Che Home Reading Circle

IMMORTAL FAME.

By HOWARD FIELDING.

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PART I. THE SECLUSION OF BERTRAM

DYER. I knew Bertram Dyer when he was living on two boiled eggs in the morning, and an occasional invitation to dinner; but he was constitutionally incapable of becoming either poor in flesh or shabby in dress, and therefore few of his friends were aware how meager was the reward of his literary It was a pleasure, in those days, to see him eat; and I enjoyed it as often as I could afford to do so. Now that his fame is so great, I can boast of having fed him; and, moreover, I can advance the claim that it was one

On the occasion in question I had asked Bertram to meet me at a tobacconist's on Forty-second street, near the hotel, where we were to dine. Urged by appetite, he came too early; and I found him sitting on the pedestal of a wooden Indian in front of the shop. Aroused from deep meditation by the sound of my voice, he arose and faced

the road to fortune

"Old fellow," he said, but which of us he was addressing I do not know, "there's money in a story about In-

And forthwith he wrote one which has been the talk of three continents, if I count Australia. Though Dyer was under thirty and had never seen a live Indian, he was thought, in England, to be a general of our western army and the peculiar terror of the red man. A newspaper portrait of him, which appeared bald, through a defect in the plate, led to the rumor that he had been scalped, and thousands of people were thus induced to buy his book. The singularly lurid coloring of the Forty-second street Indian shines out in Dyer's description of war paint, and lends a horrid realism to the tale which has been marked by many, but fully appreciated, I believe, by no one except myself.

If there is one thing that is certain ly worth money to a man in these days it is advertising, and Dyer had an abundance. Offers from publishers came thick and fast in the wake of it and my friend was well to do. Greatly to my sorrow, he married, and I saw less and less of him; for, though he urged me to come to his home, I went very seldom, having taken a violent dislike to Mrs. Dyer. Then he moved away from the city for reasons that seemed excellent when he presented them to me, though I selfishly urged him to remain, for I had become very much attached to him. It appeared that he was overwhelmed with literary engagements which he thought it would be easier for him to fulfill if he could have the quiet of the country. Also, he have the quiet of the country. Also, he was entertaining many of my wife's Mrs. Elizabeth Graves—mother of Mrs. Dyer—standing on the steps that relations, and they had begun to be a led up to the veranda. I had met her burden upon him, notwithstanding the

comfortable size of his income He bought an abandoned farm in the wilds of the Berkshire hills, and made a habitable dwelling of the sude old farmhouse. We maintained a desultory correspondence as long, I fancy, as nature will have such things live; and then I knew no more of him, except by paragraphs in the papers, and by his published writings which appeared in great and increasing profu-

About two years after his withdrawal into seclusion I came to know his cousin, Miss Emily Dyer, a charming young woman who had been thrown upon her own resources by the death of her parents, and was struggling to maintain herself in New York. She had secured a position as a "retoucher" in a photographer's establishment, and her leisure was given to drawing and painting. Her work was hard; her max of misfortune, the protographer had fallen in love with her. I would have rescued her from all these hardships and perils by the simple process of matrimony; but, anhappily, she did ot care for me. Her affections were fixed upon a tall, tow-headed youth who was studying art, but had not yet learned to draw a salary. Even by the ight of their own reseate hopes it seined likely that they might have to wait a year or two before the young man should become rich and famous; and, in the meantime, I thought that Bertram Dyer, as the nearest relative of the girl, ought to help her along,

I wrote to him upon the subject, and received a reply ten days later. It was a refusal, and he had dictated it to a stenographer! The thing read like a circular about foreign missions. I would have thought it a forgery, gotten up by his wife, but for the unmistakable Dyer signature. Such little, finelined, coldly regular characters! Why had I not long ago read his true nature in his parsimonious chiro-graphy. Yet I had thought him one of the most generous and tenderly sympathetic of men. Could success change a human creature ac completely? I could not credit it, yet on the chance that it was true, I was moved to thank God that he had made me a failure.

After spending a day or two in an went to see Emily. We were just as good friends as if I had never given remained for luncheon and the mother went to see Emily. We were just as were in Patagonia." Nevertheless I her the annoyance of refusion. her the annoyance of refusing me. She as amicably as possible with the two was ill and could not receive me. Upon ladies already mentioned, and also leaving the house where she was boarding, I perceived the flaxen-haired artist

RED ROUGH

patroling the other side of the street. A mutual sorrow often unites the bit-terest enemies. I accosted my successful rival and offered him a cigar which he received quite in the way of friend-

ship. "I don't believe it's anything se rious," he said, in an anxious tone.
"She is tired; that's all. If she could only go out into the country and rest for awhile-'

I quite agreed with his paspoken conclusion, but, though we walked together till after midnight and talked of nothing else, we did not succeed in reaching a solution of the difficulty. The next day I set out on a pilgrimage to the Berkshire hills.

of my dinners which started him on Bertram Dyer's retreat was situated in a peculiarly desolate region. The nearest railroad station was ten miles away, in the town of Rockwood, There I alighted one evening, and secured lodgings in a quaint little hotel kept by three old maids. That one of them who does the cooking should be earning twenty thousand dollars a year in New York, and wearing the "cordon bleu." Her hot biscuits appeal to all that is highest and noblest in a man's nature. He who begins the day with them can hardly descend to the level of an ignoble act before sunset-when

he can have some more.

This fortified for a task that promised many difficulties, I rode away from the hotel in Rockwood about nine o'clock in the morning, mounted upon a bicycle which I had brought from New York. I had received careful directions regarding the road, which, indeed, was easy enough to follow, since there was no other. It was in excellent condition, and, despite the hills, I might have made the ten miles at good speed, but I stopped frequently to admire the scenery, which was always beautiful, and sometimes had the effect of grandeur. There were points in the road from which I could command a wide prospect, and once, at about six miles distance, I got a glimpse of Bertram's With the aid of strong field glasses I could see it quite distinctly, and it seemed a pleasant place in which

o live and write. I reached the border of my friend's estate before eleven o'clock. There was a gate giving entrance to an avenue that wound a way towards the house, which was invisible from that point. A grove, bright with autumn tints, growing beside the main road tempted me to take the circuit of the grounds, and I entered them eventually on the side toward Greenville, a town in which I should have left the railroad, but for the reputation of the Rockwood inn since Greenville is nearer New York and only about a mile further from Dver's home.

On approaching the house I perceivthan her unamiable daughter. Her surprise at the sight of me made me aware that my letter announcing my intended visit had not arrived. In deed, I had given it an insufficient start, considering the irregularity of the mails in that region.

Mrs. Graves was not more cold in her welcome than I had expected her to

"You rode over from Greenville, I suppose," she said. "It's a pity you didn't come the other way, for if you had you'd met Bertram. He drove over to Rockwood this forenoon.'

"Indeed," said I. "What time did he start?" "Between nine and ten," she an

Of course I knew perfectly well that Bertram had not been on the road to Rockwood at the time specified, but I am not one who would betray a man wages very small, and, to cap the cli- to his mother-in-law. If it suited my friend's convenience to leave a lie behind him at home, that was a matter with which his own conscience might deal. So I let it be understood that I had come from Greenville,

Mrs. Dyer came out of the house almost immediately. She was somewhat more cordial than her mother had been. The older woman would have sent me away hungry, but the younger invited me to lunch, though with no great excess of hospitality. However, my mission was of a character to make one patient under any provocation. No poor relation in real life or in fiction was ever less particular than I about the flavor of the invitation. If there had been any possibility of finding out where Bertram had gone, I would have followed him, but since he had taken pains to lie about his destination, I thought it best to wait for him. wife seemed doubtful when he would return, and she regretted that my time was so short, etc., etc. I had said nothing about being in a hurry; and when the words were thus put into my mouth I repudiated them.

"My business with him is very urgent," said I. "If he does not return in the course of the day I shall make an effort to find him."

Mrs. Dyer looked at her mother as who would say: "This is a very disagreeable person;" and the mother with two sisters of Mrs. Dyer, with her aunt, and with her grandfather on the maternal side. The table was set for two other persons, but they did noot appear wile I was present.

In the afternon a sudden and violent rainstorm swept down from the western hills, and I blessed it, for not even the people with whom I was a guest dared turn me from their doors in such weather. I stayed to dinner, and when the mournful meal was done Grandfather Graves went forth to view the lowering clouds and returned with an aspect as gloomy as their own. Then Mrs. Dyer asked me to remain over night, and I accepted the invitation with cheerful alacrity,

It was not much after 9 o'clock when retired to my room. Midnight is my ordinary bedtime, and I felt no desire to sleep. I waited an hour or more till the house became quiet, and then

stole forth to smoke on the veranda. The moon was just breaking through the clouds and the night was full of beauty and wonderfully warm. For a iong time I sat there, smoking and thinking of Emily Dyer. I had good hope that she would profit by my secret

intercession with her cousin, and when thing else that I could do for her. At least I could help the lanky boy whom she had honored by her preference to make a profitable use of such talent as ++++++++++

Suddenly I was startled by something falling beside me. It was my eigar, which had slipped from my fingers. had been asleen. The moon had sunk almost to the hills upon the west. It was nearly 3 o'clock.

I re-entered the house and softly closed and locked the door. At that moment I heard a noise from the other end of the hall. Some one was com-

I hartily stepped into the unlighted sitting room. A slender, dark young man with disheveled hair passed close to my hiding place, but did not see me. He was carrying a lamp and yawning painfully. When he had gone upstairs and entered a bed room I stole up after The remainder of the night I passed in slumber.

When I come down the next morning I met Mrs. Graves in the hall.

"Bertram came back last night," she said. "Perhaps you heard him drive up to the front door, a little after No; I hadn't heard him, nor had I

seen him, though at the hour named I had been sitting almost directly before the door. However, I did not tell her that. "Later in the night," she continued, he was taken very sick. You won't

be able to see him. We have sent to

Greenville for a doctor." I expressed my deepest sympathy. About nine o'clock the doctor from Greenville arrived. I recognized him as the young man with the tangled hair who had passed so near me on the preceding night.

PART II.

A FRIENDLY BURGLARY.

I considered it highly important to ascertain whether the young man who personated the Greenville doctor really had any knowledge of medicine. If he had, it would seem probable that he was a resident physician attending upon Bertram in an illness that was by no means the sudden and unexpected attack described to me by Mrs. Graves. Accepting that view, two theories would naturally suggest themselves to account for the duplicity and concealment that were being practiced by the household. Bertram's illness might be of such a nature that it would bet. ter be kept secret; he might be periodically insane. Second, he might be a the point of death, and his wife and her relations might fear that I would influence him against them in the disposition of the money he had earned and the valuable copyrights he held.

On the other hand, if the young man were not a doctor, there must be some sort of plot against my friend, whereby he was held prisoner and prevented from communicating with the outer world. Perhaps his property was slow-ly being absorbed by the Graves contingent. I prepared to suspect Mrs. Graves of anything. As for Mrs. Dyer, I could not regard her as an active element in so serious affair. My dislike for her had been based upon her mental vacuity, upon her absurd inferiority to her husband. She had seemed to me incapable of good or evil except as others might influence her. Grandfather Graves was a shrewd old rat, with an eye like an X-ray to explore the inside of another's pocket. With the other members of the household I was almost unacquainted, but I did not detect any leading spirit among them,

On the whole as the best of the lot, and the easiest to deal with in such efforts as I might make to solve the mystery. I resolved to have a word with her before leaving the house, and, therefore, I clung to the veranda more tightly than the vines that encircled its ancient pillars while Mrs. Graves Strove to lop me off with the cold edge of inhos-

Mrs. Dyer and "the doctor" seemed surprised that I had shown so much tenacity, when they at last descended from the western chamber where they had presumably been busy with the sick man. I ventured to inquire about my friend's health, and was assured by the young man that a favorable termination of the case might be looked for "in a few weeks;" whereupon Mrs. Graves nodded her head at me as much as to say "I'll get rid of you long be-

Apparent acquiescence seemed to be my best course, and I made my adieux with so great a semblance of sincerity that the hatchet-faced old woman was deceived. She took "the doctor" into the house again, ostensibly to offer him some refreshment, and thus was what I had wished for. Immediately I began to speak of her husband as if I had no hope of ever seeing him alive again. I dilated upon his many amiable qualities and upon the brilshe had really been led into any plot against him, her affection for him-the sincerity of which I had never degree that she would betray signs f remorse, To my great satisfaction, she began to cry; and thus I knew that, though Betram's case might be desperate, there was one, at least, of his persecutors who had not entered into the plot with her whole heart. My mouth was open to begin a pleathat she should trust me as a friend and tell me all, when Mrs. Graves suddenly appeared in the doorway. The glance which she leveled at me was like one of the tomahawks that flashed in Betram's first great story, and I

fled for my life. Of course, I had not abandoned the adventure. It was a retreat in the nature of a feint, designed to raise false hopes in the heart of the enemy. No coner had I passed out of Dyer's farm, by the Greenville gate, than I wheeled to the westward, following a road that passed close to the base of a steep, vooded hill that I had noticed from the veranda. Its top was less than half a mile from the house, and I believed that it would afford me an ex-cellent point of observation.

Concealing my bicycle among the trees, I climbed the hill, and speedily found a spot from which I could look out upon my friend's abode, without danger of being seen. As I turned my eyes upon it, the blinds outside the windows of the western chamber were opened, and, with the aid of my field glasses, I easily recognized Mrs. Dyer as the person who had opened them. She passed to the window in the south ern wall, and immediately a flood of light streamed into the chamber, It was not a sick room, certainly. The bed was neatly made up. Beside it was a stand on which were several

other detestable appurtenances of discaso. but Mrs, Dyer, so far as I could see. Certainly no invalid would have been exposed to such a draft of crisp autumn air as must bave been surging through the apartment,



It is not the correct thing to be careless in dress at home, any ore than when abroad.

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had sworn when he had finished it.

no one enter or leave on the preceding

There was a door between the rooms.

I turned the knob. It was locked on the other side. I ventured to call soft-

ly: "Bertram!" A confused murmur-a

painful, smothered sound-was aud-

ible within. I called again, as loudly

as I dared. Still the same murmuring

noise, a little louder than before. Had

they tied the poor fellow like a dog

and gagged him? I put my strength

upon the door, softly, steadily. The lock

The room was dark, but a light sud

denly flashed up, I saw a tumbled bed, a flaring lamp on a table; and, beyond,

Grandfather Graves in his scanty

night clothing, just in the act of tak-

ing down an enormous old-fashioned

Bertram Dyer was not there, and a

half second later neither was I. My

form might have been seen flitting

across the lawn, while behind me, and,

indeed, all around me, achoed the re

(To Be Continued.)

The conditions surrounding the mar-

keting of anthracite coal have mater-

ially changed in recent years. But

few years ago no size smaller than

chestnut was sent to market and in

fact thousands of tons of the latter

were thrown on the culm pile at the

mines on account of lack of market.

In course of time this waste of chest-

nut coal ceased and the demand for

that for stove coal. The broken and

ly for steam purposes at manufactur-

ing establishments in the Eastern and

Middle states. Later the cheaper bit-

uminous coal wrested the trade of

manufacturers from the anthracite

operators and anthracite became grad-

ually known as a domestic coal for

which it is peculiarly fitted. This re-

sulted in less demand for lump and

broken coal, and made necessary the

production of larger proportions of egg,

stove and chestnut. The breaking of

these large sizes down to the sizes in

demand naturally increased the pro-

portion of pea, buckwheat and rice

coal. In most recent years improved

appliances have made it possible to se-

raising by the use of the smaller sizes

of anthracite, or those below chest-

smoke and the great heating power of

anthracite, manufacturers in many in

stances prefer it to bituminous, and

the anthracite trade has, therefore,

resolved itself into two distinct classes

First, the trade in domestic coal, which

takes the sizes larger than pea coal

Second, the trade in steaming coals,

which takes the small sizes. About

the Coal Trade.

sounding bang of the old musket.

One Way to Help

From the Colliery Engineer.

yielded. I entered.

musket from the wall.

picton which I had previously formed that Dyer was really in a room on the ground floor. I observed that the whole orth end of the house seemed closed. It was from a room in that part of the dwelling that the young man had come on the preceding night. Had he been watching with an invalid, or guarding a prisoner? I resolved to solve the problem before another night had

It may seem strange that among my heories, I did not consider the possibility that Dyer was purposely avoid-ing me. In explanation I can say only that my theories were based upon my knowledge of the man. He was not one to hide from friend or foe. I believed that, if left to his own choice, he would receive me with the heartiest cordialtly. It was impossible that my intercession on behalf of his cousin had offended him to such a degree that he did

not wish to see me. I remainded all day among the hills, observing the house from different points. Hunger drove me to a farmlouse in the afternoon. It was a poor abode as ever I saw in the country, but full of good will. The farmer's wife inmented heartily that she could give me no beeter entertainment, but tomorrow was her "baking day," and everything was clean eat up." There was no cooked food in the house except a pumpkin pie baked in a yellow, earthenware dish, three inches deep This she sat before me with a pitcher of milk, and I made a meal of them. The pie was sombre with molasses which imparted an acidity to it that was not unpleasant at first, but it grew upon me in succeeding hours. I think the pangs of remorse must be some thing like that, when one has really sinned. However, one cannot cure remorse with bicarbonate of soda. I rode en miles to Rockwood for this useful drug, and incidentally obtained from the apothecary some bits of informa-

tion about Bertram Dyer. "He used to come over here quite cme, when he and his folks fust moved into the old Peters place," said the druggist, "but lately I ain't seen nothing of him. I guess he's trading with somebody over in Greenville way. His folks buy their groceries over there. 1 that size became almost as strong as le ago that he was sick, but I ain't sold any medicine to him lately and I guess maybe he's better. Be you going up that way?"

Possibly. Would I be coming back by way of Rockwood? If so, would I drop in? Rockwood folks would be glad to hear how Mr. Dyer was getting along. Some of them had read one of his books, and they thought it pretty good for a young man to write. They were hopes that he would write something about Rockwood, and kind of help the place olang. I promised to suggest a local story to the distinguished author, if I had the pleasure

of meeting him. It was about 10 o'clock when I arrived once more upon the outskirts of the "old Peters place," I had resolved cure most excellent results in steamto pass the night in its vicinity; and to commit a friendly burglary if my investigations should convince me that nut in size. Owing to the absence of Bertram was the prisoner of his wife's

At first the moon was too high for my purpose, but before midnight it had dropped nearly to the hills, and some light clouds obscured it. Then I stealthly approached the house, and was soon concealed in the shadow of I was left alone with Mrs. Dyer, which the northern wall. A very faint light escaped through a curtained and shuttered window of the room which I had most in mind. I crouched beneath that window and listened. At first all was still; then I became aware of sounds liancy of his genius, judging that if that made me shudder. Someone within was groaning, not loudly, as if with violent pain, but rather, as it seemed to me, with wrath. Sometimes I could doubted-would be stirred to such a hear the mumbling of words that sounded like oaths. Again I heard a rustling as of paper. Finally someone cried: "There! --- it!" with tremendous emphasis. The voice sounded unlike Dyer's, yet I could not be sure. Presently the light went out. I caught the faint sound of a closing door. Then all was still.

I waited fifteen minutes, according to my best judgment, but it might not have been so long. Then I tried the fastening of the window, having softly opened the blinds. It seemed to be secure, but at last I forced the catch, and raised the lower sash. The pulley squealed painfully, but it aroused no one. Having paused to make sure of that, I pushed aside the curtain and thrust in my head. The room was totally dark. I climbed in cautiously, and stood for a moment listening, in the gloom. Faint noises in the house counterfeited footfalls, and I would have said that I was not alone, but for the aimlessness with which the patterings ran across the room and stopped and ran again,

At last I ventured to light a match The flames revealed a large, square room fitted up like a study with an abundance of fine old furniture. A well-filled book case covered nearly all one wall. Close to my right hand was a great antique desk, open and strewn with typewritten sheets. Bending over them I recognized Dyer's hand in various corrections.

The match burned my fingers. I threw it down and lighted another with the flame of which I kindled a lamp that stood upon the desk. Then I perceived in the midst of the type-written sheets a brief manuscript letbooks and magazines, but no phinis or ted addresesd to myself. It expressed very mild regret for having missed secing me, and the hope that I would come again "next summer," I laughed softly at the impatience of the writer to see me. He asked me not to say any thing more about Emily. Especially I must write if I ever contemplated coming to Berkshire again. The style was forced; the penmanship was labored.

twenty-eight per cent. of the coal of the Girard estate in Schuylkill county in 1896 consisted of sizes below chestnut. The percentage would have been materially increased had all the small sizes possible been shipped. This perpertion is about an average one for the anthracite region.

As will be seen from the foregoing, the domestic sizes of anthracite do not enter into competition with bituminous coal, and the trade in those sixes is limited to the domestic consumption in localities comparatively near the anthracite regions and to domestic consumption in the homes of wealthy men in the west and northwest who prefer to pay the increased price for anthracite over bituminous on account of its greater cleanliness. The trade in the small sizes enters into direct compe tition with the bituminous coal trade To meet this competition, lower freight rates on sizes below chestnut coal are necessary. The operator in the anthracite region can afford to put these small sizes on the car under the breaker at a price that will compete with the price received by the bituminous operator for his coal at the mine; but, when a freight rate of two or three times as much is charged on small sizes of anthracite it cannot compete in the markets with bituminous con, and the result is manufacturers, no matter how much they may desire anthracite, are driven to the use of bituminous. The The letter had "come hard." It had anthracite-carrying roads contend that plainly been written at dietation and they are carrying coal to market as under compulsion. No wonder Dyer cheaply as they can afford to. This statement may be true as far as the Evidently the poor fellow was not at large sizes are concerned because the all his own master in that house. I redemand is not constant enough to keep their cars continually in service and him. Where could he be? Where, but thus give them a regular tonnage. in that other room on the north end of the house, the room that I had seen

There is nothing to be gained by the statement that the anthracite production is not restricted. It is restricted, and rightfully so. Without restriction the market for domestic sizes would be flooded, prices would break, bank-ruptcy would be the fate of the operator and starvation that of the miner; but, the restriction that wisely controls the production of domestic sizes should not be so closely applied to the small sizes. These small sizes should not be counted in the apportionment. They have very little, if any, bearing on the state of the market for the domestic sizes, and they should have the same advantages of regular supply to consumers, as bituminous coal. Further, the freight rates on these small sizes should be reduced to a figure more in consonance with the freight rates given bituminous coal. If this is done many manufacturers now using bituminous coal, because they can get regular supplies of it, would speedily turn to the small sizes of anthracite. Operators of anthracite mines would be benefitted and the railroad companies would certainly gain, as it is better for them to employ their cars in the transportation of small sizes of anthracite than to have them lying idle during a considerable portion of each year. If bituninous coal can be hauled to market at three or four mills per ton per mile, so can the small sizes of anthracite.

If such a policy is inaugurated the great carrying roads will profit in two ways. First, by the increased income from their coal properties. Second, by an increase of tohnage on which the profits, though smaller than on the tonnage on domestic sizes, will result in some gain where now there is none While restriction in anthracite production must be adhered to, it must also be borne in mind that no steam user can afford to arrange his steam plant for the use of small sizes of anthracite unless he has some assurance that his supply will be regular and in accordance with his wants. This supply cannot be regular if the same restrictions apply to small sizes that apply to domestic sizes: therefore he cannot have such an assurance as long as the small sizes are included in the restriction. Neither can he afford to turn to the use of these small sizes of anthracite unless he can get them at such a figure as will enable him to make steam as cheaply as does his competitor who uses bituminous coal.



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