cried the girl. "What do you here?"

Valentine would have spoken scornfully, but Visconti turned his eyes on her, and she dared not. The courtyard was full of armed men.

"Ambrogio!" repeated the painter in dismay. "What does this mean?"

Visconti laughed pleasantly, but his hand tightened on his sister's shoulder.

"It means, thy daughter hath found a lover worthy of her in Visconti."

Visconti! As in a flash the little painter saw explained a thousand things that had perplexed him. Visconti! His quickly working brain had grasped it and summed it up before Graziosa could even realize she heard aright. She stared there silent, with a piteous look upon her face. Visconti turned to his prisoners.

"Take Isotta d'Este back to her prison," he said, curtly, and a group of soldiers advanced.

Isotta clung to Valentine in an agony.

"At last!" said Visconti, in her ear, "at last thy calm fails thee!"

And then he stood watching, while she implored in turn Valentine and Agnolo to save her, in incoherent words of anguish.

"I cannot bear it!" she cried. "I have borne it too long! O God, have pity on me! Have pity on me, I have not the courage to face it again. I have not the courage!"

Visconti turned to her in savage triumph of hate he scarcely troubled to conceal.

"Find thy courage again, where thou found'st it before," he said. "Thy husband is not dead, although he leaves thee to pine in prison. He may remember thee even yet."

Isotta sprang up at the taunt, wild-eyed.

"Keep thy [illegible] away from me!" she shrieked, [illegible] slain him! Kill me too!"

Then, seeing resistance useless, and those who would have saved her helpless, Della Scala's unhappy wife surrendered quietly; only, as she crossed the courtyard with her guard, and saw the tree-tops wave above the walls and the sky that was outside Milan, a cry rose that made the hardened soldiers wince.

"Mastino! Oh, Mastino!"

Visconti watched her out of sight, then turned again to Graziosa, his hand still on his sister's shoulder.

"Graziosa," he murmered.

But the girl made no answer; she was huddled on the bench that ran along the wall, looking out with frightened eyes.

As he spoke she shuddered, and crouched close to the wall.

But Agnolo answered, and Visconti, serene in his pride, did not notice the painter's tone.

"My daughter is dazed with her surprise, lord, as who would not be? Graziosa, speak to the Duke, speak to thy Ambrogio," and he gripped her hand fiercely. But Graziosa rose at his touch, and snatching her hand away, fled from the room, with one wild look toward Visconti.

"Ye see, my lord, she is bewildered, she can scarce believe it true——"

(To be continued.)

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Daily Fashion Hint for Times Readers.



A NEW CUT OF COAT.

In the new auto apparel shown at an exclusive Broadway shop this coat is displayed as one of the most modish of the new models. It is made of a waterproof mohair in the new tan shade and trimmed with brown suede. The body or waist of the coat is fashioned separate from the skirt, the skirt being cut in seven gores and fitting smoothly around the hips like the dress skirt. The body of the coat blouses slightly into the circular girdle, joining it with the skirt. There is a high military collar, and this, with the high cavalier cuffs and belt, is inset with brown suede. Brown suede gauntlet gloves and a natty turban of tan straw, with self color braid trimmings, completes this toilette.

GOT A PAIN IN YOUR BACK?

You get a pain in your back, and you wonder what is the matter. You perhaps pay no attention to it. Backache is caused by imperfect action of the kidneys, in fact, is the first sign of kidney trouble to follow.

The kidneys, proper, are composed of a close network of fibrous tissue, interlaced with tiny elastic fibres. Their object is the excretion of the uric acid, and other poisonous matter composing the urine, from the blood.

They are continuously at work to preserve the general health of the body and most people are troubled with some form of kidney trouble, but do not suspect it.

Some of the symptoms are: A feeling of weakness in the small of the back, sharp pains in back, puffiness under the eyes, and swelling of the feet and ankles, urinary troubles such as supressed urination, excessive urination, cloudy, thick or highly colored urine, etc.

Mr. J. L. Whiting, Osnabruck Centre, Ont., writes: "I suffered for two years with kidney trouble. I had terrible pains in my back, hips and legs. I could not sleep and had a poor appetite, I took four boxes of Doan's Kidney Pills, and the pains left me, my appetite returned and I now sleep well. I can recommend Doan's Kidney Pills to anyone suffering from kidney trouble.

Doan's Kidney Pills are 50 cents per box or 3 boxes for $1.25 at all dealers or mailed direct on receipt of price by The Doan Kidney Pill Co., Toronto, Ont.

Call to Pastor

At a largely attended meeting of the members of the Tabernacle Baptist church, Haymarket square, last evening, it was decided to extend a call to Rev. J. W. Kierstead, of Oxford (N. S.) It is generally understood that he will accept.

Rev. Perry J. Stackhouse, the present pastor, who will go to Campbellton May 1, has been in charge of the work for more than five years. He first went there in June, 1889, and left in October, 1903. He returned Jan. 1, 1904, and has remained up to the present.

His pastorates have been highly successful and the congregation has grown rapidly under his ministrations. Many improvements have been made in the building and since 1904 pews have been installed in the auditorium of the church. A vestry has also been built and furnished and an acetylene gas plant has been installed.

Free Site for Technical School

Halifax, N. S., April 17—The city council of Halifax, at an informal meeting today agreed to donate a free site to the government for the Technical Education College buidding.

The technical education bill has passed the house of assembly and is now before the legislative council. A clause will be added in the council incorporating in the bill, the fact that Halifax shall give a free site. With that amendment it will come back to the house of assembly for concurrence. The aldermen were unanimous in their decision to offer the site.

Edwin J. Everett, W. E. Raymond and George Blake will leave on the 25th for Los Angeles to attend a gathering of Mystic Shriners.

$100 Reward, $100

The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages, and that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure now known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system; thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of testimonials.

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WEDDINGS

Fillmore-Stiles.

Hopewell Cape, April 17—(Special)—The marriage of Miss Blanche Millicent Stiles, youngest daughter of Henry A. Stiles, of Beaver Brook, Harvey, to John Howard Fillmore took place this evening at the cosy home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank C. Fillmore, sister and brother of the bride and groom respectively, at Riverside, Albert county.

The ceremony was performed by Rev. Howard D. Worden, pastor of the Hopewell Baptist church, in the presence of some seventy guests.

The bride, unattended, looked charming in a gown of a combination of blue and white chiffon taffeta with medallion trimmings.

The number of beautiful and valuable wedding presents attested to the popularity of the young couple. Miss Annie Maude Copp presided at the piano and played Mendelssohn's wedding march with singular sweetness and effect.

A dainty luncheon was served after the ceremony in the tastefully decorated dining room.

Mackintosh-Wood.

Halifax, N. S., April 17—The marriage of J. Forrester Mackintosh, of the firm of J. C. Mackintosh & Co., bankers, and Miss Winifred Wood, daughter of A. L. Wood, took place this afternoon at the residence of the bride's father.

Goudy-Hamilton.

Yarmouth, April 17—Mrs. Annie Hamilton was married here last evening to Arthur Goudy, traveler for Edward Allen, wholesale grocer. The bride is a daughter of the late Hon. Wm. Law, and a sister of B. B. Law, M. P.

MacGowan-Dodge.

Moncton, N. B., April 17—(Special)—The home of Mr. and Mrs. G. A. Dodge, Gordon street, was the scene of a pretty but quiet wedding at 8.30 this evening, when their eldest daughter, Miss Jennie Elvira, was married to Andrew R. MacGowan, the well known I. C. R. civil engineer. The house was prettily decorated with flowers for the event. Only the immediate friends and relatives were present. Rev. W. B. Sisam, rector of St. George's, performed the ceremony, the bride being given away by her father.

The bride was attired in a Dresden gown of white nuns veiling, trimmed with baby Irish lace. The wedding march was played by the bride's sister, Miss Alice Dodge. The bride was the recipient of many beautiful gifts in cut glass and silverware. Among the presents was a cabinet of silver from the groom's fellow clerks in the engineering department. The groom's present was a pearl necklace ,with pendant of pearls. After luncheon Mr. and Mrs. MacGowan left on the Maritime express on a wedding trip to Montreal, Toronto and other points.

The News—No Pure Drug Cough Cure Laws would be needed, if all Cough Cures were like Dr. Shoop's Cough Cure is—and has been for 20 years. The National Law now requires that if any poisons enter into a cough mixture, it must be printed on the label or package.

For this reason mothers, and others, should insist on having Dr. Shoop's Cough Cure. No poison-marks on Dr. Shoop's labels—and none in the medicine, else it must by law be on the label. And it's not only safe, but it is said to be by those that know it best, a truly remarkable cough remedy. Take no chance, particularly with your children. Insist on having Dr. Shoop's Cough Cure. Compare carefully the Dr. Shoop package with others and see. No poison marks there! You can always be on the safe side by demanding Dr. Shoop's Cough Cure. Simply refuse to accept any other. Sold by druggists.

The will of Dr. Mason A. Sheffield gives Mrs. Sheffield one-third of the real estate and one-half the personal. The balance of the estate will be divided equally among Delancy Sheffield and Charles E. Sheffield, brothers, at Cornwallis (N. S.), and Mrs. F. B. Newcombe, Kentville; R. S. Newcombe, Marlboro (Mass.), and Johanna Newcombe, nephews and nieces of the deceased.

J. Hunter White will leave in a fortnight for England.

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