

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 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 cult 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 out-skirt 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, concealed doubt 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 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 signs 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, love, and I had lent him my big gray ulster, for he complained of the cold. 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 her 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. Blyer, to whom in after times, as his wont was, he engraved some verses of his writing—appreciative verses, sincere and unfinished—"a tol, Blyer, 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 Blyer—"a Zeeman, peintre des maitres."

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 artist 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.

TALMAGE'S SERMON.

'A SUMMER-HOUSE TRAGEDY.'

SUNDAY'S SUBJECT.

From Judges III, 15, as Follows: "But When the Children of Israel Cried Unto the Lord, the Lord Raised Them Up a Deliverer, Ehud, the Son of Gera."

Ehud was a ruler in Israel. He was left-handed, and, what was peculiar about the tribe of Benjamin, to which he belonged, there were in it seven hundred left-handed men, and, yet, so dexterous had they all become in the use of the left hand, that the Bible says they could sling stones at a hair's breadth, and not miss. Well, there was a king by the name of Eglon, who was an oppressor of Israel. He imposed upon them a most outrageous tax. Ehud, the man of whom I first spoke, had a divine commission to destroy that oppressor. He came, pretending that he was going to pay the tax, and asked to see King Eglon. He was told he was in the summer-house, the place to which the king retired when it was too hot to sit in the palace. This summer-house was a place surrounded by flowers, and trees, and springing fountains, and warbling birds. Ehud entered the summer-house and said to King Eglon that he had a secret errand with him. Immediately all the attendants were waved out of the royal presence. King Eglon rises up to receive the messenger. Ehud, the left-handed man, puts his left hand to his right side, pulls out a dagger, and thrusts Eglon through until the haft went in after the blade. Eglon falls. Ehud comes forth to blow a trumpet of liberty amidst the mountains of Ephraim, and a great host is marshaled, and proud Moab submits to the conqueror, and Israel is free. See, O Lord, let all thine enemies perish! So, O Lord, let all thy friends triumph!

I learn first from this subject the power of left-handed men. There are some men who, by physical organization, have as much strength in their left hand as in their right hand, but there is something in the writing of this text which implies that Ehud had some defect in his right hand which compelled him to use his left. Oh, the power of left-handed men! Genius is often self-observant, careful of itself, not given to much toil, burning incense to its own aggrandizement; while many a man, with no natural endowments, actually defective in physical and mental organization, has an earnestness for the right, a patient industry, an all-consuming perseverance, which achieve marvels for the kingdom of Christ. Though left-handed, as Ehud, they can strike down a sin as great and imperial as Eglon.

I have seen men of wealth gathering about them all their treasures, snuffing at the cause of a world lying in wickedness, roughly ordering Lazarus off their doorstep, sending their dogs, not to lick his sores, but to hound him off their premises; catching all the pure rain of God's blessing into the stagnant, rosy, frog-inhabited pool of their own selfishness—right-handed men, worse than useless—while many a man with large heart and little purse, has, out of his limited means, made poverty leap for joy, and started an influence that overspans the grave, and will swing round and round the throne of God, world without end: Amen.

Ah, me! It is high time that you left-handed men, who have been longing for this gift, and that eloquence, and the other man's wealth, should take your left hand out of your pockets. Who made all these railroads? Who set up all these cities? Who started all these churches, and schools, and asylums? Who has done the tugging, and running, and pulling? Men of no wonderful endowments, thousands of them acknowledging themselves to be left-handed, and yet they were earnest, and yet they were determined, and yet they were triumphant.

But I do not suppose that Ehud, the first time he took a sling in his left hand, could throw a stone at a hair's breadth, and not miss. I suppose it was practice that gave him the wonderful dexterity. Go forth to your spheres of duty, and be not discouraged if, in your first attempts, you miss the mark. Ehud missed it. Take another stone, put it carefully into the sling, swing it around your head, take better aim, and the next time you will strike the center. The first time a mason rings his trowel upon the brick he does not expect to put up a perfect wall. The first time a carpenter sends the plane over a board, or drives a bit through a beam, he does not expect to make perfect execution. The first time a boy attempts a rhyme, he does not expect to chime a "Lalla Rookh," or a "Lady of the Lake." Do not be surprised if, in your first efforts at doing good, you are not very largely successful. Understand that usefulness is an art, a science, a trade. There was an oculist performing a very difficult operation on the human eye. A young doctor stood by and said: "How easily you do that; it doesn't seem to cause you any trouble at all." "Ah," said the old oculist, "it is very easy now, but I spoiled a half of eyes to learn that." Be not surprised if it takes some practice before we can help men to moral eye-sight, and bring them to a vision of the Cross. Left-handed men, to the work! Take the Gospel for a sling, and faith and repentance for the smooth stone from the brook; take sure aim. God direct the weapon, and great Goliath will tumble before you.

When Garibaldi was going out to battle, he told his troops what he wanted them to do, and after he had described what he wanted them to do,

they said, "Well, general, what are you going to give us for all this?" "Well," he replied, "I don't know what else you will get, but you will get hunger, and cold, and wounds, and death. How do you like it?" His men stood before him for a little while in silence, and then they threw up their hands and cried, "We are the men! We are the men!" The Lord Jesus Christ calls you to his service. I do not promise you an easy time in this world. You may have persecutions, and trials, and misrepresentations, but afterward there comes an eternal weight of glory, and you can bear the wounds, and the bruises, and the misrepresentations, if you can have the reward afterward. Have you not enough enthusiasm to cry out, "We are the men! We are the men!"

I learn from this subject that death comes to the summer-house. Eglon did not expect to die in that fine place. Amidst all the flower-leaves that drifted like summer snow into the window; in the tinkle and dash of the fountains; in the sound of a thousand leaves fluting on one tree-branch; in the cool breeze that came up to shake feverish trouble out of the king's locks—there was nothing that spake of death, but there he died! In the winter, when the snow is a shroud, and when the wind is a dirge, it is easy to think of our mortality; but when the weather is pleasant, and all our surroundings are agreeable, how difficult it is for us to appreciate the truth that we are mortal! And yet my text teaches that death does sometimes come to the summer-house. He is blind, and cannot see the leaves. He is deaf, and cannot hear the fountains. Oh, if death would ask us for victims, we could point him to hundreds of people who would rejoice to have him come. Push back the door of that hovel. Look at that little child—cold, and sick, and hungry. It has never heard the name of God but in blasphemy. Parents intoxicated, staggering around its straw bed. Oh, Death, there is a mark for thee! Up with it into the light! Before those little feet stumble on life's pathway, give them rest.

Here is a father in mid-life; his coming home at night is the signal for mirth. The children rush to the door, and there are books on the evening stand, and the hours pass away on glad feet. There is nothing wanting in that home. Religion is there, and sacrifices on the altar morning and night. You look in that household and say, "I cannot think of anything happier. I do not really believe the world is so sad a place as some people describe it to be." The scene changes. Father is sick. The doors must be kept shut. The death-watch chirps dolefully on the hearth. The children whisper and walk softly where once they romped. Passing the house late at night, you see the quick glancing of lights from room to room. It is all over! Death in the summer-house!

Here is an aged mother—aged, but not infirm. You think you will have the joy of caring for her wants a good while yet. As she goes from house to house, to children and grandchildren, her coming is a dropping of sunlight in the dwelling. Your children see her coming through the lane and they cry, "Grandmother's come!" Care for you has marked up her face with many a deep wrinkle, and her back stoops with carrying your burdens. Some day she is very quiet. She says she is not sick, but something tells you you will not much longer have a mother. She will sit with you no more at the table nor at the hearth. Her soul goes out so gently you do not exactly know the moment of its going. Fold the hands that have done so many kindnesses for you right over the heart that has beat with love for you since before you were born. Let the pilgrim rest. She is weary. Death in the summer-house!

Gather about us what we will of comfort and luxury. When the pale messenger comes he does not stop to look at the architecture of the house before he comes in; nor, entering, does he wait to examine the pictures we have gathered on the wall; or, bending over your pillow, he does not stop to see whether there is color in the cheek, or gentleness in the eye, or intelligence in the brow. But what of that? Must we stand forever mourning the graves of our dead? No! No! The people in Bengal bring cages of birds to the graves of their dead, and then they open the cages, and the birds go singing heavenward. So I would bring to the graves of your dead all bright thoughts and congratulations, and bid them sing of victory and redemption. I stamp on the bottom of the grave, and it breaks through into the light and the glory of heaven. The ancients used to think that the straits entering the Red Sea were very dangerous places, and they supposed that every ship that went through those straits would be destroyed, and they were in the habit of putting on weeds of mourning for those who had gone on that voyage, as though they were actually dead. Do you know what they called those straits? They called them the "Gate of Tears." I stand at the gate of tears, through which many of your loved ones have gone, and I want to tell you that all are not shipwrecked that have gone through those straits into the great ocean stretching out beyond. The sound that comes from that other shore on still nights when we are wrapped in prayer makes me think that the departed are not dead. We are the dead—we who toil, we who weep, we who sin—we are the dead. How my heart aches for human sorrow! This sound of breaking hearts that I hear all about me! This last look of faces that will never brighten again! This last kiss of lips that never will speak again! This widowhood and orphanage! Oh, when will the day of sorrow be gone?

After the sharpest winter, the spring dismounts from the shoulder of a southern gale and puts its warm hand upon the earth, and in its palm there comes the grass, and there come the flowers, and God reads over the poetry of bird and brook and bloom, and pronounces it very good. What, my friends, if every winter had not its spring, and every night its day, and every gloom its glow, and every bitter now its sweet hereafter? If you have been on the sea, you know, as the ship passes in the night, there is a phosphorescent track left behind it; and as the waters roll up they toss with unimaginable splendor. Well, across this great ocean of human trouble Jesus walks. Oh, that in the phosphorescent track of his feet we might all follow and be illumined!

There was a gentleman in a rail car who saw in that same car three passengers of very different circumstances. The first was a maniac. He was carefully guarded by his attendants; his mind, like a ship demasted, was beating against a dark, desolate coast, from which no help could come. The train stopped, and the man was taken out into the asylum, to waste away, perhaps, through years of gloom. The second passenger was a culprit. The outraged law was seized on him. As the cars jolted, the chains rattled. On his face were crime, depravity and despair. The train halted, and he was taken out to the penitentiary, to which he had been condemned. There was the third passenger, under far different circumstances. She was a bride. Every hour was as gay as a marriage bell. Life glittered and beckoned. Her companion was taking her to his father's house. The train halted. The old man was there to welcome her to her new home, and his white locks snowed down upon her as he sealed his word with a father's kiss. Quickly we fly toward eternity. We will soon be there. Some leave this life condemned culprits, and they refuse a pardon. Oh, may it be with us, that, leaving this fleeting life for the next, we may find our Father ready to greet us to our new home with him forever! That will be a marriage banquet. Father's welcome! Father's bosom! Father's kiss! Heaven! Heaven!

STORYETTES.

Canon MacColl tells an amusing story. "A friend of mine," says the canon, "once shared the box seat with the driver of the stage coach in Yorkshire, and, being a lover of horses, he talked with the coachman about his team, admiring one horse in particular. 'Ah,' said the coachman, 'but that 'oss ain't as good as he looks; he's a scientific 'oss.' 'A scientific horse!' exclaimed my friend. 'What on earth do you mean by that?' 'I means,' replied Jehu, 'a 'oss as thinks he knows a deal more nor he does.'"

A soldier who served in Cuba relates that one night, after a march, a few of the boys pitched their tents close to the tent of an officer of another company. The boys were talking quite loudly, as taps had not been sounded. "Hush up out there!" shouted the officer, angrily. "Who are you?" asked one of the boys. "I'll show you who I am if I come out there!" was the answer. The talking continued, and out came the officer. His anger was great, and he threatened to report the men to his colonel, winding up with, "Don't you know enough to obey an officer?" "Yes," replied one of the boys, "and we should have obeyed you if you had had shoulder-straps on your voice."

When the lord mayor of Dublin presented to Charles Stuart Parnell from the Irish people the Parnell tribute, not less than \$185,000, his lordship naturally expected to make a speech. The lord mayor having been announced, says Barry O'Brien in his biography of the Irish leader, he bowed and began: "Mr. Parnell—" "I believe," said Mr. Parnell, "you have got a check for me." The lord mayor, somewhat surprised at this interruption, said, "Yes," and was about to recommence his speech, when Parnell broke in: "Is it made payable to order and crossed?" The lord mayor again answered in the affirmative and was resuming the discourse, when Parnell took the check, folded it neatly and put it in his waistcoat pocket. This ended the interview.

BURIED CITIES.

Many of us, no doubt, often wonder how it is possible for the sites of great cities to be covered many feet deep with heaps of debris and earth, so that after two or three thousand years the levels of the original streets can be reached only by excavation.

The explanations vary with the localities. The lower portions of Rome have been filled up by the inundations of the Tiber; the higher by the decay, destruction or burning of large buildings. The ancient builders rarely took pains to excavate deeply, even for a large structure. When Nero rebuilt Rome he simply leveled the debris and erected new houses on the ruins of the old.

Earthquakes are responsible for much of the destruction wrought round the shores of the Mediterranean, for there was a current superstition that an earthquake came as a special curse on a place, and after one of these visitations the locality was often totally deserted. In places of rich soils earthworms bring to the surface an inch or two of ground every year, while the winds, bearing clouds of dust, contribute their share to the work of burying the ruins of deserted cities.

A pawnbroker may be dissipated, but he's always willing to take the pledge.