

A ROMANTIC SKETCH.

The following story I had direct from a son of the clergyman who performed the marriage ceremony, and who came from England to this country, where he is now in good business.

"On the evening of a dark and lowry day in late autumn, a close carriage was driven to the door of an inn in a manufacturing town of Derbyshire, from which a female alighted, closely cloaked and veiled. She seemed to know that the landlord was a kind-hearted man, and one to be trusted. She called him aside, and said, without raising her veil, but in a voice of rare sweetness, and evidently of a young person:

"I must trust you, good sir, with more, perhaps than life. I wish you to serve me without asking a question. I can give you my word, in the outset, that no harm can come to you on my account in any legal way. I must be married. I must be a wife within this hour; and you must find me a husband. I only ask that you will find a man who can legally take a wife; a man not a rascal, and a man who will take three hundred pounds and give his solemn pledge never to seek me, nor to speak to me after the final word of the marriage ceremony shall have been pronounced. If you can find such a man, and bring him hither, and then bring a willing clergyman, you will do me a great favor."

"But the licence, madam?"

"I am provided. I have a special licence waiting only the name of the bridegroom."

It took the host some little time to make up his mind that the lady was in earnest, and that all else was right so far as the law was concerned. When he was satisfied upon these points he nodded and pleasantly smiled.

Just the man required was in the employ. He went out into the stable where he found Mark Conroy at work over a favorite horse. Mark was a splendid specimen of physician and mental manhood. Nearly six feet tall perfectly proportioned, with features regular and handsome, an eyes like a well of light, and a clustering mass of nutbrown curls setting off his shapely head, he was such a man as might win the love and esteem of any woman; and the only reason why he had not married or courted, only one of the many damsels who sought to attract him, was that his love for his beautiful horses engrossed his whole heart.

Mark heard the landlord's story, and went with him into the private apartment where the lady was, determined to have request from her own lips; and she made it, though, when she had seen him, standing so strong and so proud before her, she faltered considerably. But she got through with it, claiming from him the pledge before mentioned. While she spoke he tried by every means in his power to gain a glimpse of her face, but in vain. Yet he did not miss her voice. It was very sweet to his ear. He loved music, and he did not think he should ever forget the rich, pure tones of that voice. It was to him an index to her character. Never a coarse woman with such breathing of music.

"My dear lady," he said, with a respectful inclination of the head, "I will accept the money which you offer, because I think I can make a good use of it. Ordinarily I would not listen for a moment, but now three hundred pounds may be the weight in the balance that shall make my whole future; and added to this I may serve you. Not for a thousand times three hundred pounds would I lend myself to a plot that could work harm to yourself."

"It will save me, sir; oh, it will save me!"

"Then I am ready."

"And—I have your promise—"

"I have given my word, it was never yet broken, and I do not think that to your harm I shall now make my first false step."

Somehow the lady seemed to be more shy than she had been at first, and once or twice she moved away from Mark, as though she was afraid of him, and craved nearer to the landlord.

Near at hand lived an accommodating rector. He came in fully understanding the work he was to do, and after a few whispered words with the lady he signified his readiness to proceed. The name of Mark Conroy

was filled into the license, after which the work was quickly done.

"Must I sign the register?" the newly made wife asked, uneasily.

The clergyman insisted upon it. The law required it.

Mark signed his name in a bold, strong round hand. Then the lady took the pen, and tremblingly wrote a name, saying:

"That is not the name by which I am known, but I have a sacred right to it."

She had written "Cordelia Temple."

She gave to the rector five pounds—to the host five more: and then she counted out six crisp new fifty-pound notes to her husband. Mark took them and put them into his pocket, and then he drew from his purse a half sovereign of gold, and laying it upon the post of a big oaken chair he placed the edge of his pocket-knife upon it, and with a single blow of a billet of wood he cut it into two equal parts, one of which he handed to his wife.

"Lady," he said, "I need not tell you that this, to me, is, and must ever be while I live, a serious matter. Do not tremble. You have my word. But will you not take this bit of gold and keep it in remembrance of the man whose name you can wear when you will, and who must henceforth be true to you?"

She caught the peice of gold with a spasmodic clutch, and turned away, as though to hide an emotion which she did not care to have witnessed.

One step and Mark Conroy was by her side. He took her hand, and raised it to his lips.

"I do this reverently," he said, almost in a whisper. "And now lady" he added, lifting his head proudly, and stepping back, "know that I shall be true to the vows this night taken upon myself. If, in the time to come, Mark Conroy can in any way serve you, you may command him without fear. He will never intrude, and he will never take advantage of any service he may happily render. Adieu! May God and the good angels watch over you, and bless you ever!"

And with this he turned away, and was gone. The lady could not have spoken if she would.

"I suppose," said the landlord, as the lady was ready to depart, "that you would have this kept a profound secret?"

"No! no!" she cried vehemently. "If men should be upon my track—if they should trace me to this place—tell them that I am married. Tell them exactly what you have seen, but for his sake—my—my—husband—do not give his name. Will you promise this?"

The good Bonifac promised, and shortly afterwards the lady's carriage was whirling rapidly away into the gloom, toward Cheshire.

The clock in the tower of the old stone church was striking the hour of nine as the strange woman drove away from the Derbyshire inn. Two hours later—as the same bell hammer was pealing forth the eleventh hour—another carriage was driven rapidly up, from which alighted two gentlemen—one an elderly man, with a hard, hawk-like face, and the other, younger, and evidently a debaucher—Mark Conroy heard the arrival, and came in to see.

The gentlemen were eager and breathless. Had anything been seen of a young lady, appearing as the old man described,

Mark contrived to whisper into the host's ear, to direct his questions.

"How old was the lady?" asked the publican.

"Nineteen," answered the old man.

"Was she handsome?"

"She had the name—the shameless vixen!—of being the handsomest girl in Staffordshire."

And then the host told his story—told it as it was, all save that he represented the husband as having gone in pursuit, not to molest the lady, but to protect her into Staffordshire, for he had determined to serve her if he could.

The younger man swore a big oath, and the elder man swore a bigger. Their plans were shattered, and they were crestfallen and chagrined.

Before they went away, the younger man discovered our hero, who had remained respectfully in the background.

"Hallo, Mark! is that yourself?"

And he advanced and extended a hand with perfect freedom of manner.

"Yes, my lord, I am stopping here just now."

"Ah, say, Mark, did you see this girl we have been talking about?"

"Why, my lord, as for seeing her, I cannot say I did; but I saw the carriage, and saw a woman get into it and whisk away."

"Well, old fellow, there went the most dainty bit of womanhood in the kingdom. Egad! I supposed I had her hard and fast. Sir John is her guardian, and had given her to me; but—an oath—"she has given us the slip. Locks and bolts and iron bars have been of no use. If she's been honestly married, Sir John's guardianship is at an end. But, say, Mark, I have a magnificent filly, which I wish you to take in hand. She promises tremendous things."

Mark said he would give the filly a trial, and shortly afterwards the gentlemen took their leave.

"Who was that?" demanded the host, as they drove away.

"That," replied Mark, "was the Earl of Bently—Dick Temple."

And they all went their ways in life as seemed to them best.

Mark Conroy from that night became a new man. He borrowed books, and read and studied, and went to French and German schools. He had said that the three hundred pounds might be the making of him, nor did he mistake. The owner of a place near to Derby—a raiser of thoroughbred stock—was glad to sell him a half interest, and in a very few years the horses from the stables of Monkton & Conroy stood at the head of the list in England.

The Earl of Bently let his favorite filly go to pay a betting debt, and Mark bought the animal for twenty guineas. Four years later the filly was known and celebrated under the name of "Light-foot," and Mark sold her to the Earl of Derby for ten pounds, and she won the money dack for her noble owner in one season.

This was but one circumstance of many. Mark Conroy had one great aim of life, and in that direction he bent every energy.

At the age of two-and-thirty he sold out all interest in his Derby property, and his funds in the hands of his bankers amounted to more than eighty thousand pounds. He had made not one mistake in all his adventures, and fortune had literally smiled upon him. And through it all—by day when business seemed to entirely engross him, and by night, in the still, thoughtful watches, one in fluence was never absent—the music of that sweet voice he had heard in the old D.royshire inn! O! what should come of it? At all events, he thought he'd him pure and true, and led him to the station of a manhood that any might covet, for it was pure, and above all else, robust in glowing glorious health.

Eight years had elapsed since the day on which Mark Conroy was married, and he had grown from four-and-twenty to two-and-thirty, when he took a notion to make a tour of the continent. He went to Paris first and thence into Germany. From city to city, seeking a pleasure he did not really find, until at length he found himself in the quaint old walled city of Ulm, on the Danube.

He was standing in the quaintly constructed hall of a quaintly constructed inn, with innumerable nooks and corners, and dim recesses, when he was attracted by the sound of a familiar voice. It was the Earl of Bently, and he with his valet, a dark visaged, powerful rascal, evidently engaged because of his physical strength and daring.

"She will be alone in her chamber an hour after dark," said the voice of the Earl. I have bought up her maid. My boat is at the old landing. I must not be seen here. Will you carry the lady to that boat?"

The valet said he would do it. He knew just how to accomplish the task. He would bear the lady to the boat and she would make no outcry.

"Once she is in my power," went on the Earl, "all else is simple. We will prove her professed marriage all a sham, and she will marry me, or—" The rest of the sentence was lost."

Conroy's heart beat hard and fast. He knew very well who was the lady alluded to.

He inquired of the landlord, how, ever, and was informed that the occupant of the suite he had designated

was an English lady, who had been with him several weeks—Lady Isabel Cordelia, of Templeton. She was a beautiful woman, but evidently unhappy.

Mark Conroy found it the suite of apartments, and did not lose sight of the entrance. About an hour after dark he saw the maid come out, and saw her speak with a man who has hiding in a recess. Presently after that this man was joined by another whom he had called by a low whistle and the two entered the chamber from which the maid came. A few moments, during which the watcher's heart beat furiously, and then came the sound of a smothered cry.

With a bound Conroy was in the chamber, where he saw a lady struggling in the grasp of two men. With a blow of his fist that might have felled an ox, he sent the valet to the floor then with a backward sweep he sent the other against the wall, and then winding his left arm around the lady he held her in safety, while with his right he drew a pistol and levelled it.

"My—!" exclaimed the valet, when he had picked himself up and looked upon the man who had knocked him down, "tis the horse tamer—Conroy!"

"And you'll find out something more than that if you do not take yourself out of this. Go tell your master that Mark Conroy knows all, and that if he is in Ulm to-morrow morning he may suffer for it!"

The two men slunk away, and then Conroy led the lady to a seat, and would have let her go, but she clung to him. He was able to speak with comparative calmness, because he had carefully prepared himself for the meeting.

"Lady, I have not forgotten my promise. I have watched over you when you knew it not. You may command me even yet."

She looked up into his face, still clinging to his strong arm, and a variety of emotions were shadowed upon her surprisingly beautiful face.

"You are Mark Conroy?"

"I am."

"Do you know who I am?"

"I do."

"Do you know that you ever saw me before?"

"I cannot say that I know, but my heart tells me that it is so,—it tells me that you have the mate to this."

And he drew from his bosom, where it had hung suspended from a silken cord about his neck, a tiny bag of chamois-skin from which he took a semi-disk of gold.

A moment she stood irresolute, and then while a rich glow suffused her cheeks mounting to her temples and brow, and imparting to the lustrous eyes a living light, she drew from her own bosom, where it had been kept in a velvet pouch, the other half of the golden half-sovereign.

Conroy could contain his great heart no longer. Grasping both the lady's hands and looking earnestly and frankly into her face, he said:

"Lady, from that hour, of the other years—that hour in the old Derbyshire inn! I have kept the faith then pledged. Your voice betrayed to me a pure and worthy woman, and I have held the sweet remembrance in love and true devotion. I dare not, knowing who and what you are, ask you to share my lot; but O!—if you—"

She put out her hand and stopped him.

"Mark Conroy, from that hour I have not lost sight of you. I know how you have lived—how you have thrived and prospered—"

"But," he cried, interrupting her, "you do not know that the one thought of yourself has been the blessed spirit of my uprising."

"But—I have hoped it," she said.

"You—have—hoped?"

"O! my husband! if you can claim me for your wife, and love me always, I will be happy!"

And so, after the years of waiting Mark Conroy found his reward; and he was not prouder or more happy than the Lady Isabel Cordelia, heiress of the vast estate of the Earl of Templeton. A distant cousin inherited the title, but the wealth was hers.

Lord Bently, when he learned the truth, not only gave up his striving and his persecution, but he descended to beg that the story of his fruitless endeavors might be told in England.

But in England, Mark Conroy and his wife lived no more. They found a pleasant home on the Rhine, where were countrymen enough to make it homelike, and where they were estimated in society for the grand qualities of head and heart that endeared them to all with whom they came in social meeting.

CONFIDENCE MAN ARRESTED.

The most notorious and successful combination of confidence men and swindlers that ever operated in Central and Northern Pennsylvania is now in a fair way to be broken up and its members lodged in the penitentiary. For five years past they have established headquarters in Harrisburg and Dauphin, the latter a little town nine miles west of Harrisburg. From these points they have, during all these years, operated with great success, swindling farmers and other confiding people out of thousands of dollars. A short time ago several of the gang were operating through the Cumberland Valley. They swindled farmer Shook near Chambersburg, out of \$1,500, and also a Mr. Gayman of near Newville, out of a large sum. They also tried their game in this borough on a Cleversburg farmer some months ago, and on several others in this vicinity. Their last exploit was in Williamsport, where they robbed Farmer Smale of \$250. Last week one of the gang, Harry Reynolds, otherwise known far and wide as "Pete Motes," was arrested near Harrisburg and taken to Williamsport. Since his arrest he has squealed and given away the whole gang of eight or ten men! The wife of Reynolds is a barbar, and in that capacity she has become famous all over the State.

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I hereby certify that the following testimonials are a true and exact copy as given by me by the parties whose names are attached thereto.

W. C. McCLURE, Sworn and subscribed before me this 14th day of June, 1885, Lafayette Webb, Prot. notary of the Court of Common Pleas of Mifflin county, Pa.

PARALYSIS AND CONSTIPATION. Milroy, Pa., May 30, 1885. Gentlemen—I deem it a pleasure as well as a duty to state that I have worn them for several months and have gradually improved from the effects of Paralysis of one side and Constipation. Since using the appliance have been free from the trouble, beside I have improved in my general health. I therefore commend them to any who may be suffering from the same trouble.

D. M. COSTNER, NERVOUS PROSTRATION AND SLEEPLESSNESS. Milroy, Pa., June 2, 1885. Gentlemen—My wife has suffered for years with Nervous Prostration, so much so that life at times seemed to her a burden. Her rest a sleep was so much broken and disturbed that she could not without much difficulty perform her daily household duties. She was induced to try the Howard Shield, has worn it over two months and can now sleep well at night, and even during the day, can work with comfort that was a burden before. She has improved in general health and complexion. I consider your appliance invaluable for nervousness, sleeplessness and general debility. JOHN COX.

NO MEDICINE NEEDED. Belleville, Pa., May 30, 1885. Gentlemen—I have been greatly benefited by the use of the Howard Shield, No. 2, for constipation. I have worn it since May and would not like to do without it. I now feel thankful for your appliance and have advised others to give them a trial, feeling sure that they would be benefited as I have been.

WHAT A LEADING DOCTOR SAYS. C. R. PEACY, Milroy, Pa., June 2, 1885. Gentlemen—I have used many years with chronic inflammation of the bladder, and have had to procure a Howard Shield and have been wearing it for Lumbago or Rheumatism in my back and have had the most wonderful relief since wearing it. Over the small of my back and have gained strength of muscle to a most wonderful degree. I can therefore recommend the use of these appliances of all Rheumatic and nervous complaints particularly nervous debility. I have recommended them to my patients and in every case with benefit.

A. HARSHEBER, M. D., WHAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE 1st NATIONAL BANK SAYS: Ashland, Pa., March 9, 1885. Gentlemen—I know what your Appliances are from personal use and therefore recommend your shield to Mrs. Hanburger some time ago for Sciatica and induced her to send for one which she did and has used it for about four weeks, and she is now able to sit around and feels entirely cured. Yours truly, GEO. H. HELFRICH, President of the 1st National Bank.

Another Affidavit From a Prominent Citizen of Ohio NERVOUS DEBILITY IN ITS WORST FORM. Columbus, O., per Friend & Sand's, etc., '85. Gentlemen—I take pleasure in saying that I tried almost every known remedy, as well as so-called Electric appliances, without any benefit. I was weak, nervous, I spirited, despondent, almost without hope, almost entirely enervated, lacked power and will force, in a word, was afflicted with the worst symptoms of Nervous Debility the effects of which are so well known to every sufferer. I can truthfully say that the Howard Spinal Appliance and the Howard Shield entirely cured me. I commenced their use in 1881 and was restored to perfect health. I am now married and have never had a recurrence of my former trouble. You can refer anyone to me as I shall ever be grateful to you. Your treatment is as represented. You have proven yourselves worthy of the confidence of every sufferer.

AUG. F. ELLERMAN, Personally appeared before me, Aug. F. Ellerman, to me known, deposes and swears that the above letter, certifying as to the curative powers of the Howard Electric Shield and Spinal Appliances is true. Sworn and subscribed before me this 14th day of May, A. D., 1885. T. B. H. BUCK, Deputy Clerk of Courts of Franklin Co., O.

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