

MASTER RICHARD.

I may say that I was brought up in the family, for it is now high on to thirty years since I came into it, and I was then a lusty youth of almost 20. It almost makes me tremble when I think of it to find that in a few months I shall be half a century old. Well, during those thirty years I've seen and known some startling things in the family, but nothing more so than what I'm about to tell.

Of course I use no real names, and I shall call my master Richard, though that was not at all his real name any more than that of the family was Stratton, which I shall call that. Master Richard Stratton's father was a very practical man, who had come from England as a boy, married a New York lady and made a large fortune as a merchant. He had but one child, a son, Master Richard, and of him he made an idol, especially after the death of his wife, who departed this life, beloved by all, when Master Richard was a year old.

I have said that Mr. Stratton was a very practical man, and he showed it when he employed me, a stout and intelligent lad of 20, freshly arrived from a rural part of England, as a care-taker of Master Richard, then a handsome boy of 8 years old. French bones, fresh from Ireland, was not then in fashion, and it pleased Mr. and Mrs. Stratton to intrust Master Richard to me rather than to some half-witted nursemaid, and I am confident that they never regretted it.

How fond I became of that boy, and how well he deserved all the care and devotion I lavished on him! I taught him to ride, to jump and to drive, and that I might teach them again to Master Richard, I learned to box and the use of the sword. I really felt as if that boy belonged to me, and I do believe that it was on my account that he should not be separated from me that his father employed a tutor and had Master Richard educated at home instead of sending him away to school, and farther than that, when it came to college years he sent him to Columbia so that I had daily care of him, instead of to Harvard, which I knew was his first choice.

All these years passed away very rapidly, and I may say very happily, and Master Richard always treated me with the highest consideration, never allowing me to feel, for an instant, my inferiority, but, on the contrary, always placing before me his desire that I should uphold his and my own pride by acting as if I was a gentleman and the equal of any one, as long as I was honest and behaved myself. I was his own man and I felt it an honor. Before strangers he always called me Mr. Brown, but when alone he would call me Bob, and sometimes Bob, which latter cognomen I liked much the best.

But now comes the first opening of what I call the dark era. Master Richard graduated with high honors, and had chosen the law for his profession, since it seems that in this country every man, no matter what his wealth or tastes, must be something, and he began to study for it. Then it was that Master Richard fell in love. I knew it before his father did, and was the medium of correspondence, for the boy made a confidant of me in everything, and I did not hesitate in doing anything to forward it, feeling that the father must approve of the lady.

Miss Allie Sylvester was simply beautiful. She was of unimpeachable family, and for her age, which was only 19, was one of the pronounced belles of society. I knew that Master Richard was engaged to her, and he told me when he made his father acquainted with the fact, and soon afterward I found that it was whispered freely about. At first it was easy to be seen that Mr. Stratton was pleased with the match, though he hinted as much to me as to say that he thought his son too young to marry. Then, after the affair began to be well known, it was evident that there was some cloud lowering between father and son.

One day when Master Richard was out Mr. Stratton sent for me to come into the library and put me through the severest line of questioning I ever underwent in my life, and it was all about Miss Sylvester, and much of it, as I then thought, of a very curious kind, bearing, as it did, on my impressions of the lady's personal looks and conduct. I answered him as best I could, but he did not seem satisfied, and afterwards when I thought the matter over I got suspicion as to what he was driving at, and remembered that several times when I had been ordered to deliver a letter or message, personally to her, she had acted in a way that I thought a little strange, but as I attributed it to her being in love—though I was never that way myself—I thought nothing of it. Mr. Stratton gave me no orders to keep the interview with him secret, and so I told it to Master Richard who was at first very angry, but afterward laughed at it, though he made no explanation. A week later Master Richard came in very much excited and angry, and said to me: "Bob, you've seen anything about Miss Sylvester when you have been there for me, that looked as though she had been using stimulants, either wine or opium?"

The question shocked me, and I was obliged to confess to him that I had noticed a singular levity in Miss Sylvester at times, but that I had never thought of attributing it to that cause until after his father had questioned me, and that I was not prepared now to pronounce it so. Then he said, the anger flashing out of his eyes: "Do you know that Dr. Wilsey, that old scoundrel, has dared to presume, because he has been our family doctor for 30 years, to come between my father and myself by telling him that Miss Sylvester is an irremediable victim to stimulants, especially opium?"

"How did he know it, Master Richard?" I asked.

"He says he has known it for several years, and that he has had her several times under his treatment for it. It's a lie, but my father believed it, and even if it were true I'd marry her and trust to love afterward to cure her of the habit, if she had it."

I could not help approving this, though my heart misgave me, because I knew that Master Richard's whole life was absorbed in his love, and that without her that life would be a waste to him. Two or three times after this I saw that my boy was excited and almost wild with

suppressed anger, but he did not speak until one evening some weeks after the last conversation, when he said to me: "Bob, I am going to put a stop to this infamous slander. I have ordered a carriage to be here at 8 o'clock, and in the meantime you must pack my trunks and hold yourself ready to go with me. I shall marry Miss Sylvester to-night, and to-morrow I shall depart for Europe. I have written to my father, and he can forgive me or not as he pleases, but I'm not afraid of the final result."

I had nothing to do but to obey orders, and at 8 o'clock, when the carriage came, we were ready. Mr. Stratton was out—he generally was at that hour—at his club, and Master Richard laid the letter for him on the library table, and we drove away to a hotel, where he saw his trunks deposited in elegant rooms which he was as careful in selecting as though he and his bride were to inhabit them forever, instead of for a single day.

Then we drove to Miss Sylvester's residence. Her only parent was her mother, a scheming, fashionable woman, who, of course, favored the match, but whom Master Richard did not like, and had several times said to me that when he was married he intended to keep his wife as much away from her mother as possible. The two ladies were expecting us and were prepared. In ten minutes we were all on our way to the clergyman's. Miss Sylvester, her mother, Master Richard, and the bridesmaid, Nannie, a Swiss girl, very pretty, but, I must say, I did not like her, though I had seen her without vanity that she had made plenty of advances to me. I was on the box with the driver.

How supremely beautiful did Miss Sylvester appear that evening in her plain traveling dress, as she stood up before the minister to be made Mrs. Richard Stratton. It was all over in a few minutes, and then she was a wife. Her mother tried to cry a little, but it was a failure, as was also Nannie's attempt. It was I that ought to have cried, and I would have had I been able to see a little into the future.

The marriage over, we drove back to the bride's mother's house, where we left that lady and took on board Mrs. Richard Stratton's trunks and returned to the hotel. There was no shadow upon that marriage, and it seemed as though they were as happy a couple as could be found anywhere; for though Master Richard had married against his father's consent he had not to depend on Mr. Stratton for money. He had a very fine income of his own, left him perfectly uncontrolled by his mother, and the bride also had property of her own, left by her father. Besides that, I had savings of about 600 pounds sterling, which I drew from bank and took with me in case of emergency.

"I gave the governor a chance to come and see me or send for me this morning," Bob, said Master Richard, when we got on board the steamer for Southampton, "but he's mad and won't come. Well, I can't help it," and Master Richard laughed lightly.

We had a delightful trip, and I am sure nothing could have been so absurd as any suspicion that the story Dr. Wilsey told had any truth in it. To be sure she was lively, but not any more so than any young bride ought to be who has a young, handsome and rich husband whom she loves and who is devoted to her. It was not until we had arrived in London and been there two weeks, that I saw anything that looked wrong, and then it was one day when Master Richard had gone out to dine with some American friends, and sent me back—I always went everywhere with him—to get some letters that he wanted.

I found Mrs. Richard, whom he had left an hour before perfectly right, under an influence, either of morphine or wine, that was plainly perceptible. Nannie was frightened and began to beg me not to tell Master Richard, and to declare that she could not help it. I promised to say nothing and to detain Master Richard as long as I could, and charged her to do all she could to make her mistress sober. But why dwell on this terrible episode in my life? We went to Paris, to Madrid, to Rome, to Naples, to Vienna, to Berlin, and then back to Paris to stay. Every day and every place made it more apparent that Dr. Wilsey had been right, and that all Master Richard could do was useless. Get the terrible drug or stimulant she would in some way. I ventured one day to suggest to Master Richard that he should place her in some asylum, but I never even hinted at it again, for his response was a dreadful rebuke. Death, he said, rather than that. Then I spoke plainly about Nannie as pandering to her mistress's appetite and suggesting her discharge, but this I saw was folly. It would be out of the frying-pan into the fire.

I saw its terrible effect on my mistress, but more on Master Richard. He gave up all society, and watched her like a child. He was as nervous and nervous as I longer like himself. Then came a new phase of the terror. Denied the deadly poison at home, she, with the cunning of a marmoset, as she was, would steal away from her watchers and remain away, at first, for hours, and then for all day, then all night, and be brought home by the police, drugged and without reason. Then, at last, when Master Richard had almost concluded to place her in an asylum, with what seemed to be an instinct of the intention, she disappeared altogether, and every effort of the police and detectives failed to obtain any trace of her, notwithstanding the large reward.

Master Richard was crazed, and so was I almost. The police coolly declared that she would never be seen again alive; that the strongest probability was that the Seine would eventually give her up. The only theory to combat this was that Mrs. Richard had worn a fortune in diamonds when she went away, something she had never done before, and which seemed to show that she had prepared herself to stay away.

A month elapsed, and one morning Master Richard was notified that the body of his wife was at the morgue. We went there instantly, and, in spite of the fact that the body had been so long in the water, identified it. She was dressed in plain black, trimmed with lace, when she went away, but the lace was gone; she was shoeless and bonnetless and had not a shred

of jewelry; even her rings were gone, and her earrings had been torn from her ears. The police said that it was a case of robbery, perhaps murder, and the poor, mutilated, disfigured body found its resting place in Pere La Chaise. Nannie, with more money than she had ever possessed before in her life, was sent to her Swiss home, and Master Richard and I went our steps toward New York.

I have forgotten to say that all the trouble between Master Richard and his father had been made up. The old man could not bear the absence of his son, and was pleading for Master Richard to bring his wife home as soon as he could, not knowing anything about why Master Richard could not, nor yet, when he was notified of the death, of the cause of it.

The next three years of our lives were quiet. Mrs. Richard had made a will immediately after her marriage, bequeathing all her property to Master Richard, but he would have none of it. He made it all over to her mother, and after that was consummated, refused to see Mrs. Sylvester again.

After those three years Master Richard's father began to fret. He wanted to see his son married again, and he had picked out a wife for him. The lady was a great beauty and had always been a great pet of the old man, as she had been of Master Richard before he fell in love with Miss Sylvester, and I always used to think she really loved him. To make a long story short, they were married, and a more quiet, happy couple I never saw. A year elapsed and an interesting event was about to happen. The doctor was in the house, not Wilsey, and Master Richard expected every moment to become a father.

Almost at this critical moment there came a violent ring at the street doorbell and it was announced to me that a woman demanded to see Master Richard, and though she had been told she could not, had insisted on forcing her way in, and was then coming through the hall. I was in the library, and went out to meet this woman. The gas was turned low, but it had been darkness itself I would have known her. Good heaven! it was Mrs. Richard risen from the dead, old, haggard, bleared and ragged. She was almost at the library door when I met her, and heard her gasp out, "Brown, where's your master?"

Hardly had she uttered the words when she staggered and fell, rolling over on her back. I was so frightened that I was not only speechless, but paralyzed. The footman came up, and the terror of the situation recalled me to myself. I ordered him to assist me, and between us we raised the woman, and carried her into the library, laying her upon the sofa. Then I told the footman to go up to the doctor, and whisper to him to come down stairs, but not to let Mr. Richard know anything about it, but in less than five minutes, before the doctor got down, I saw that the woman was dead, and so the doctor pronounced her, in a cold, professional way, he asked me if I knew the woman. I said I did not. Did my master? I said I thought not.

He sat down to the table, wrote a certificate that the woman had died of heart disease, turned to the footman who stood by horror-stricken, gave him the address of an undertaker not far away and his message, telling the man to use his name, and went back to his charge upstairs, following my injunction not to say anything to Master Richard. In half an hour the undertaker's wagon was at the door, and a few minutes later, as the living was ushered into the world upon one floor, the coffined dead was carried out from the floor below.

The next morning I told Master Richard the story of the night before, and together we went to the undertaker's and looked upon the dead woman. There could be no doubt about the identification this time, though there was nothing about her to recognize but a single ring, the wedding ring, and the wreck of her great beauty. Where she had been in all those four years, how she had found her way back and who the woman was that sleeps in Pere La Chaise will remain a sealed book forever.

The Eucalyptus in Australia.
[Melbourne Cor. Courier-Journal.]
Australia has a vegetation that is peculiar and emphatically its own. Belonging to the myrtle family they form a distinct class of trees, with distinctive features peculiar to no other part of the globe. These are known here as the gum tree, and to botanists as the eucalyptus. There are about 150 distinct species, which form four-fifths of the vegetation of the country. Wherever you travel you come across the eucalyptus. On the arid plains are found the dwarf species, and on the mountain slopes and undulating lands they form gigantic forests. They shed their bark annually, but not the leaves, which are evergreen and very abundant.

The leaf has a peculiar action of turning one or the other side constantly to the sun, and while this affords poor shade, an operation of absorption and exhalation is constantly going on that is fatal to malaria. The leaves are full of oil cells, 100 pounds of them yielding from twenty to sixty ounces of a volatile oil. This oil has valuable medicinal qualities, and parties here in Victoria, who have a patent process for extracting the same, have the most valuable "oil well" in the world.

The different varieties of the eucalyptus furnish the commercial timber of the colony. The blue gum is a hard, light-colored timber of greater strength and tenacity than either the English oak or the Indian teak, and is chiefly used in heavy building and for piers and bridges. The red gum is also hard wood, with short-curved grain, and is used for ship-building, railway sleepers and wagon wheels, and is especially valuable for salt-water piers, as it contains a peculiar acid that resists the attacks of the sea worm.

Equal to the Occasion.
[Paris Paper.]
Scene in the Chinese war:
Captain of ironclad to artilleryman—Do you see that Chinese general there, about three miles off? Let him have one of those eight-inch shells in the eye.
Artilleryman, equal to the situation—Aye, aye, sir. Which eye, your honor?
Victor Hugo: Youth, with gentleness, has upon old men the effect of sunshine without wind.

A Tanker in Rubber.
[New York Sun.]
In front of a small, dingy basement in Brooklyn is a little board sign which reads: "Rubber repaired." After entering the shop-door at the foot of a long, steep flight of steps a reporter found himself in a dark cellar in which were piled up on every hand rubber goods, patent fire-escapes, models of elevators, and a thousand and one things that have nothing to do with rubber at all. Peering about he saw a little old man, who proved to be the proprietor. "Can I mend it?" he remarked, smiling, as he took the torn rubber articulation of a foot-ball which the visitor handed him. "Of course I can, and make it stronger than when it was new. To put a patch on the inside I use a thin rubber cloth, on one side of which I put a coat of cement, and then carefully place it inside the cushion and smooth the torn edges of the rubber over it. When this is done I blow up the cushion, and the air serves as an excellent brace to keep the patch in place. It is then an easy matter to put a patch on the outside, and the thing is done. I can mend anything that is made of rubber."

As the rubber-mender was talking an Italian ragpicker entered with several pairs of old rubber overshoes. He threw them down with the question, "How much?" "Twenty-five cents," said the ragkeeper. This price the Italian gladly accepted. "That is another branch of my business," said the old man. "I buy all the old rubbers the Italians bring here, and turn them into almost new ones. All of these shoes, he said, pointing to long lines of them around the room, "were picked up out of ash-barrels by Italians and brought here. I began this business about a year and a half ago, and I find that no one in a thousand knows that rubber can be repaired. In addition to fixing rubbers I can mend fine leather shoes in this way so that the patch cannot be seen three feet away, and I often put rubber soles and heels on leather boots and shoes."

The "shakemakers" of the Sierras.
[San Francisco Examiner.]
Living just above the foothills and in the midst of the virgin pine forests of the Sierras are a class of industrious people little known to the world. They live an isolated, happy life far from the busy world, of which they know little and care less. These are the "shakemakers." They exist usually in couples, and make their home for the time being where the finest sugar pine grows, and where the products of their labors can be conveniently hauled away. They are jolly, happy lot, these "shakemakers" of the Sierras. They work at will, and by way of recreation divide their leisure time between deer and bear hunting and the nearest country store.

The mode of making "shakes" or clapboards is simple. The tree felled is sawed into suitable lengths, and then split into thin boards or "shakes" by means of a froe and a mallet. The shakes sell here in the mountains at \$4 to \$4.50 per 1,000, and are always in demand. A shakemaker's camp is one of the most picturesque scenes to be found on the coast, and the voluntary recluses who spend year after year in these mountain solitudes are the jolliest lot of backslaps on earth. A majority of this almost unknown race of men are old miners and young men from the foothill farms. Wild, brave, undaunted and kind-hearted, they include within their numbers hundreds of the best frontiersmen and the noblest types of manhood.

Justice Will Eventually "Rise Up."
[Elmer-Klin Club.]
Goodness and its own perfection, an de career of de wicked are liable to be cut short right in de midst of de cheapest prices for oysters known in twenty years. Villany may prosper up to a certain pint. You kin lie to a man in a horse trade; you kin open a bank and steal de deposits of widlers an' orfuns; you can secure de confidence of in-nercent men an' rob em; you kin be lected to jills an' rob de taxpayers an' walk aroun' with your hat on your ear, an' eben de business of grave-robbin' kin be clothed wid a certain respectability. But, doan' go beyond a settled pint. While de law may bar wid your villany, outraged Justice will rise right up an' flop her wings an' scream for vengeance.

Doan' be too good, but, also, doan' reckon on makin' wickedness take you free de world on a smooth track. You may swim along for awhile an' feel yourself de biggest peanut on de stand, but in de midst of your hilarity along comes a sighthone an' upsets yer shanty.

A Curious Concession.
[Chicago Tribune.]
Two English dukes hold their dukedoms by a curious concession. The dukes of Wellington and Marlborough—descendants of England's two greatest military heroes—are each required to present to the sovereign a small silk flag of an original color and design, and handsomely embroidered with some new sentiment expressed emblematically, falling which their dukedoms are forfeited. The flags are kept on either side of the great window in the armory of Windsor castle, and are only removed to be replaced by the succeeding year's emblems. As may be imagined, neither duke has ever failed to be on hand in season with his flag.

Cremation in Germany.
[Foreign Letter.]
Cremation continues to win favor in Germany. Thus the 200th case has just been registered at Coburg, where fifty-four people have been cremated this year alone. These 200 cremations have occurred since 1878, when the furnace was first erected in Coburg, and the cases include sixty-two inhabitants of the duchy and 138 foreigners—128 men, sixty-nine women and five children.

Novel Scarf-Pin.
[Chicago Times.]
The holiday market is to be stocked with a novelty in the way of a low-priced electric lamp to be worn as a scarf-pin? The lamp is connected by a wire to a small pocket battery. A simple contrivance serves to turn on the electric current and produce a light of one candle power.

Truth: The man who wishes to continue believing in his friends should never put them to the proof.

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