MY POOR WIFE.

BY J. P. SMITH.

CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)

"I made cautious inquiries, and found to my surprise that my miserable identity was quite lost. I had given no hint, uttered no name during my stay there, that would lead to discovery. I learned that the clothes I wore when taken up by the police were mere rags of the coarsest, most loathsome kind, and a bit of soiled paper bearing the name 'Elizabeth Thompson' found in the pocket of the dress served as my certificate of baptism, and so Elizabeth Thompson I remained to all who met me during those seven years. When and how my clothes were changed and stolen, as they undoubtedly were, I don't remember. After three years I was discharged as cured, and, as I had shown some capability for nursing during an epidemic that visited the asylum, a kind nun who had charge of the Catholic ward offered to get me a place as attendant in a hospital, where I remained some time."

"And you never thought of me—never longed to see me, to know how I—"

She laughed bitterly, as she waved the eager interruption aside, with a gesture of pain.

"Never thought of you! Ah, you will never know how you filled my life, can never understand what I felt—and suffered! I knew you must believe me dead, and I knew the best thing for your happiness, your peace of mind, was to let you remain in that belief. I struggled to keep away from you, to learn nothing about you; but, when nursing a patient whom I casually heard had lately been in domestic service in the neighborhood of Colworth, I could not resist the temptation of questioning her. From her I learned, Paul, that Mr. Dennys of Colworth was married to a Miss Stopford, with whom he had inherited a large fortune, that he was very happy and prosperous and the father of three beautiful children.

"This news allayed all my doubts, drove every lingering spark of hope and happiness from my future. I begged the reverend mother who had procured me the place in the hospital to accept me as a novice; but she hesitated for some time, knowing of the taint in my blood. However, after a couple of years, seeing no sign of a relapse, and getting a very favorable opinion of my case from the asylum doctors, I was received into the convent, and on application allowed to join the mission going to New Zealand.

"We were to have sailed next week, and as the time drew near a terrible restlessness came over me, a longing so intense to breathe the air you breathed once more, that I felt I could never be a useful and contented servant of Heaven unless my longing were gratified. I appealed to the reverend mother, and she with her usual goodness gave her consent. I arrived at dusk that—that blessed night, intending only to say a prayer for you and yours at the cross preserving my memory, and then steal away as I had come.

"At the station I saw your brother accidentally, believing him to be you—his features are wonderfully like what yours once were. I found to my utter bewilderment, and I think relief, that my love was dead—completely dead, that Edith's husband was nothing to me.

"I wandered out, pondering the meaning of this discovery, and saw you stretched across my grave. At the first sound of your voice, at the first glance into your worn altered face—ah, beloved, I knew that I was not free, and could never be, no matter what gulf divided us. I tried to save you as I thought—to leave you; but—but—"

CHAPTER XIX.

She stopped a little hysterically; and he laid his hand on her lips. Presently she lifted it away, and said with eager wistfulness—

"But you loved her, Paul, sister-in-law or not; you never can explain that away. No no; do not try! You wanted to marry her before you met me. I am sure of it. You loved her—you wanted to marry her once," she repeated monotonously.

"Yes, yes, I wanted to marry her once. Listen, listen to me Helen! I was a mere boy, home from an outskirt station in India, where I never saw a woman's face. I was lonely and sad; she was kind and beautiful, and did everything in her power to fascinate and enslave me. How could I help falling in the trap? I left her in a state of melodramatic despair, which I now know was only skin deep, though I believed at the time she had dealt me a life-wound.

"I met you; we were married and spent six months together abroad. Ah, Helen, I did not understand until long afterwards how happy those six months were, how thoroughly they had made you part of my life, the very essence of my content and happiness. For I was happy; but blind, conceited dolt that I was, I attributed my contented state of being to my own selfishness and generosity in marrying you, and accepted as my due your devotion to me. Well, well, I was punished, cruelly punished for it all. I lived to linger over every day, every hour of those six months with a yearning passion, a sickening remorse that left those lines you see on my face, and streaking my hair with gray before I had reached the prime of life.

"When we returned she came across my path again, and necessity compelled her to confide a secret to me. When I learned by it how shamefully she had been treated, I believed I had misjudged her cruelly, and was only eager to offer reparation in my power. I felt that no sacrifice or exertion I could make would atone for the irreparable wrong done her by one of my name, and—"

"Your brother Arthur, you mean; he had—"

"He had forced her—an ignorant thoughtless girl of sixteen—to marry him secretly when she was staying with an invalid aunt in London."

"Of sixteen!" she exclaimed eagerly. "You mean that she—she was your brother's wife before I left you—all that time she was with us, your brother's wife?"

"Yes, yes. At first the excitement and adventure had pleased her, but later on, when she came to know Arthur's true character and mode of his life—how he had squandered his fortune, was shunned by honest men and respectable women—when her uncle, who had heard some rumor of a childish attachment between the pair, informed her that, if she exchanged another word with Arthur, he would not only alter his will and leave her penniless, but would expel her from his home, her complacency changed to a state of misery and almost unbearable suspense, which by degrees taught her to hate the cause of her selfish terror, and made his existence a positive nightmare to her.

"At last, after a stormy interview Arthur consented to emigrate to Australia, pledging his word to remain there until the General should die, and Edith's inheritance be quite safe.

"He sailed, but after a time tiring of Colonial life, broke his solemn promise, and a month after our arrival at Colworth he turned up at Southampton, and Edith in her terror of discovery confided her secret to me, implored me to help her and induce my brother to return to Australia at once.

"I promised to help her by every means in my power, wrote at once to my brother, begging him to leave; but he refused point blank until he had had at least one interview with his wife, whom, with all his faults, I believe he truly loved, as his conduct within the last seven years has amply proved. Seeing he was not to be shaken, we arranged that the meeting should take place at Colworth, where there would be less chance of detection. It was in vain. I begged Edith to let you share the secret; she was inflexible on that point. Her motive for that reserve at the time I thought trivial and unreasonable; but I have since fathomed the terrible overweening vanity and heartlessness of the woman, and can now understand it perfectly. She was jealous of you, my darling; that I should have so quickly recovered from her wanton attack was a stab her vanity resented bitterly; she saw more clearly than I could see myself—dull fool!—how thoroughly happy I was, how dear you were to me; and so she set about, with a thousand nameless, almost intangible wiles and artifices, to wreck the happiness of a man who was sheltering and protecting her, fighting to preserve her fortune and honor. With broken, half-stifled hints and innuendoes, she gave me to understand that I would have been her choice had I spoken long ago, before my brother—tried by every means in power to wean me from your influence, to force on me the fact that I had made a tremendous sacrifice in marrying you, that my chivalrous and tender bearing towards you awoke in her feelings that made her own wretched fate almost unbearable, and at the same time, I presume, from what I've heard, that you, my poor darling, did not escape her——"

"Paul, that time when you left me alone with her, when you went to London——"

"To meet her husband—yes?"

"She told me—not at once, you know, but by degrees—it—it took three days, Paul—that you—you had loved her passionately for years, that you had proposed to her a few days before you met me, that, even after her first refusal, you had followed her about London, trying to make her change her mind, and that, failing that, you—you had rushed back to Ireland in wrath and despair, and—and married me——"

"She told you that—the jade?"

"Not boldly, as I tell you now, but with little hints and jokes, half laughing sighs that were almost worse."

"My poor brother! Well, my darling, the end came. You followed us that night, and saw the meeting between husband and wife."

"Paul, Paul! You mean it was not you I saw holding her in your arms, imploring her to fly?"

"No it was Arthur. We were more alike then than now, and I had lent him my big gray ulster, for he complained of the cold. The—the mistake was natural; but, oh, how awful in its consequences to you and me!"

"Go on—oh, go on!" she cried breathlessly.

"When convinced of your terrible death, brain fever set in, and for some months I was unconscious of my loss. I recovered, rose from my sick bed wretched in heart and body, the love, hope, happiness of my life buried in your grave. I left Europe—traveled aimlessly in Asia and America for six years. In the meantime the old General had died suddenly a few weeks after your disappearance, leaving his niece sixty thousand pounds in hard cash, but the Hall and surrounding property to a male relative.

"Edith married Arthur publicly almost at once, and they settled down at Colworth, renting the place from me. A few months ago my brother, who is now a most exemplary member of society, wrote asking me if I would sell my interest in it, and let them entail it on their eldest son, as it was my avowed intention not to marry again. I could not make up my mind, and came home to settle the business.

"A few days ago at the Langham I met my brother and his wife for the first time since their second marriage, and he persuaded me to try to visit the old place again. I came down with them, and walked across the fields to the cross which bore your name. When I saw the familiar spot, the house among the trees, the cruel mill, heard the mournful rustle of the leaves and the ripple of the water, all the old pain broke out as fiercely as on the day I lost you. I threw myself upon your grave, calling out your name. Your voice answered me. I looked up, and saw you, Helen, standing in the moonlight before me."

Two months after his installation at Colworth, Mrs. Arthur Dennys, her lord and master, nursery, horses, carriages, lackeys, and maids were storming the sleepy country station again, enroute for a Sydenham villa residence, where she still bemoans the ill luck of her eldest born, who will never now inherit Colworth.

(THE END.)

A GREAT FRENCH ETCHER.

Would Have Been a Fine Painter but for Color Blindness.

Charles Meryon—born in 1821—was brought up to the navy, going first in 1837 to the naval school at Brest, says Pall Mall Gazette. As a youth, he sailed round the world. He touched at Athens; touched at the then savage coasts of New Zealand; made sketches, a few of which, in days when most of his greater work was done, he used as material for some of his etchings. Art even then occupied him, and deeply interested as he soon got to be in it, he seems to have had a notion that it was less dignified than the profession of the navy, and after awhile he chose deliberately the less dignified—because it was the less dignified. He would have us believe so, at any rate; he wished his father to believe so. And in 1845, having served creditably and become a lieutenant, he resigned his commission. A painter he could not be. The gods, who had given him, even in his youth, a poetic vision and a firmness of hand, had denied him the true sight of color; and I remember seeing hanging up in the salon of M. Burty, who knew him, a large, impressive pastel of a ship cleaving her way through wide, deep waters, and the sea was red and the sunset sky was green, for Meryon was color blind. He would have to be an engraver. He entered the workroom of one M. Blery, to whom in after times, as his wont was, he engraved some verses of his writing—appreciative verses, sincere and unfinished—"a toi, Blery, mon maitre." The etchings of Zeeman, the Dutchman, gave him the desire to etch. He copied with freedom and interest several of Zeeman's neat little plates, and addressed him with praises, on another little copper, like the one to Blery—"a Zeeman, pointre des matelots."

AFRAID OF THE GLASS EYE.

Japanese Coolies Would Not Serve the Owner of It.

A year or two ago an artist from San Francisco who wore a glass eye came to Yokohama and established himself in a little bungalow on the outskirts of the city, says the Yorkville Yeoman. The weather was extremely warm, and before the stranger had become settled he was besieged by a number of coolies who wanted to get the job of fanning him at night. The artists looked over the applicants and finally selected an old man who brought excellent recommendations from his last employer. When it was time to retire the artist took out his glass eye, laid it on the stand at his bedside and went to bed. The old man picked up his fan and the San Francisco man was soon asleep. He slept peacefully for an hour or two, when he was awakened by a chorus of buzzing insects about his head. He looked about him and found that the man whom he had hired to fan him was gone. The next morning when he went in search of another coolie he was amazed to discover that no one would work for him. He was looked upon as a wizard and worker of miracles with whom it was unsafe to be alone. The old man had gone among his friends and told how the Californian had taken out his eye at night and laid it on a stand in order that he might watch his servant at night and see that he kept his fan in motion. The old coolie's story created such excitement that the San Francisco man was never able to get another Japanese to fan him after that.

Pessimist—I tell you the world is going to the devil. Optimist—Well, I see you are going the way of the world.

MORE THAN A BILLION

EXPORT TRADE THE LARGEST IN OUR HISTORY.

The Year 1898 Beats All Previous Records in Sales Abroad of Domestic Products, While Imports Are the Smallest Since 1885.

The manner in which our national wealth is being increased as the result of an economic policy which stimulates the use of domestic products while at the same time enabling the producers of the United States to reach out after foreign markets is set forth in the figures furnished by the Treasury Department Bureau of Statistics. From these figures it is certain that the calendar year 1898 will be a record breaking year in the matter of export trade. Only twice in our history have the exports in a calendar year passed the billion dollar line; in 1898 they will be a billion and a quarter. During the eleven months of 1898 ending with November they are greater than in any full calendar year preceding, the total for the 11 months being $1,117,681,199, and it is apparent that the December statement will bring the grand total for the year above $1,250,000,000. The November exports were $129,783,512, the largest in any month in the history of our commerce.

Of breadstuffs the exports for the eleven months ending with November, 1898, are the largest in our history, being $277,135,341, against $223,211,617 in the great exporting year of 1892; provisions are for the eleven months $148,417,850, against $125,297,007 in the eleven months of 1892. Cotton for the eleven months amounts to $192,223,391, a figure slightly below that of 1896, though the total number of pounds exported by far exceeds that of the corresponding months in any preceding year, being for the eleven months 3,436,032,504, or, measured in bales, 6,722,283, a larger total in bales or pounds than that of any full calendar year preceding.

Equally gratifying is that portion of the showing which relates to the largely diminished purchase of articles of foreign production and the corresponding increased consumption of domestic products. It is herein that the American policy becomes effective in piling up national wealth to figures so vast as to startle the financiers of Europe, who are growing more and more solicitous as to the enormous credit balances which are being accumulated by this country.

The import record of the year 1898 will be as remarkable as that relating to its exports, but for opposite reasons, the total imports for the year being less than those of any calendar year since 1885. For the month of November they were $52,109,560 only, which was slightly less than those of November, 1897, and less, with three exceptions, than those of any November since 1885. For the eleven months ending with November they were $579,844,153 only, while those of the corresponding months of 1897 were $691,089,266 and those of the eleven months of 1896 $622,598,896. It is thus apparent that the imports for the full calendar year 1898 will not exceed $640,000,000, a sum less than that of any calendar year since 1885 and fully a hundred million dollars less than that of the calendar year 1897.

The year 1898 will naturally show the largest balance of trade in our favor ever presented in any calendar year. The figures for the eleven months show an excess of exports over imports amounting to $537,837,046, and the December figures will bring the total excess of exports for the calendar year above the $600,000,000 line, making an average excess of exports for the year more than $50,000,000 a month. The highest excess of exports in any preceding calendar year was $357,090,914 in 1897, and $324,263,685 in 1896.

The gold imports for the eleven months ending with November are $149,396,370. No full calendar year, save 1896, ever reached the hundred-million dollar line, and in that year the total for the twelve months was $104,731,259. The effect of this large importation of gold, in conjunction with the increased production from our own mines, is plainly visible in the increased circulation of that metal. The gold in circulation on December 1, 1898, was $658,986,513, against $544,494,748 on December 1, 1897; $516,729,882 on December 1, 1896, and $456,128,483 on July 1, 1896. The total circulation on December 1, 1898, was $1,886,879,504, against $1,721,084,538 on December 1, 1897; $1,650,223,400 on December 1, 1896, and $1,509,725,200 on July 1, 1896.

STRICTLY JEFFERSONIAN.

The Patron Saint of Democracy Advocated Marine Protection.

In the early days of the Republic attention was directed to the building of ships to strengthen the commercial enterprise of the country. A development of ship-building and ship-owning followed that rapidly increased the tonnage of American shipping in foreign trade. When Thomas Jefferson was Secretary of State in the administration of President Washington he, at the request of Congress, made during the third session of the First Congress, prepared a "report on the privileges and restrictions of commerce of the United States," which was written after careful study of the question and when his mental powers were in their very prime. His command of the English language was such as to enable him to express himself with precision and felicity, which is a delight to study. In that memorable report he said, in part:

"If particular nations grasp at undue shares of our commerce, and more especially if they seize on the means of the United States to convert them into aliment for their own strength and withdraw them entirely from the support of those to whom they belong, defensive and protective measures become necessary on the part of the nation whose marine resources are thus invaded, or it will be disarmed of its defense; its productions will be at the mercy of the nation which has possessed itself exclusively of the means of carrying them, and its policies will be influenced by those who command its commerce. If we lose the seamen and artists whom it now employs we lose the present means of marine defense, and time will be requisite to raise up others, when disgrace and losses shall bring home to our feelings the disgrace of having abandoned them."

It is thus clearly shown that the question of being able to build and own our own ships was not with Jefferson a purely economic one; indeed, it was especially a national, a defensive, a military one. These considerations were of value in Jefferson's day; they are even more so today, when the present commerce of the United States has become of wonderful importance and the future presents a view that is encouraging in the extreme.—Buffalo Express.

A Sensible Suggestion.

The Los Angeles Times thinks it would be easy to resent French hostility to American fruits and other products by setting up the tariff on French wines and Parisian gewgaws. The suggestion is sound and practicable. For example, if the duty on French wines were double the present rate it would increase customs receipts from this source, for a large proportion of wine drinkers would doubtless continue to let the foreign label and not the real question of quality and merit control their palates, but the largely increased selling price necessitated by the higher duty would set sensible people to thinking whether it was worth while to pay for French wines three or four times the money for which an equally good article of American wine could be bought. And it only needs that sensible people should give the question of relative quality and merit a fair amount of consideration in order to reach the conclusion that American wines of standard brands are good enough for anybody; in fact, are a great deal better than the bulk of imported wines.

Protection.

Jack—"That's an awfully big building your father is putting up over there."

Grace—"Yes; papa says they haven't room enough in the old place, the business has grown so rapidly since protection came."

The Explanation.

In a report to the state department, Commercial Agent Stern, at Bamberg, predicts that the United States will soon surpass England in the value of exports of machinery to Germany.

The present year shows even a falling off in the case of England, while the imports of American machines show an increase of 75 per cent over last year's figures. In 1895 the imports of the United States of these goods into Germany did not amount to the sixth part of the amount of the English imports, while today they are equal to 60 per cent of the latter.

This increase is due not so much to price as to quality. An American-made machine is recognized as the best the world over. The explanation is ready and simple. It is found in what the London Times calls "intelligent labor highly paid." In other words, the fruits of protection.

Value of Experience.

Soon after the enactment of the Dingley tariff bill was completed it was attacked from Democratic quarters because of its assumed favor for the sugar trust. Experience has proven that the Dingley bill contained no such favor. Since the Dingley bill became a law two great competitors to the sugar trust have appeared in the market, and the home manufacture of sugar from beets will soon destroy the power of all the trusts and combinations in the sugar market. There is more value in one year of experience under a Republican tariff law than in all the Democratic free trade and free silver theories ever formulated.—Cadillac (Mich.) News and Express.

Not Always Silly.

Americans are not silly on all off years. Protection and gold, and territorial expansion, and the building of a mercantile navy have been indorsed.—Hillsboro (Ore.) Independent.

Commerce and Industry.

Republican management, with its protective tariff, builds up the commerce of the nation, as well as its industries.—Erie (Pa.) Dispatch.

REWARD FOR FRIENDSHIP.

What England Expects in Return for Her Amicable Disposition.

Great hopes from the present established community of interests between this country and Great Britain fill the English mind as well as the minds of those in this country whose handiwork is to advance British interests. The style of advantage we are expected to receive from the British co-operation was outlined in a repeatedly false rumor that we were to lease Socotra from England for a naval coaling station, without power to interfere with British trade by coaling our own merchant ships there. The fact that the rumor was promptly denied has no bearing on the pro-British idea of the commercial advantages we will be allowed to derive from the cordial relations established between the two countries.

There seems nothing that England is not claiming as a reward for her friendship. On one hand we find that our law allowing us to print our own books, as well as some for the English, is objectionable to British publishers, and they think it is a good time to have it altered. On another we find that the extension of our coasting trade to Porto Rico is inimical to British maritime interests, and immediately the demand is made that our navigation laws shall be so amended as to still further increase the tolls we pay to England for the privilege of getting our goods to an oversea market. (This seems a particularly unkind claim, as they propose to pass a free ship bill.)

But the great claim, the claim for which every one who expects British recognition or free dinners and other flattering attentions when in England, must work, is for an open door in the Philippines. The British trade route between Hongkong and Australia lies through the Philippines, and they wish to do all the coasting trade of those islands and maintain a center of British influence in every little port; a center that will discriminate against the use of American goods; and there are some inhabitants of this country that would be proud and happy to travel through American possessions under the British flag.

We are asked to efface all opportunities for employment on the sea, and to minimize the consumption of our goods in Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines by extending to those islands the lack of competent wages and the want of free trade countries because Great Britain is said to have refused to enter a European combination to prevent our freeing Cuba. The fact is that Great Britain found herself without a chance of friends in this world unless she made friends with the United States. But she apparently insisted on payments in advance for any friendly act. Before anything was done by her it seemed necessary to neglect and virtually abrogate the declaration in the Republican platform, of two years ago, in favor of a discriminating duty on all goods, wares or merchandise which shall be imported in vessels not of the United States; and she positively prohibited a tonnage tax of 20 cents per ton on all vessels, American and British alike, entering our ports.

Every one knows that without the strength given to her by the recognized mutual good understanding between the two countries the lately made arrangements with the emperor of Germany could not have been obtained. And for all of this we are to extend a Wilson-Gorman tariff over our new acquisitions despite their present poverty and sore need of development.

This is too much.

A Natural Result.

"How far the present small purchase of goods by America has been due to the Dingley tariff we have no means of ascertaining, but it is not remarkable that a country which sells us produce in one year of the value of £124,000,000 should buy British goods of the value of only £14,500,000?" says the London Statist. The people of this country are better informed than is the Statist, and are convinced that the favored conditions are very largely due to the Dingley bill. If nothing else were at hand, the record of the past would show that under a protective tariff our imports have decreased and unusual prosperity and activity obtained in our manufactures, while under free trade or low tariff the reverse has resulted. The great reduction in the sales of British products to this country is but the natural result of protection, for the demands of our people have been supplied with American instead of foreign products.—Tacoma Ledger.

They Have Not Changed.

Will the people of this country ever return to Democratic party policies? They will if they ever vote the Democratic party into power again. The people thought when they elected Grover Cleveland that the Democratic party had changed; that it had progressed, and a Democratic president and a Democratic congress could be elected without bringing national ruin. A fair supposition is that Democratic leaders believe in Democratic principles, and just as often as the Democratic party is voted into power, Democratic policies will prevail.—Binghamton (N. Y.) Republican.

Not For Foreigners.

We must own our own ships. We are making ten times as much as we can carry, and there is no reason why we should give one of the most productive lines of business in which any country can engage into the hands of foreigners.—El Paso (Texas) Herald.