

The Battle for the Cedars.

BY FRESLEY W. MORRIS.

CONCLUDED.

VALASQUEZ sprang to his feet, and shook his manacled hands in her face.

"Do your worst, devil," he cried: "I defy you, I defy you."

The woman sprang back from him, her breast heaving, her breath coming in quick gasps, her eyes flashing out flame.

"Ha, ha!" she laughed madly, "you dream not of the sweet vengeance Eloisa, dead Eloisa, is to have, villain! Your defiance shall be turned to terror."

She turned toward the doorway. "Come, Giorgio, good Giorgio!" cried she.

Instantly a giant form rushed in, beating the air wildly with his long arms. He grinned and gibbered hideously, looking as terrible as the inhabitants of the regions of despair might.

"Revenge, Giorgio! revenge!" cried the woman.

With a loud cry, the idiot, Giorgio, sprang towards Valasquez. The detective leaped forward with his revolver, but he was hurled violently to the floor, where he lay bleeding and half senseless.

The woman snatched the pistol from his grasp and stood over his prostrate form. At the first sight of the idiot, Barbara, whose nerves were already weakened, gave a wild scream and fainted dead away.

"Revenge, Giorgio! revenge!" the woman repeated.

The idiot seized Valasquez and held him firmly in his grasp. The villain's defiant manner vanished, and he stood terror-stricken, paralyzed with fright, not able to struggle even, while the hot breath of the terrible creature, in whose power he was, fanned his cheek.

"Mercy! mercy! have mercy!" he pleaded.

"You might as well ask mercy of the tigress whose young you had slain, as to ask it of Eloisa's mother," screamed the woman. "Monster! when did you ever show mercy? When did you spare youth, or beauty, or gentleness, or innocence, or love? Never! Demon! no power can save you! You must, and shall die!"

There was one moment of dread, awful silence.

"Blood, Giorgio! blood!"

Those words were the signal of doom. With exclamation of delight, the idiot struck terrific blows on the face and head and body of Valasquez, who shrieked in pain and terror.

It was a wild and bloody scene.

"To the death, Giorgio! to the death," cries Signora Foscari presently.

The idiot hurled Valasquez to the floor, and locked his long fingers about his throat.

There was a brief struggle, and then all cries ceased.

Henri Valasquez, false master of The Cedars had met his doom.

"Eloisa, sweet Eloisa," sounded in a wild, mournful wail, through the midnight stillness of the stone mansion, "sleeping beneath the skies of your sunny South, you are avenged."

When Victor and his companion returned to the library, they found Barbara Lindsley lying on the floor, still in a dead swoon, while the detective who had remained was sitting in a chair weak and shuddering.

Valasquez was stretched in the middle of the apartment, utterly lifeless, and battered and bruised out of all semblance to humanity.

The detective pointed to the bloody form and said,—"Justice has been meted out speedily."

And he briefly described the wild scene that had just occurred, while Victor lifted Barbara in his arms, thankful that a blessed unconsciousness had come to her.

Victor carried Barbara to the carriage in which he and the detectives had come from Fairmount, and when she revived she was on her way to the De Vere residence.

Eloisa's mother, and the idiot, Giorgio had disappeared. They were never seen again in the neighborhood of The Cedars, and nevermore was aught heard of them.

Barbara Lindsley and Victor were in the parlor at the De Vere mansion. No one else was present.

Barbara was still somewhat pale, but the scene through which she had passed would work her no particular harm.—She could smile and be happy, for she had been spared to life and love, and, farther, the blow she had given Varcor the slave, had not slain him, for, though he was severely wounded, he would recover.

And Victor had just said,—"Dear Barbara, you bade me hope! Tell me, do you love me?"

He was sitting on a sofa by her side. She turned toward him, blushing.

"How could it be otherwise?" she murmured. "You are my hero, my knight, always at hand in my time of need, my good Sir Lancelot! Yes, I love you!"

Then they sat in silence for many happy minutes. Victor spoke at length.

"As you can guess, Barbara, from what I have said before, I have a revelation to make. My story is as strange as any romance ever written. Excuse my absence for a moment."

Victor stepped from the apartment.—He was gone for a minute, and then Barbara, sitting with bowed head, heard a step and raised her eyes.

A tall figure with handsome face, and the frank eyes of Victor, stood before her. But could it be Victor? The Victor that Barbara knew was the possessor of a long red beard, but this face had no such appendage.

"Mr. Victor!" Barbara exclaimed half doubtfully.

"Yes, it is he whom you have known as Victor," said the happy voice of the man. "But that is not all. I have at last a right to claim my own full, true name. It is Lionel Victor Cashel, and the man who was your foe as well as mine has wronged me out of it for years. Twice he tried to slay me, but each time I escaped as by a miracle."

Then Lionel Cashel told the surprised girl the story of his life. She was astonished, but made double happy by the realization that her hero was the true master of The Cedars. Here she could behold an end to all the dreadful litigation about the possessions.

"But, dear Barbara," Lionel concluded, "after all, the estate that Henri Valasquez held for so long is not mine. There is a claimant that has a better right to it than I, as I truly believe. She is as I cannot doubt, the daughter of the deceased Herbert Cashel, while I am only his grand-nephew. Doubtless you have heard of the suit of Cashel vs. Cashel?"

"Yes, I have heard of it!" said Barbara with a smile.

Then she rose and placed her hands on Lionel's shoulders with her face close to his.

"I, too, have a revelation to make," she whispered softly.

"What is it, darling?"

"I am the claimant to The Cedars, the daughter of Herbert Cashel."

"You!"

"Yes, I!"

Lionel kissed the beautiful face so close to his.

"It is the providence of Heaven," he said solemnly.

At that instant a tread sounded in the hall. In a moment Robert De Vere entered. He had just returned from Baltimore. It took him some time to recognize Victor, as he still knew Lionel.

But he did presently, and reached out both his hands, one to Barbara and one to Lionel.

"Thank God!" he uttered reverently.

Of course he had previously heard of the tragedy at The Cedars, and the rescue of Barbara, for the whole country was ringing with the news.

Barbara and Lionel had Victoria Sherwood summoned before they told their strange histories. Then they narrated all, not forgetting to tell how the battle for The Cedars would end forever. Victoria, Vincent, Robert, all, were greatly surprised. Victoria shed some happy tears, and the two young men sympathized deeply.

When the narratives were ended Robert rose, and taking Barbara Lindsley's hand, placed it in Lionel Cashel's.

"She is my other sister," he said; "take her, and may heaven's richest blessing rest upon you."

It was months after the scene we last described, when Mr. and Mrs. Cashel, searching through some papers in the library at The Cedars, found Herbert Cashel's will. They read it over together.

"Poor, dear, papa!" murmured Barbara, when they had finished it; "he never dreamed that I was saved."

"No," answered Lionel dreamily, his thoughts seemingly far away.

"Had I not known you and loved you, Barbara, my wife," said Lionel presently, breaking the silence, "I would never have taken The Cedars, even with this will in my favor to install me, for I should have felt that it would be wronging the daughter of the dead master out of her inheritance,—a wrong that I should have realized that he had never intended should be wrought."

Barbara kissed him.

"I know you would not have taken it," she cried. "You are too noble, my prince of generosity, my hero, my good Sir Lancelot!"

"We have not yet heard of a case of colds, coughs, throat or chest complaint, that has not yielded to 'Dr. Sellers' Cough Syrup.'"

How Mike Cured His Pig.

MIKE FAGAN has a little patch of ground behind his house, where he supports a few ducks and chickens; and the freest eggs in the neighborhood can always be found on his premises; for he never allows himself to be possessed of more than a single dozen at a time.

In addition to his stock of poultry, Mike purchased this summer a young pig, which, after four months' petting and nursing, he prided himself upon exhibiting to his friends and acquaintances as the "sweetest cruther in the world." But Mike's pig took sick lately and from his coughing and sneezing symptoms, it was certainly evident that he had contracted a bad cold.

Close by the residence of this Hibernian there dwells the village physician—a kind hearted man and very skillful—whose practice is none of the largest. As he came from his house, a few mornings since, Mike stood at his gate, ruminating upon the chances in favor of his favorite young porker; and, observing the doctor, hailed him: "The top o' the mornin' to ye, docthur."

"Ah! Mike, how are you?"

"It's very well I am meself, docthur; but perhaps ye'll be tellin' a poor man wot he'll be doin' for the pig, sure?"

"Pig!" exclaimed the doctor, with a smile. "What pig? and what's the matter with him?"

"Shure he's very bad indade, so he is. A cowl, docthur. Snazin' and barkin' the head off him a'most, and I'd like to know what I'll be doin' with him?"

"Well, really, Mike, I can't say. I'm not a pig doctor at any rate."

"It's meself as could say that sure. But s'posin' it were a baby instead—the sweet cruther—wot wud I be doin' with him for the cold he has?"

"Well," continued the doctor, considerately, "if it were a child, Mike, perhaps I should recommend a mustard plaster for his back, and that his feet be placed in hot water."

"It's much obliged to you, docthur, I am," responded Mike, as the physician passed along; and he entered his domicile.

"Biddy!" he added, addressing his good woman, "we'll cure the pig, so we will."

And in a little while the struggling porker was enveloped in a strong mustard poultice, from his ears to his tail. Notwithstanding his struggles and his squealing and torture from the action of the unyielding plaster, a tub of almost boiling water was prepared, and into it poor piggy was soused above the knees. The result may be easily conceived.

Next morning, bright and early, Mike stood at his gate once more, awaiting the coming of the doctor, who soon made his appearance, as usual.

"Good morning, Mike; how's the pig?"

"O, be gorrah, docthur! It was mighty oncivil on ye to be traitin' a neighbor that way, so it was."

"Why, what has happened, Mike?"

"Happened—is it! I put the powtlis on the pig, so I did—an, he squealed bloody murder, to be sure; an' the wull came off his back!"

"What?"

"An' thin I put the swalt baist's feet into the hot wather, as ye bid me do, an' bejabers, in five minits the hoofs dropped off o' him entirely, too, so they did!"

Hunted by a Fortune.

ABOUT three years ago, says a Eureka (Nev.) paper, a band of horses from Iowa arrived in town, driven by the owner and several herders. Among the latter was a boy about seventeen years of age, a bright youth, who had been picked up in Omaha, a waif, drifting as impulse and opportunity impelled him. At this point he quarrelled with his boss and left his employ. He had been working for his board, and there were no settlements to make, and he found himself adrift among strangers without a cent to his name. For a year or more he led a rough life, loafing around the saloons, picking up a subsistence as best he could, and a good portion of the time depending upon the restaurant swill barrels for his meals, disputing with the Chinese slop-man and the Shoshone for the choice scraps that found their way to those receptacles.

About eighteen months ago Messrs. Ford & Hathaway noticed the boy, took pity on his forlorn condition, and sent him out to their ranch, where he has since been employed in doing chores and making himself useful. In the meantime an uncle of the youth, a wealthy old bachelor, had died, and left him property valued at \$50,000. This was situated at his old home, in Illinois, and of course the youngster's whereabouts was an object of interest. Advertisements were inserted in the leading papers of the East, but six months passed away and no tidings came. Finally information was had of his leaving Oma-

ha with a band of horses, and the next step was to trace out the owner of the herd.

It took three months to locate him and find that he had left the youth at Eureka. Instead of appealing to the newspapers with the customary "Information Wanted," a month more was consumed looking for him, when he was at last traced to Ford & Hathaway's ranch, and the long search ended. There was no question as to his identity, nor any dispute as to his being the heir to the property. At the request of the administrator to the estate, Mr. Ford bought the boy a ticket to Chicago, furnished him with an outfit of clothes, etc., and a short time ago started him for his home and fortune. We are pleased to state that there were no legal quibbles intervening to prevent his taking immediate possession, and he is now enjoying his good luck, and doubtless contrasts his present state with his condition two years ago, when the swill-barrels of Eureka were his main dependence for a living.

Puzzled Custom House Officers.

SOME forty years ago, the Governor Endicot arrived at Salem, Massachusetts, from India, and there landed several missionaries, who departed at once for Boston to report their arrival to the Missionary Board, leaving their belongings at the Lafayette Hotel. There they attracted the attention of a custom house clerk, who, noting the presence of a cask, suspected an evasion of duty, and reported the matter to General Miller, the collector of customs. That official at once ordered baggage and cask to be sent to the custom-house for examination, and requested that the men would give him a call as soon as they returned to Salem. The suspicious cask was taken to the custom-house yard, the bung knocked out, a proof glass inserted to find out what kind of liquor was inside, in order to fix the duty on it. They all tasted—collector, deputy-collector, naval officer, inspector, clerk, and a tribe of hangers on. They drank it neat, they drank it with water, with sugar, with biscuits, with cheese, but could not agree what kind of liquor it was. Bets were made; and it was finally agreed to leave the knotty question to be decided by two absent inspectors—Captain Bill L.—and Captain Steve R.—. At last they came. They tasted. Captain L.—said that he would stake his reputation that it was old London Dock brandy, vowing "he had not tasted such liquor since General Crowningshield launched Cleopatra's barge in 1818." Captain R.—declined "to put a name to it;" he said it had a flavor different from any liquor with which he was acquainted.

The next day the missionaries arrived at the custom-house, to have their baggage passed, all save the cask of liquor. "That must pay duty," said the General. "Would they inform him what spirits the cask contained?" The amused missionaries complied by telling him that when they left India they brought with them a pet orang-outang, which dying after thirty days experience of sea life, had been put in a cask of rum for preservation. An explanation accounting for the peculiar flavor that had puzzled so many experienced tasters.

The Philosopher's Stone.

The eccentric but brilliant John Randolph once rose suddenly up in his seat in the House of Representatives and screamed out at the top of his shrill voice:

"Mr. Speaker! I have discovered the philosopher's stone. It is—Pay as you go!"

John Randolph dropped many rich gems from his mouth, but never a richer one than that.

"Pay as you go," and you need not dodge sheriffs and constables.

"Pay as you go," and you can walk the streets with an erect back and a manly front, and you have no fear of those you meet. You can look any man in the eye without flinching. You won't have to cross the highway to avoid a dun, or look intently into the shop windows to avoid seeing a creditor.

"Pay as you go," and you can snap your fingers at the world, and when you laugh, it will be a hearty honest one. It seems to us, sometimes, that we can almost tell the laugh of a poor debtor. He looks around as though he was in doubt whether the laugh was not the property of his creditors, and not included in articles "exempted from attachment." When he does succeed in getting out an abortion—he appears frightened, and looks as though he expected it would be pounced upon by a constable.

"Pay as you go," and you will meet smiling faces at home—happy cherry-cheeked children—a contented wife—a cheerful hearth-stone.

John Randolph was right. It is the philosopher's stone.

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April 25, 1875.