

His Last Will and Testament.

Isabella Kaiser, in Ueber Land ein Meer.

THE patient shivers in the cool evening air and draws his plaid closer about his shoulders.

"You must go indoors, my lord," says the nurse, who sits beside him on the beach.

He inclines his head politely, but he does not move his eyes from the big fire ball of the sun, which fades over yonder in tragic melancholy, just as he himself is fading.

Beyond the sea the sun descends into the empire of shadows, loses his rays, and imparts his purple to the waves, the sky, the mountains, with an affection which by his daily death is rendered a triumph, a celebration of life for the earth.

"How grand and simple, such a dying," muses Douglas Lindsay. But the nurse near him cautions: "Be reasonable, my lord, for this is the hour so injurious to the sick in the Riviera; the hour which makes sunset the winter of the South; the incomparable, treacherous hour in which beauty casts its gold-interwoven veil and death its nets over the beach."

The patient rises painfully from his rocking chair.

He knows that he will be sorely troubled by cough tonight, but he does not know whether he will see the sun tomorrow.

The sky of the Mediterranean sea is as if suffused with mallow-colored silk, as if prepared for a glorious festival. The slender masts of the yachts at anchor show as if traced upon a golden background, and the Es and Monte-Cain towers as if dipped in bloody glory.

Douglas Lindsay has taken the arm of the nurse and returns with slow steps to the Hotel Grey Albin.

In front of the villa with the Greek colonnade he asks: "A young girl died here suddenly within the last few days?"

"Yes, my lord. The father and the bridegroom are inconsolable. It is said," "Fortunate girl! Thus to die . . . beloved and lamented."

The nurse is silent. His remark betrays such bitter grief. He will be lamented by nobody, the poor rich man!

His tall figure is now bent, yet in the whole attitude of this vanquished man, in the noble grace of his manner, there is the Englishman of aristocratic descent. At the threshold of the house he looks back. The splendor is gone; the sea has a faded color; the balconies of the clouds are sunken to naught. Motionless and mourning, the Etesian rises in the midst of a gigantic funeral; the light is dead; night has set in.

"The sun dies every evening, and all the earth mourns him," the patient muses when he enters the magnificent court of the hotel, where officious servants open the dark portals in silence.

When Dr. Dielin, the medical attendant of Cannes, a few hours later leaves the room of Lord Lindsay, he mentions to the nurse:

"We must be prepared for the worst; the patient has only a few days to live."

"Will he have much to suffer," she asks.

"Physically, very little; morally, a great deal," replies the doctor, a fine psychologist and searcher of souls.

He has been suffering for some time from a truly sentimental spleen, which, however, is nothing strange in such a patient. A great anxiety seizes him at the thought that he has to start so early upon his last journey. Do you not, Miss Mary, to ease his last hours, is the only mercy we can bestow upon him?"

"What can I do for him?"

"Oh, you are a woman, and at the sick-bed all women turn into mothers and words to rock affliction into slumber, on that point I can teach you nothing."

Thoughtfully the nurse went into the sick room. It was furnished with the utmost princely comfort of a man accustomed to luxury, and those tender flower proofs which show the hand of a woman were not lacking; everywhere aromatic flowers, white heather from the forests of Provence and mass roses.

She bends over the bed where the doomed man rests with closed eyes. Yes, he bears the sign of the shadow upon his brow. The energetic nose is actively beating; the thin and contracted, the bloodless lips are slightly curled, but the long eyelashes overshadow the cheeks, and the blonde hair is of truly Anglo-Saxon brightness.

And over all is the sacred beauty of all faces marked by death with its masterly chisel.

She lowers the heavy draperies, adjusts the light of the lamp, arranges the medicine, takes up a volume of devotional and prepares for the watch of the night.

He has opened his eyes and his looks follow her.

The harmonious movements of this woman are like music to his eyes. And so much rest and quietude emanates from her.

It has often appeared to him as if her presence alleviated his suffering. The five months during which she nursed him have been his best. He has had no weary but not one of them has left even a trace upon his memory. But Miss Mary was the true self-sacrifice. She belonged to those secular associations of English nurses which are recruited from the daughters of the higher classes exclusively. Perhaps for this last arrival he felt a special affection because she was a countrywoman of his and spoke his language.

She cared for him not like a servant, but like a sister of the great family beyond the stars, who came to nurse her suffering brother, and to smooth for him the return to the home of the Father. He spoke to her not as to a subordinate, but as to a woman of his world, who did him the honor to veil by her care the horror of death which destroyed him, and to soften his bitter loneliness by her presence.

He closed his eyes and sought to slumber, cradled by the mighty pulsation of the sea, and the monotonous daint of the mistral of the fire.

Sister Mary read from her missal: "If your brother is impoverished and stretches forth his trembling hands to you, you shall receive him, even the stranger, that he may live beside you."

The hours passed.

During the night the patient started from his sleep and endured a long attack of the cough.

The nurse supported him. The hoarse cry sounded like the cry of approaching death. He sank back vanquished, and groaned.

She attempted to reach the bell to summon help. But with a commanding motion of despair he prevented her. Why? She assented—he wanted to witness of his death struggle.

His fingers wandered over the cover with painful effort and he sought to grasp the fleeing life.

She took these emaciated hands between hers and sought to temper their fever by the touch of her fresh, caressing fingers.

The eyes of the patient opened in grateful recognition, and silently heavy tears, the last, coursed over his face.

She had never seen him weep. He looked at her. "Sister Mary, it is terrible, is it not, thus to die, without anybody who loves us. . . . So alone. . . . So alone."

Like a refrain to this question the nurse heard the supplication of the doctor: "Try to ease his last hours for mercy's sake."

And she said: "Am I not here?"

"You! Ah, you!" he said with the quickness of an awakening. "Yes, you nurse me well, you are affectionate; I often feel as if in your presence I were surrounded by a family; but I know

In the sails which over yonder strove toward a distant promised land; in the rustling of the palms swept by the wind; in the mysterious mourning of the lonely villas she perceived a silent appeal for mercy. . . . She did not withdraw her hand from beneath the flowers.

The features of the patient assumed a quiet, blissful expression, as if he held a soft promise of life between his fingers.

He did not regard the dying sun, nor the approach of the irrevocable night.

On the following day Lord Lindsay received several visitors. When Mary approached his bedside in the evening he spoke with a waning voice, which seemed to come from the beyond, of the future, nothing but the future; of home on the beach of Bournemouth, where they would retire after he recovered, and she would be his wife.

His breast heaved, slowly and with difficulty, but he did not suffer. There was something radiant in this unconscious dying, which seemed to praise death.

Through the window which opened upon the infinity of the starry downs the nurse felt the approach of this

PICTURE PUZZLE.



The man is fishing in a forbidden stream. Can you find the angry owner and his dog?

that you will give the least amount your patients the same care; that you would have the same pity tonight with a dying beggar. Is it not so?"

He spoke the truth.

She should have frankly answered "Yes," but the look of the dying eyes rose to her with the wonderful expression of a fear hovering between heavy joy and bitter disappointment. She felt that truth would be misery and untruth consolation, and that in the wretchedness of this hour the ideal could be expressed in the one word, Love.

Had she not become the sister of this rich man and was not her religion one of resignation?

And she unexpectantly said "No," very quietly like a confession.

It came like a redemption over his wan features, a light as if the window had been opened suddenly for the sun; then it came over him like a surfeit of joy; he sank back, grasped the hand of the young woman and pressed his feverish lips to it, devoutly, whispering: "Thanks . . . Thanks . . . Thanks . . . Mary!"

When the valet entered the room in the morning he found his master sitting up in bed, impatient to rise.

The windows were opened, and the great sun of the Riviera, which he saw doing so tragically yesterday, solemnized his resurrection for him, flooded the room like a victor and enveloped him in his life-giving caress.

He dressed carefully, breakfasted with the appetite of a healthy man, and when Dr. Dielin entered the room he met him: "Ah, it is very much better with me today!"

The physician's delicacy admitted of no surprise. He knew these cheeks which color more vividly like the leaves before they wither. He knew the happy exaltation of the consumptive.

Death has such mercuries for the chosen ones.

He permitted the patient to have a drive in the morning sun.

The young nurse blushed when she saw the look with which Douglas Lindsay received her when she came to accompany him. She felt as if a great responsibility was resting upon her.

She wanted to speak to him as formerly, to look her blanches as symptoms of embarrassment, and looked at her with an imploring prayer which recalled the confession of yesterday and pledged her to confirm the word by the act.

"Mary!"

She found no words, but she smiled at him and preserved her kindness. He refused the covers and sat boldly upright in the carriage beside her as if he wanted to anticipate recovery and to die by his attitude.

At a slow trot they traversed the Boulevard de la Croisette.

It was one of those February days in the Riviera when the air seems to tremble with joy, when the mimosa is at its prime, when the palms sensually open their crowns to the sun, and when the quiet sea whispers promises to man.

Douglas Lindsay breathed this air like a rejuvenating draught. He saw new, undreamed of attractions in the landscape, and all this beauty was like a sunny glory for the head of a woman. The almost heavenly serenity of her mild face imparted confidence and life to his shy homes.

He had no longer this feeling of loneliness in an immeasurable void.

An old woman offered a basket of violets. "Buy, buy, they bring luck!"

He emptied the basket in Mary's lap. The young girl refused the flowers.

"No, my lord, not this—not this!"

He paled. "Do not call me any longer my lord, Mary."

A look of surprise involuntarily escaped her.

"Nobody calls me Douglas any more,"

He had taken her hand beneath the flowers.

She shrank from the touch, unable to follow him on this course.

"If you love me a little I shall recover," he said imploringly.

"You will recover," she said softly, without lifting her eyes.

"And you will then never leave me any more, my bride?"

She shuddered. A revulsion rose in her. But no! It was only a shadow speaking thus to her. He was so near to death that he did not feel its approach any longer.

At the opening of the last will and testament of Lord Lindsay, dated and signed by the testator on the eve of his death, the notary declared in the presence of the witnesses that the deceased had cancelled his first testament, in which he had disposed of his estate for the benefit of the poor and sick of his province. He opened the sealed letter and read: "I name as my exclusive heir the woman who loves me, Mary Sullivan, my bride."

Astonishment was depicted upon the faces of all, and all eyes were turned to the young English nurse.

She rose, very pale. She had never thought of this consequence of her deed of mercy.

She took the document from the hands of the notary, read it through, and slowly her brow turned openly and frankly toward the men of law; she tore it asunder and declared:

"Pray, gentlemen, the first testament of Lord Lindsay is the only valid one. In his last will there was written: 'I bequeath my estate to the wife who loves me.' He died a happy man; I am paid . . . but I never loved him!"

DALTON.

It is expected that the public schools will reopen on Monday next.

Among those from this place who attended the Nordica concert in Scranton last evening were: Mrs. Frank Colvin, Mrs. W. A. Dean, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Palmer.

It has been a long time since the cry of fire has been heard in this borough. But such a cry was made on Wednesday evening about 7:30 o'clock, as flames were seen issuing from a barn owned by Frank Colvin and located in a field near the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western railroad. Just how the fire originated is a mystery, but it is presumed some one was in the barn smoking. The fire company was not called out, as no water could be brought to play on the flames and as no other buildings were endangered. All that could be done was to stand by and see the flames do their destructive work. Mr. Colvin had some hay, oats and other things in the barn, which were totally consumed. There was no insurance on the building, so Mr. Colvin sustained a considerable loss.

The gang of Italians who have been blaspheming and violating the Lackawanna railroad roadbed for a third track, have completed their work and have moved their effects elsewhere.

C. D. Finn and S. E. Finn were visitors in Tunkhannock on Monday last. Mrs. Charles Miller and son, Alvin, have opened a new stand in the rooms formerly occupied by Purdy's bakery.

"Some Folks and Other Folks, or the Greatest Problem of the Century," will be the subject of Rev. A. H. Smith's lecture in the Baptist church on Friday evening, Nov. 22. The admission will be 15 cents.

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