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Poetry.

Longings.

When shall I be at rest? My trembling heart
Grows weary of its burden, sickening still
With hope deferred Oh! that it were thy will
To loose my bonds, and take me where thou art?

When shall I be at rest? My eyes grow dim
With straining through the gloom; I scarce can see
The way-marks that my Saviour left for me:
Would it were now and I were safe with him.

When shall I be at rest? Hand over hand
I grasp, and climb an ever steeper hill,
A rougher path, Oh! that it were thy will,
My tired feet might tread the Promised Land.

Oh that I were at rest! a thousand fears
Come thronging o'er me lest I fail at last.
Would I were safe, all toil and danger past,
And thine own hand might wipe away my tears.

Oh that I were at rest, like some I love.
Whose last fond looks drew half my life away,
Seeming to plead that either they might stay
With me on earth, or I with them above.

But why these murmurs? Thou didst never shrink
From any toil or weariness for me,
Not even from that last deep agony;
Shall I beneath my little trials sink?

No, Lord. for when I am indeed at rest,
One taste of that deep bliss will quite efface
The sternest memories of my earthly race,
Save but to swell the sense of being blest.

Then lay on me whatever cross I need
To bring me there. I know thou can'st not be
Unkind, unfaithful or untrue to me!
Shall I not toil for thee, when thou for me didst bleed?

The Dead Prodigal.

Yes, bear him to his father's house;
And on the old familiar bed,
When first his childhood found repose,
From which his boyhood springing rose,
Lay gently his dishonored head.

For him was no predestined prime:
He was not pure, nor strong, nor sage;
Passion obscured the lights of truth,
And brought him age in time of youth,
And death instead of tranquil age.

Of vice the urgent debt he paid;
But shall his folly nurse our pride!
He sinned against the gracious Lord,
Like you and me—and, self-abhorred,
He sinned against himself, and died.

Pass by him, man of prudent blood,
With shrinking feet and lifted eyes;
You never sinned against your frame,
Nor cause of scandal gave, or blame,
And he did both—and there he lies.

So weak of will, he never strove
As some against themselves have striven;
So young, so easily beguiled—
Ah, was he not a very child,
Father to thee, which art in heaven?

[*The Planet.*

Selections.

The Brilliant Keeper.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE HEIR TO ASHLEY."

It was a comfortable room, even for the west-end of London. It was not the grand drawing-room of the house; it was not the commodious dining-room, where Sir Philip's patients waited their turn to go into him; it was only a small cozy apartment with a bright fire, easy chairs, and, generally, plenty of litter. For a wonder, it was tidy now; nothing was on the centre table, save Lady Annesley's desk, at which she sat writing—a plain, pleasant woman of forty, wearing weeds yet. The late Sir Robert, a popular and successful physician, had risen in the world and got his baronetcy; but this had been his second wife.

On a low sofa, near the fire, sat an old lady—a cheerful, nice old lady, in spite of her blindness and her eighty-four years.—She would tell you, could you speak with her, that God had seen fit to take her dear son, Sir Robert, and had spared her. Upon her lap was a bag made of white linen, resembling a pillow-case, but not so large; and she was stuffing it with handfuls of paper torn into minute bits. Since she became blind she was wont to employ some of her time in tearing up waste paper, newspapers and the like, to stuff cushions. Maria Carr, Lady Annesley's niece, was at the far window, making a case for this cushion; two square pieces of white velvet, on each of which was painted an exquisite group of flowers, Maria's doing. The cushion was intended for a present for Mary Annesley, who was on the point of marriage with Dr. Scott. She had gone out now with the late Sir Robert Annesley's ward, Georgina Livingston, who lived with them.

Mrs. Annesley looked up from her cushion and her bits of paper—if it be allowable to say that of one who has no sight; but when she spoke to people she was in the habit of turning her face in the direction she thought they might be, as she had done before the darkness had come on: "What about Charley's going to church? Is it decided?"

"Well, I suppose——" Lady Annesley stopped. The door had hastily opened, and a gentleman entered—a tall, fine man.—But for the sweet smile that frequently parted his lips and lighted up his dark blue eyes, his features might have been deemed plain. And yet ladies were apt to say that Sir Philip Annesley, being unmarried, was too attractive for a medical man.

"Is that Philip?"

"Myself, and nobody else, grandmamma;" for Sir Philip sometimes, half in sport, addressed her by the old familiar title of his boyhood. "Who will lend me a finger!"

"A finger!" echoed Lady Annesley.—"What for? Ask Maria."

Maria laid down her velvet, and came forward. Sir Philip opened a little square box, and taking out a ring, passed it on to the third, or wedding-finger of her left hand, She stood before him, perfectly quiet in motion and bearing, but blushing to the very roots of her hair. Two thin chains of gold crossed and re-crossed each other, enclosing a brilliant between each crossing—twelve brilliants in all, small, but of the first water—a jewel of rare beauty, remarkably light and elegant.

"Philip, what a beautiful ring!" uttered Lady Annesley.

"Yes; it took my fancy. Mary will like a keeper, and Scott, in his absent fashion, is sure not to think of one. Lucky, I say, if he remembers the wedding-ring. It is too large; is it not, Maria?"

"Much too large for a keeper. Mary would require another ring to keep this one on."

"I ought to have chosen the smaller one," said Sir Philip. "There is another, just like it, only less in size. I'll take this one back and change it."

"It must have cost a good deal?" said Lady Annesley.

"Pretty well. Forty-eight guineas."

Mrs. Annesley lifted her hands in dismay. "Oh, Philip! Forty-eight guineas for a ring! It seems next door to a sin. Your father, my dear, would have looked twice at a quarter of the money before giving it."

He crossed the room and put the keeper into her hand, bending down to her, and speaking gently:

"Feel it grandmother; it really is a beauty. I know the sum is large; but we do not give away Mary every day."

Mrs. Annesley passed her fingers over the ring, after the manner of the blind, and handed it back to him. "Philip, when do you intend to buy a wedding keeper on your own account? Ever?"

That sweet smile of his rose to his lips, and perhaps the least tinge of color to his face. "A doctor has no time to think of such things."

"No time!" returned the old lady, taking the remark literally. "I think he has as much time for it as other people. Where there's a will there's a way. Philip, do you know that you are in your thirty-fifth year?"

"And do you know also what you patients say?" put in Lady Annesley. They say—"

"I'll guess: that will do!" interrupted Sir Philip, with a laugh. "If they don't like an unmarried man, they need not come to me. Let them go elsewhere."

"Not they," said Lady Annesley, significantly. "Philip, you really ought to marry. Delay it another ten years, and your children will be growing up when you are an old man. I wish you would: it would set my mind at rest."

"At rest from what?" asked Sir Philip in a hasty and somewhat sharp tone.

"Oh, well; I am not going to explain," answered Lady Annesley. "At rest in more ways than one."

"Provided, I presume, that I married to please you," cried Sir Philip, who fully understood the by-play.

"Of course not to please me, Philip—I am nobody. To please your sisters, and to please the world."

"Terrible if I married only to please myself, would it not be, Lady Annesley?" he laughed.

He had never called her "mother;" at one time had studiously called her "Lady Annesley." Four-and-twenty years of age when his father married this, his second wife, Philip, in his inmost heart, had rebelled at the union. They all had, at first; but they learnt to like her in time. The girls were married now, save Mary, who would be the last.

"It is no joking matter, Philip. What a nice rose that is in your button-hole!" continued Lady Annesley. "Where did you get it?"

"Out of Mrs. Leigh's conservatory"—he replied, taking it from his coat—a magnificent rose, beautiful as a camelia—"she seduced me into it just now, when I was at her house."

"Is her daughter better?"

"No, poor girl. And I fear——"

Sir Philip did not say what he feared.—He was not one to speak, at home, of his patients. In the silence that supervened a servant appeared.

"Lady Oliver, sir."

Sir Philip nodded; stood a moment or two as if in thought; then prepared to descend:

"Will you put this up for me?" he said, giving the diamond keeper to Lady Annesley as he passed her. "I will change it when I go out. There, Maria! a present for you."

He hung the white rose into Maria's lap. She did not touch it, only let it lie there, her cheeks again glowing hot. Lady Annesley knitted her brow. But it cleared as her eyes fell on the ring.

"I never did see a greater beauty!" she enthusiastically exclaimed, as she slipped it several times on and off her finger; "but what a judge Philip must have been to get it so large as this! "Who is this coming up?"

It was Charles Carr, Maria's brother, popularly known in the house as "Charley." A young lieutenant he: gay, careless and handsome. Often in scrapes, always in trouble; deep in debt, in "bills," in many things that he ought not to be; altogether, a gentleman who was believed to be going to the bad headlong, especially by Lady Annesley. He was her own nephew, her dead brother's son; and he came to the house, presuming upon the relationship and upon Maria's residence in it, oftener than Lady Annesley liked. A great fear was at her heart that he had grown too fond of Georgina Livingston, or that Georgina had of him—perhaps both. *Her* penniless nephew who had not cross or coin to bless himself with, steal Georgina and her nine hundred a year! The world *would* talk then—would say that she, Lady Annesley, had planned it! And Lady Annesley was remarkably sensitive to the world's censure.

Charley glittered in, in full regimentals; one of the handsomest young fellows that had ever bowed before Her Majesty at St. James'. And he had no objection that somebody else should see him and think so.

"Where's Georgina?" asked he.

"Georgina's out," snappishly replied Lady Annesley. "What are you dressed up for?"

"I have just come from the Levee. Did you forget it?" he returned, taking up mechanically the little jewel-box and opening it. Charley's fingers had a trick of touching things, and he often got a rap on the knuckles for it, literally and metaphorically, from my lady. "What a splendid ring!" he uttered.

"Sir Philip's present to Mary. But it is to be changed, it is too large."

Charley put it on his little finger and turned it round admiringly; as they had all done. "A charming ring!" he repeated.—"It is really beautiful!"

"Do you wish it were yours?" laughed Maria, from her distant window.

"I wish I had the cost of it," he said.—"That would be of more use to me. What was it? Fifty guineas?"

"Not a bad guess," said Lady Annesley, who really liked Charley, and his good looks, and his good nature, *au fond*, when she could forget the fear and trouble touching Miss Georgina.

They stood together, singing praises of the ring; now she had it on—now he. Lady Annesley at length took it from him—and held it over the box, as if taking a farewell of it before she dropped it in.

"Oh dear!" cried out Mrs. Annesley.

Lady Annesley hastily put the lid on, left the box on the table by Charley, and ran to her mother-in-law. The old lady had let the sack fall upon the hearth-rug, and some of the ammunition was falling out.

"Don't trouble yourself, my dear," she said, as Lady Annesley began pushing it in. "Put it on my lap again; I won't be so clumsy a second time. It is nearly full, you see."

Lady Annesley did as requested, and returned to the table. Charley, restless Charley, was then standing by Maria, and the two were whispering together. Lady Annesley took a sheet of fair white paper and wrapped up the little box, without again looking in it, lighted a wax match and sealed it.

"Well, I must be off," cried Charles.—"Shall you be at home this evening?"

"*I* shall," laughed grandmamma, from her place on the sofa. "I don't suppose many of the others will be out." She had not penetrated Lady Annesley's fear; and Charley was a wonderful favorite of hers.

"Look, Maria," said Lady Annesley, as they heard Charley and his sword clattering down the stairs four at a time—"I will put it here. If Philip should come for it, you can tell him where it is."

She lifted the lid of her desk and put in the little box; then approached Mrs. Annesley and took hold of her arm to lead her from the room. "We shall have no drive to-day, unless we make haste. Maria will finish that."

"It's finished, all but tacking," said the old lady; "it is as full as it ought to be.—Maria, my dear, come and do it at once."

Maria carried her velvet to the sofa, and set about completing the cushion, kneeling down for convenience sake. She had got the velvet cover on to it, and was beginning to put round the gold cord and to sew on the tassels, when Sir Philip entered. He rested his arms on the back of the sofa, and looked down at her and her work—a fair girl she, with a gentle face.

"I wonder if folks would send *me* presents if I set up housekeeping on my own score?" he cried.

"You had better try them," said Maria. But she spoke the words without thought, and felt, the moment they had left her lips, that she had rather have bitten out her tongue than uttered them.

"But the flitting from the house of all of you, what a trouble it would be!" returned he in a tone of much remonstrance. "I don't know that every one of you would have to go, though," he continued, while the too conscious crimson dyed her face, and she played nervously with the gold cord.

"Certainly not, if Lady Annesley had her way," he resumed. Maria, astonished at the words, glanced at him in amazement.—"Don't you see it all, Maria?"

"See what?" she exclaimed.

"Nay, I shall not tell you. So much the better if you have not seen it. I thought it had been patent to the house. My vanity may be in error after all."

"What do you mean, Sir Philip?"

He was gazing hard at her with his deep blue eyes—vain and saucy enough they were just then. She felt herself completely at sea.

"Give me your opinion, Maria? If I did set up housekeeping for myself, do you think that any one of you could be induced to stop and help me in it?"

Her heart beat violently—her eyes fell. The gold chord in her fingers was wreathing itself into knots. Sir Philip came round and laid his hand upon her shoulder as she knelt, making her turn her face to him.

"Because I may be asking the question some day. Do you know where Lady Annesley put the ring?"

She sprang up. She opened the desk, and gave the parcel to him, sealed as Lady Annesley had left it. He slipped it into his waistcoat pocket, went down to his brougham, and drove off.

In less than twenty minutes he was back again, and came flying up the stairs as fast as Charley Carr had flown down them.

"A pretty simpleton you made me, Maria!—giving me an empty box!"

"An empty box!" she echoed.

He took the box out of his pocket, and held it open before her.

"I told the man I had brought back the ring to exchange for the smaller one, opened the box, all gingerly, to hand it to him, and behold! there was nothing in it."

"Did you drop it in the brougham? Did you open it in the brougham?" she reiterated.

"I never touched it, after you saw me put it in my pocket, until I was in the shop.—I unsealed the paper before the shopman's eyes."

"Then where can it be?" exclaimed Maria. "Lady Annesly certainly sealed it up, and put it herself in the desk ready for you. No one went near the desk afterwards—no one came into the room, but myself."

"Lady Annesley must have sealed up an empty box, that's clear," said Sir Philip. "I have brought the other ring."

But Lady Annesly, when she entered, protested that she had not sealed up an empty box—that the ring was in it. And she related the details to Sir Philip, as they have been given above. The box, she said, was not out of her hand a minute altogether.

"Are you sure you put it *in?*—that you did not let it slip aside?" questioned Sir Philip.

"Sure!" repeated Lady Annesley, half inclined to resent the implied suggestion of carelessness. "I am quite sure. And, had the ring slipped aside, it would have gone on the table. I put it in safely, and shut it in."

"Who was in the room beside yourselves?" asked Sir Philip.

"Only Charley Carr. He was standing by me, wishing that the ring were his."

"No," cried out Mrs. Annesley, innocently; "wishing its value in money was his. The more sensible wish of the two."

A wild, sickening sensation darted to Maria Carr's brain. It was not yet a suspicion; it was a fear lest suspicion should come; nay, a foreboding that it was coming.

The suspicion did come; came immediately to all of them. In vain Sir Philip suggested that Charles must have done it in a joke, to put Lady Annesley in a fright, for he was as full of tricks as a monkey—that he would bring it back with him in the evening. That he had taken the ring from the box there was no doubt whatever; and Lady Annesley, in her anger, refused to be soothed.

She attacked Charles the moment he made his appearance. "Where's the keeper?"—she sternly demanded, without circumlocution.

"What keeper?" returned Charles.

"The brilliant keeper, that you made off with to-day."

"I don't know what you mean, Aunt."

Lady Annesley flew into a rage. "I left the box close to your hands when I turned to pick up the cushion for Mrs. Annesley.—"How dared you take the ring out?"

"Let me see whether I have got it about me," retorted Charley, in a careless, indifferent, provoking manner, as he made a show of feeling in all his pockets. "Oh—I must have left it in my regimentals."

Lady Annesley nearly boiled over. Words led to words. Charles grew angry in his turn; and at length she gave a hint that he must have *stolen* the ring. He declared he had not touched the box or ring; that he had turned from the table when Lady Annesley did, and remained talking to Maria while the cushion was being picked up; and he swore to this with sundry unorthodox words, forgetting that he was not in quarters but in a lady's drawing-room.

"If nobody takes his part, I will!" hotly cried Georgina Livingston, after Charles had dashed away from the house, promising that he'd never enter it again; and her countenance was distressed, and her cheeks were scarlet, as she said it. "Steal a ring! You may just as well accuse me, Lady Annesley, as accuse him; I should be the more likely of the two to do it."

"Do, pray, recollect yourself, Georgina!" remonstrated my lady. "Is this avowal seemly for a young girl?"

"I don't care whether it's seemly or unseemly," responded Miss Georgina, dashing away some tears. "You ought to be ashamed of yourselves, all of you! Because Charley happens not to be made of money, you turn against him, and think he'd *take* it. I'll let him know that *I* don't."

Hot words, hotly spoken. A few days, and even Georgina was obliged to judge him less leniently. Sir Philip chose quietly to investigate the suspicion; and he ascertained that Charles had, the very evening subsequent to the loss of the ring, and the following day, paid sundry small debts, for which he had been long dunned. Twenty pounds, at least, of these payments were traced, and then Sir Philip dropped the search. Why pursue it? It was all too clear, for Charles had no resources of his own to draw upon.

But here Maria stepped in to his defense. She protested with earnestness, with tears, that she had furnished him herself with twenty pounds; that she had given it to him in that moment when they were whispering together. She knew Charley's wants, she said, and had been saving this money up for him. Lady Annesley flatly contradicted Maria. It did not stand to reason, she contended, that Mria, with her poor means could save up twenty pounds, or even ten. The thing was almost against possibility; and Maria fell under nearly as great a ban as her brother, for attempting to screen him by falsehood. There were moments when, in her own sick heart, Maria did believe him to be guilty. Such things have been heard of in the world—done in the recklessness of necessity.

* * * * * * *

A twelvemonth passed away: and a twelve month brings changes. Georgina Livingston was of age now, and at liberty to choose her own residence. She was alone in the drawing room one April evening. Mrs. Annesley was much confined to her chamber, and Lady Annesley had gone up to her.—Sir Philip came in.

"Alone, Georgina! Why! what is the matter?—crying?"

"Oh, Lady Annesley set me on!" was the young lady's pettish rejoinder, as she brushed the tears away. "She was angry with me for 'moping,' as she called it; and I told her I would not stay here to be grumbled at."

"Why do you mope?" he asked.

"Because I choose," was the wilful retort. "I *can* leave now if I like, you know, Philip."

"If you like—yes," assented Sir Philip. "Where should you go?"

"I don't know, and I don't much care," dreamily responded Georgina.

"Would you like to remain in the house for good?" resumed Sir Philip, after a pause. "I was thinking of asking you to do so."

A faint blush rose to her face, but she showed no other emotion; and his tone, considering the momentous words, was wonderfully calm. Perhaps both had been conscious for some little time that these words would be spoken. Sir Philip bent his head towards her.

"The world has reproached me with not marrying. Help me, Georgina, to put the reproach away! There is no one I would ask to be my wife but you."

"Look here, Philip!" she exclaimed, pushing back her hair, and turning her face, full of its own eager excitement, towards him—excitement not caused by him. "I'll speak out the truth to you; I could not to every one; but you are good, and true, and noble. Were I to say to you, 'Yes,' and let you take me believing that I loved you, I should just be acting a lie. I love some one else; I am trying to forget him with my whole heart and might—but I did love him."

"Who was this?"

"Charles Carr."

Sir Philip's blue eyes flashed with a peculiar light, and he looked into the fire—not at Georgina.

"That love ought to end," he said. "It can bring you no good."

"Don't I tell you that it has ended—that I am putting it from me as fast as ever I can? But the remembrance cannot go from me all at once. I did love him; and I believe it was your generosity, in hushing up his dreadful disgrace, instead of proclaiming it and prosecuting him, that first made me like you more than common."

"You acknowledge then that you do like me?" smiled Sir Philip.

"Yes—very much."

"Well enough to take me for better and for worse?"

"Yes; if, after this confession you would still wish it."

"I do," he answered, drawing her to him, and taking his first kiss from her lips.—Georgina flew to her room, and there burst into a flood of tears.

Lady Annesley was strangely elated at the news. She had hoped for it in her inmost heart—long and long.

"You have done well, Philip," she said to her step-son.

"I shall escape the worrying about not getting married, at any rate," responded Sir Philip.

"Philip"—lowering her voice confidentially—"do you know I frightened myself to death, at one time, lest you should marry Maria. I fancied you were growing attached to her; and people would have said I set it on."

The red color flashed into Sir Philip's face. "I should have married her, but for that affair of the diamond keeper."

Lady Annesley looked blank. "Did you like her so much as that?"

"Like her!" he echoed with emotion—"I loved her. I am not sure but I love her still. Why, Lady Annesley, I *all but* asked her to be my wife the very afternoon that wretched boy did the mischief."

"I'm sure I am very glad he did do it, if it prevented that," retorted my lady.

"I might have got over that—his fault; but I could not get over Maria's. To uphold him in his deceit—to invent a falsehood to screen him—how could I make her my wife?"

"Whatever is there about Maria to like?" fretfully interrupted Lady Annesley.

She's more *likeable* than any one else in this world, to my thinking——"

"Hush, Philip!"

The news of the engagement went forth to the house. Maria had still remained in it making herself useful, as she had done before, especially to Mrs. Annesley, for she had no other home. Better she had quitted it—to see Sir Philip every day was not the way to cure her love for him.

"I hope you will be happy, Sir Philip, I wish you every happiness," she stammered, believing it was incumbent on her to say something to him to that effect. But Sir Philip observed that her face turned ghastly with emotion as she spoke.

"Thank you; I hope we shall be," he coldly replied; and, since that unhappy episode, he had never spoken to her *but* coldly.—"Georgina Livingston possesses one great essential towards making herself and others happy—truth."

The preparation for the wedding went briskly on. Lady Annesley would first remove into another residence. No change had been made since Sir Robert's death, but Sir Philip must have his house to himself now. One evening Sir Philip was spending an hour with Dr. Scott. A navy surgeon was also there—Mr. Blake, once their chum at St. Bartholomew's; and Georgina was sitting up stairs with Mary Scott and her baby.

"Is smoking allowed here?" asked the surgeon, glancing at the elegant sofa on which he sat, where was displayed that beautiful cushion painted by Maria Carr.—"I'm half dead without my pipe."

Receiving assent he lighted it, and then walked across the room to Sir Philip and the doctor, who stood at the window. There was some disturbance in the street, and they all three remained there chatting and looking out.

Suddenly a burst of light up in the twilight of the room, and they wheeled round in consternation. A blaze was ascending from the velvet cushion. They caught up the hearth-rug and succeeded in putting out the fire. Georgina Livingston, hearing the confusion, came in with a white face.

In lighting his pipe, Mr. Blake must have suffered a spark to fall upon the cushion.—There it had smouldered, penetrating at length to the stuffing, which then blazed up. You may remember that it consisted of paper.

"Oh, that lovely cushion!" lamented Georgina.

"What's this?" uttered Dr. Scoot, picking up something bright and glistening from the ashes. "If I don't believe it's a ring!"

A ring it was. The lost, the beautiful, the brilliant keeper. The eyes of Sir Philip and Georgina met.

Maria was that same evening sitting alone—she and her breaking heart. It had felt breaking ever since that cloud fell upon it. She heard Sir Philip come home—and she began gathering her work together.

Don't run away, Maria; I have something to tell you."

She looked at him in wonderment. His voice wore the same loving tone as in days gone by; a tone long past, for her.

"Lend me your hand, Maria!" And, without waiting for assent, he took it in his, the left hand, and slipped upon the third finger, as he had done once before, the diamond keeper. "Do you recognize it?"

"It is Mrs. Scott's" replied Maria. Why have you brought it here, Sir Philip?"

"It is not Mrs. Scott's; it is larger than hers. Do not remove it, Maria. It shall be your own keeper, if you will let me add the wedding-ring.

Confused, bewildered, wondering what it meant, wondering at the strangely loving expression that gleamed on her from his dark blue eyes, she burst into tears. Was he saying this to mock her?

No! not to mock her! No! Sir Philip wound his arms round her as he told the tale; he drew her face to his breast, his eyelashes glistening in the intensity of his emotion. "I can never let you go again, my darling! I do not ask your forgiveness, I know that you will give it me unasked, for you and I alike have been miserable."

"Charley innocent—been innocent all this while?" she gasped.

"He has, in good truth! We must try and make it up to him. I——"

"Oh, Philip!" she interrupted, with streaming eyes, "you will believe me now! I did give him the twenty pounds—I did, indeed! I had saved in so many trifles—I had made old gowns look like new ones—all for him. *You* should not have doubted me, if the rest did."

"My whole life shall atone to you, Maria," he softly whispered. "Georgina——"

She broke from him, her cheeks flushing crimson. In the moment's bewilderment she had entirely forgotten his engagement to Georgina. He laughed merrily, his eyes dancing, and drew her back again.

"Never fear that I am about to turn Mormon and marry you both! Georgina has given me up, Maria. In the excitement caused by the discovery she spoke her mind out to me, that she did not like me, with all her 'trying' half as well as she did Charley Carr, and that none but Charley should be her husband. Scott has gone to tell Charles the news, and bring him up. If——"

"What on earth is this?" ejaculated Lady Annesley, as she came in and stood like one petrified.

"It's this'" replied Sir Philip, holding out Maria's hand, on which shown the brilliant keeper. "This mischief making ring has turned up again. When you held it that day over the open box, and Mrs. Annesley called you out, there can be no doubt that you, in the hurry, unconsciously slipped it on your finger, instead of into the box, and lost it off your finger again immediately amidst the paper stuffing. The cushion has just given up its prey."

Lady Annesley sank upon the first seat, with a very crest-fallen expression. "I never heard of such a thing!" she stammered. "*My* finger! Whatever will be the consequence? Poor Charley!"

"The consequence, I expect, will be, that you will have two weddings instead of one," laughed Sir Philip. "Georgina has proclaimed *her* intentions, and I don't suppose Charley will bear malice. I think I ought to have given the ring to him as a memento, instead of to Maria."

"To Maria!" irascibly returned Lady Annesley, not precisely understanding, but not feeling comfortable. "What in the world need is there to give it to her, Sir Philip?"

"Great need," he replied, his tone becoming serious. "But it is given with a condition attached to it—that I add one of plain gold. Ah, Lady Annesley! we cannot be false to ourselves, try as we will. Maria has remained my best and dearest love up to this hour, cajole and deceive my heart as I would. And now, I trust, she will remain so, as long as time shall last!"

THE POONANGS—A NATION WITH TAILS.—In the Dutch Byblad for September, 1860, occurs a description of the different nations inhabiting Borneo, with a notice respecting the tribe of the Poonangs, which, on account of the singular peculiarity to which the author refers, I think too remarkable for oblivion. The article is inserted in a serious periodical, and I have no reason whatever to doubt of its veracity. It relates as follows: "The Poonangs are very shy, and reside in the most interior part of Borneo. And no wonder they are rarely met with, for as soon as they are frightened by the appearance of something out of the way, they hide behind the trees, and kill every being that come under bear of their blow pipe.—They have a most ugly look." In stature and color they are much the same as the Bassaps, but their forehead is more indented, their face more prominent, and their mouth exceedingly wide. They speak a language which had no affinity at all with the tongues used by the other tribes, and only consists of monosyllabic sounds. But the most remarkable feature of all is, that they have tails like the animals, and which are longer in one individual than the other, whilst those of the females are very short and of a softer kind than with the males. The common size of the appendage is between three and five inches. On the whole, however, it is hard, stiff and nearly immovable, which makes sitting an impossibility. To remedy this defect, or rather this exuberance, the Poonangs always take with them a wooden block with a hole, and use it as a chair, after first having carefully put their tail in the perforation. It is said this nation is spread all over the inland regions of the isle, though I heard the tribe mentioned under another name in the Kootee state. The aborigines of the several dominions, all relate the same tale about the Poonangs, and last year the subjects of the Sultan of Goonang-Taboor had the good luck to catch three individuals of the race. Mr. Van Hontrop, who just then was in the Borneo province, has seen and manipulated them; and, after accurate investigation, he came to the result that their tail was neither a sham nor a diseased excrescence. To persuade me that gentleman brought me in contact with several eye-witnesses, who all testified the same.—And at Macassar, where the existence of these tailed natives had been long held for a fable, Mr. Van Hontrop did all he could to prove the truth of his relation. He even promised the Sultan his services to exert himself as much as possible to catch some Poonangs, and to have them transported, dead or alive, to Macassar, from whence they then could be taken to Holland and examined by the "Royal Academy of Sciences."

Gorrillas the Poonangs are not, for this species of monkey inhabits Africa and is tailless.

ASBRAN SENNEP.

Zeyst, near Utrecht, Sept. 24 1860.—*Notes and Queries.*

THE NEW CONNECTICUT NUTMEGS.—A good anecdote is told of one of the Connecticut boys. While in conversation with a rebel, after the capture of Fort Pulaski, the latter said, "At least, with all our faults, we have never made wooden nutmegs." The Yankee, a very demure-looking specimen, innocently replied, "We do not make them of wood any longer," and pointing to one of the big projectiles lying near, which had breached the fort, added quietly, "we make them now of iron." Secesh subsided.

☞ The rebel leaders have evidently been badly raised. They may have to be raised over again—or rather hoisted.