THE PORTENT.

A Story of the Inner Vision of the Highlanders, Commonly Called the Second Sight.

By GEORGE MACDONALD.

CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)

"Has she ever raved?"

"Not often since the first week or two. Now and then occasionally, for an hour or so, she would be wild, wanting to get out. But she gave that over altogether; and she has had her liberty now for a long while. But heaven bless her! at the worst she was always a lady."

"And I am to go away without even seeing her?"

"I am very sorry for you, Mr. Campbell."

"Does she sleep at night?" I asked.

"Like a bairn. But she sleeps a great deal; and the doctor says that's what keeps her so quiet. She would go raving again, he says, if the sleep did not soothe her poor brain."

"Could you not let me see her when she is asleep to-night?"

"I will, sir; but I trust to you never to mention it."

"Of course I will not."

"Come at 10 o'clock, then. You will find the outer door on this side open. Go straight to my room."

With renewed thanks I left her, and betaking myself to the woods, wandered about till night, notwithstanding signs of an approaching storm. I thus kept within the boundaries of the demesne, and had no occasion to request readmittance at any of the gates.

As 10 struck on the tower clock, I entered Mrs. Blakesley's room. She was not there. I sat down. In a few minutes she came.

"She is fast asleep," she said. "Come this way."

I followed her trembling. She led me to the same room Lady Alice used to occupy. The door was a little open. She pushed it gently and I followed her in. The curtains toward the door were drawn. Mrs. Blakesley took me round to the other side. There lay the lovely head, so phantom-like for years, coming only in my dreams; filling now with a real presence the eyes that had longed for it, as if in them dwelt an apostle of appetite of sight. I calmed my heart at once, which had been almost choking me with the violence of its palpitation. "That is not the face of insanity," I said to myself. "It is clear as the morning light." As I stood gazing, I made no comparisons between the past and the present, although I was aware of some difference—of some measure of the unknown fronting me. I was filled with the delight of beholding the face I loved—full, as it seemed to me, of mind and womanhood; sleeping—nothing more. I murmured a fervent "Thank God!" and was turning away with a feeling of great satisfaction for all the future, and a strange great hope beginning to throb in my heart, when, after a little restless motion of her head on the pillow, her patient lips began to tremble. My soul rushed into my ears.

"Mr. Campbell," she murmured, "I cannot spell; what am I to do to learn?"

The unexpected voice, naming my name, sounded in my ears like a voice from the far-off regions where sighing is over. Then a smile gleamed up from the depths unseen, and broke and melted away all over her face. But her nurse had heard her speak, and now approached in alarm. She laid hold of my arm, and drew me toward the door. I yielded at once, but heard a moan from the bed as I went. I looked back—the curtains hid her from my view. Outside the door, Mrs. Blakesley stood listening for a moment and then led the way down stairs.

"You made her restless. You see, sir, she never was like other people, poor dear!"

"Her face is not like one insane," I rejoined.

"I often think she looks more like herself when she's asleep," answered she. "And then I have often seen her smile. She never smiles when she's awake. But, gracious me, Mr. Campbell! what shall I do?"

This exclamation was caused by my suddenly falling back in my chair and closing my eyes. I had almost fainted. I had eaten nothing since breakfast; and had been wandering about in a state of excitement all day. I greedily swallowed the glass of wine she brought me, and then became aware that the storm, which I had seen gathering while I was in the woods, had now broken loose. "What a night in the old Hall!" thought I. The wind was dashing itself like a thousand eagles against the house, and the rain was trampling the roofs and the court like troops of galloping steeds. I rose to go.

But Mrs. Blakesley interfered.

"You don't leave this house to-night, Mr. Campbell," she said. "I won't have your death laid at my door."

"Dear Mrs. Blakesley," I said, seeing her determined.

"I won't hear a word," she interrupted. "I wouldn't let a horse out in such a tempest. No, no; you shall just sleep in your old quarters, across the passage there."

I did not care for any storm. It hardly even interested me. That beautiful face filled my whole being. But I yielded to Mrs. Blakesley, and not unwillingly.

CHAPTER XV.

MY OLD ROOM.

Once more I was left alone in that room of dark oak, looking out on the little ivy-mantled court, of which I was now reminded by the howling of the storm within its high walls. Mrs. Blakesley had extemporized a bed for me on the old sofa; and the fire was already blazing away splendidly. I sat down beside it, and the sombre-hued past rolled upon me.

After I had floated as it were upon the waves of memory for some time, I suddenly glanced behind me and around the old room, and a new and strange experience dawned upon me. Time became to my consciousness what some metaphysicians say it is itself—only a form of human thought. For the past had returned and become the present.

Perhaps I slept—I do not know; but but as I became once more aware of myself, I awoke, as it were, in the midst of an old long-buried night. I was sitting in my own room, waiting for Lady Alice. And, as I sat waiting, and wishing she would come, by slow degrees my wishes intensified themselves, till I found myself, with all my gathered might, wishing that she would come. The minutes passed, but the will remained.

How shall I tell what followed? The door of the closet opened—slowly, gently—and in walked Lady Alice, pale as death, her eyes closed, her whole person asleep. With gliding motion as in a dream, where the volition that produces motion is unfelt, she seemed to me to dream herself across the floor to my couch, on which she laid herself down as gracefully, as simply, as in the old beautiful time. Her appearance did not startle me, for my whole condition was in harmony with the phenomenon. I rose noiselessly, covered her lightly from head to foot, and sat down as of old to watch. How beautiful she was! I thought she had grown taller; but, perhaps, it was only that she had gained in form without losing anything in grace. Her face was, as it always had been, colorless; but neither it nor her figure showed any signs of suffering. The holy sleep had fed her physical as well as shielded her mental nature.

She was waking. My love with the unknown face was at hand. The reviving flush came, grew, deepened. She opened her eyes. God be praised. They were lovelier than ever. And the smile that broke over her face was the very sunlight of the soul.

"Come again, you see!" she said, gently, as she stretched her beautiful arms toward me.

I could not speak. I could only submit to her embrace, and hold myself with all my might, lest I should burst into helpless weeping. But a sob or two broke their prison, and she felt the emotion she had not seen. Relaxing her hold, she pushed me gently from her, and looked at me with concern that grew as she looked.

"You are dreadfully changed, my Duncan! What is the matter Has Lord Hilton been rude to you? You look so much older, somehow. What can it be?"

I understood at once how it was. The whole of those dreary twelve years was gone. The thread of her consciousness had been cut, those years dropped out, and the ends united. She thought this was one of the old visits to me, when, as now, she had walked in her sleep. I answered:

"I will tell you all another time. I don't want to waste the moments with you, my Alice, in speaking about it. Lord Hilton has behaved very badly to me; but never mind."

She half rose in anger, and her eyes looked insane for the first time.

"How dares he?" she said, and then checked herself with a sigh at her own helplessness.

"But it will all come right, Alice," I went on in terror lest I should disturb her present conception of her circumstances. I felt as if the very face I wore with the changes of those twelve forgotten years, which had passed over her like the breath of a spring wind, were a mask of which I had to be ashamed before her. Her consciousness was my involuntary standard of fact. Hope of my life as she was there was thus mingled with my delight in her presence a restless fear that made me wish fervently that she would go. I wanted time to quiet my thoughts and resolve how I should behave to her.

"Alice," I said, "it is nearly morning. You were late to-night. Don't you think you had better go—for fear you know?"

"Ah!" she said, with a smile, in which there was no doubt or fear, 'you are tired of me already! But I will go at once—to dream about you."

She rose.

"O, my darling," I said, "and mind you get some right sleep. Shall I go with you?"

Much to my relief, she answered:

"No, no; please not. I can go alone as usual. When a ghost meets me, I just walk through him, and then he's nowhere; and I laugh."

One kiss, one backward lingering look, and the door closed behind her. I heard the echo of the great hall. I was alone. But what a loneliness!—a loneliness crowded with presence! I paced up and down the room, threw myself on the couch she had left, started up, and paced again. It was long before I could think. But the conviction grew upon me that she would be mine yet. Mine yet? Mine she was, beyond all the power of madness or demons; and mine I trusted she would be beyond the dispute of the world. But what should I do? The only chance of her recovery lay in seeing me; but I could resolve on nothing till I knew whether Mrs. Blakesley had discovered her absence from her room; because, if I drew her, and she were watched and prevented from coming, it would kill her, or worse. I must take to-morrow to think.

Yet, at the moment, by a sudden impulse, I opened the window gently, stepped into the little grassy court, where the last of the storm was still moaning, and withdrew the bolts of a door which led into an alley of trees running along one side of the kitchen-garden. I felt like a house-breaker; but I said: "It is for her right." I pushed the bolts forward again, so as just to touch the sockets and look as if they went in, and then retreated into my own room, where I paced about till the household was astir.

CHAPTER XVI.

PRISON-BREAKING.

It was with considerable anxiety that I repaired to Mrs. Blakesley's room. There I found the old lady at the breakfast table, so thoroughly composed, that I was at once reassured as to her ignorance of what had occurred while she slept. But she seemed uneasy till I should take my departure, which I attributed to the fear that I might happen to meet Lady Alice.

Arrived at my inn, I kept my room, my dim-seen plans rendering it desirable that I should attract as little attention in the neighborhood as might be. I had now to concentrate these plans and make them definite to myself. It was clear that there was no chance of spending another night at Hilton Hall by invitation; would it be honorable to go there without one, as I, knowing all the outs and ins of the place, could, if I pleased?

My congitations concluded in the resolve to use the means in my hands for the rescue of Lady Alice. Midnight found me in the alley of the kitchen-garden. The door of the little court opened easily. Nor had I withdrawn its bolts without knowing that I could manage to open the window of my old room from the outside. I stood in the dark, a stranger and house-breaker, where so often I had sat waiting the visits of my angel. I secured the door of the room, struck a light, lighted a remnant of a taper which I found on the table, threw myself on the couch, and said to my Alice: "Come."

And she came. I rose. She laid herself down. I pulled off my coat—it was all I could find—and laid it over her. The night was chilly. She revived with the same sweet smile, but, giving a little shiver, said:

"Why have you no fire, Duncan? I must give orders about it. That's some trick of old Clankshoe."

"Dear Alice, do not breathe a word about me to any one. I have quarreled with Lord Hilton. He has turned me away, and I have no business to be in the house."

"Oh!" she replied, with a kind of faint recollecting hesitation. "That must be why you never come to the haunted chamber now. I go there every night, as soon as the sun is down."

"Yes, that is it, Alice."

"Ah! That must be what makes the day so strange to me, too."

She looked very bewildered for a moment, and then resumed:

"Do you know, Duncan, I feel very strange all day—as if I was walking about in a dull dream that would never come to an end? But it is very different at night—is it not dear?"

She had not yet discovered any distinction between my presence to her dreams and my presence to her waking sight. I hardly knew what reply to make; but she went on:

"They won't let me come to you now, I suppose. I shall forget my Euclid and everything. I feel as if I had forgotten it all already. But you won't be vexed with your poor Alice, will you? She's only a beggar girl, you know."

I could answer only by a caress.

"I had a strange dream the other night. I thought I was sitting out on a stone in the dark. And I heard your voice calling me, and it went all around about me, and came nearer, and went further off, but I could not move to go to you, I tried to answer you, but I could only make a queer sound, not like my own voice at all."

"I dreamed it too, Alice."

"The same dream?"

"Yes, the very same."

"I am so glad. But I didn't like the dream. Duncan, my head feels so strange sometimes. And I am so sleepy. Duncan, dearest—am I dreaming now? Oh, tell me that I am awake, I shall fancy that I have lost you. They've spoiled my poor brain, somehow. I am all right, I know, but I cannot get at it. The red is withered, somehow."

"You are wide awake, my Alice. I know all about it. I will help you to understand it all, only you must do exactly as I tell you."

"Yes, yes.' '

"Then go to bed now, and sleep as much as you can; else I will not let you come to me to-night."

"That would be too cruel, when it is all I have."

"Then go, dearest, and sleep."

Next morning I called again upon Mrs. Blakesley, to inquire after Lady Alice, anxious to know how yesterday had passed.

"Just the same," answered the old lady. "You need not look for any change. Yesterday I did see her smile once, though."

"Have you heard of young Lord Hilton's marriage?" asked Mrs. Blakesley.

"I have only heard some rumors of it," I answered. "Who is the new countess?"

"The daughter of a rich merchant somewhere. They say she isn't the best of tempers. They're coming here in about a month. I am just terrified to think how it will fare with my lamb now. They won't let her go wandering about wherever she pleases, I doubt. And if they shut her up she will die."

I vowed inwardly that she should be free, if I carried her off, madness and all.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PROSPECTS OF FLYING.

Machine for Air Traveling May Eventually be Used By Sportsmen.

Lord Rayleigh, in speaking of my experiments at the Oxford meeting of the British association, said he considered that of the five great problems to be solved before flight could be accomplished I had already solved three, says Hiram S. Maxim in the National Review. I presume he referred to the motive power, the propelling power and the lifting power. What remains to be done is to learn to steer and to maneuver the machine, and, when once free flight is accomplished, to practice landing until the navigator is able to bring the machine slowly to the earth and land without injury or shock. Of course, it would be necessary to approach the earth slowly in a vertical direction while running at a very high speed, and to shut off steam the instant the machine touches the earth. The machine will then run forward over the earth and be brought to a state of rest in about 100 feet.

Now that it has been shown that a machine may be made which will actually lift itself and travel through the air at a very high velocity, I believe that some of the military powers who have so long been experimenting in this direction will take advantage of what I have accomplished, that they may obtain sufficient appropriation, and that an actual flying machine for military purposes will soon be evolved, whether I continue my experiments or not. As for the commercial value of flying machines, I do not think it is likely that they will be employed for freight or passengers. Perhaps they might be used for sporting purposes, and it is not altogether unlikely that in the daily journals of twenty years hence we shall find illustrations of some popular prince of the realm on a flying machine pursuing a flock of wild geese through the air and firing on them with a Maxim gun.

Too Expensive for Both.

Mrs. Wigglestein—Do you know, Jack, I think I should like to learn to play poker. It must be a fascinating game.

Mr. Wigglestein—Great heavens, Ethel; don't think of it for a moment. We can't both afford to play.

Did it ever occur to you that no man can "raise the devil" without lowering himself.

GRAND OLD PARTY,

SOCIALISTIC IDEAS REPUDIATED BY WORKMEN.

Blanttant John Burns Finds His Influence Waning—Where Is the Dollar Wheat?—Secretary Herbert Helps the Navy.

The Passing of Burns.

One reason why that eminent blatherskite, John Burns, received courteous treatment in this country, even after he began to spout about his socialistic doctrine, was that he came over here with something of a reputation as a political leader who had marshaled new forces and inaugurated a movement in England which gave promise of accomplishing something for the masses. It was on account of his leadership that he inspired respect, notwithstanding his views were known to have a radical and dangerous tendency.

It seems, however, that the work begun by Mr. Burns toward building up a new political party in England has had but a temporary effect, and that the so-called New Unionist organization is already dissolving on account of the "advanced" views which he was so brash in promulgating during his American tour. The socialistic program that Mr. Burns and his followers carried through the trades union congress at Norwich last fall has led to dissension and division in the labor organizations. From London it is announced that several of the most important unions have decided to withdraw from future congresses. Among these dissident bodies are the boiler-makers and the iron and steel ship-builders and the engineers, three of the greatest unions in England, and it also appears that the Miners' federation of Great Britain is breaking away from the New Unionists. It looks as if the big organization which Mr. Burns was chiefly instrumental in forming would fall to pieces.

This development shows that with all his magnetism as a leader and power as an organizer, Mr. Burns can not infuse the trades unions of England with his socialistic ideas, says the Cincinnati Times-Star. His victory in the trades union congress comes to naught when the unions that indorsed his platform hastily have had time for deliberation. From the reaction now taking place the conclusion seems warranted that Mr. Burns will be the target of keener arrows of criticism among working people of his own country than those that punctured his thick skin when he was the bloviating guest of his American cousins.

Where Is the Dollar Wheat?

How long will it take the American farmer to forget the campaign cry by which his vote for a change in government was solicited? It was in the program of promised blessings that dollar wheat would be one of the results of a Republican defeat.

The farmer himself knows how far he has come short of a realization of the glittering promise. He has the facts brought to his mind every time he goes to market, every time he has an installment of interest to pay, and every time his wife wants a new dress or his children a pair of shoes.

The secretary of agriculture has had figures made which will present the matter to everybody who can read so that he can understand it as well as the farmer, and with the man who plows the ground and sows the seed everybody is compelled to participate in the distress that comes from the result.

In the report on farm crops for last year it is shown that in 1890-92 the average price at the farm for each bushel of wheat was 76.7 cents. This was during the years of protection of American industries under the McKinley law.

The first year after the change that was brought about by false promises and deceptions of all sorts, the farm value of the product fell off 22.9 cents a bushel, and last year the average price was 27.6 cents less than the average for the three years first named.

From 83.9 cents a bushel in 1891, the price for which the farmer must sell his grain has now fallen to an average price of 49.1 cents, and who can tell how much farther down it will go?

The farmer has had a lesson he will not soon forget. Under the most favorable conditions it must be years before the wreck under which the country's prosperity lies buried can be wholly cleared away. The first move has been made to begin the work, but every deluded voter whose eyes have been opened will have to lend a hand. —Kansas City Journal.

An Alaskan Delegate.

The present congress ought to comply with Alaska's request that it be given a regular delegate just as other territories are. There is no reason why the request should not be granted and its refusal would be an act of injustice. The fact that American people have to stand around and beg for privileges of this kind is a very serious reflection upon our system of government. It amounts to a denial of a right which should be accorded to all Americans wherever practicable. No one would say that Alaska is prepared for statehood and yet anything short of statehood is a condition which should be tolerated only as long as it cannot be avoided.

Reason Enough.

The recent uprising in Hawaii will not have a tendency to boom England's project to grab one of the islands for the purpose of "landing a cable." If John Bull is permitted to attach a cable to Necker island his next ambition will be to rope in the whole group. The fact that Mr. Cleveland favors this project is reason enough why congress should sit down on it. We might change the subject by asking Mr. Bull why his consul-general encouraged the revolutionists and an English steamer transported their arms and ammunition.—New York Advertiser.

Helping the Navy.

Secretary Herbert is determined that our navy shall not suffer by comparison with that of any other country. There is an English song which says: "Our ships are British oak and hearts of oak our men," and Mr. Herbert is strong in the belief expressed as to the value of good sailors, as well as of ships. And so his heart warmed when he was notified some time ago that a naval reserve had been formed in Baltimore and in his enthusiasm he vowed that he would do something to stimulate those brave tars, if he had to exhaust all the available resources of the naval department. How well he has kept his word it will be the purpose of this narrative to show.

The young men who compose the reserve have not, it must be confessed, had much maritime experience, says the Philadelphia Inquirer, but they wanted to have it. They knew that near them was the ocean, and they longed to be out on the blue waters, and swing in hammocks and man guns, and reef the top sails and splice the main brace and do other things strictly nautical.

So last summer they asked that a government vessel should be sent to them for that purpose and the secretary promised that it would. But time passed and their experience was like that of Enoch Arden. "No sail from day to day." Then there came hints that one of the smaller war vessels would be furnished, but that idea was abandoned and it was announced that the old monitor Wyandotte had been selected.

The hearts of the reserve beat high, but once more there was a fly in the amber. The department with that solicitude for the welfare of our citizens which the present administration has always shown, decided that the amateur tars must stick close to their desks and never go to sea. The Wyandotte would be fastened to a wharf in the harbor so securely that she could not break from her moorings and drift out into the river, and the young men would, therefore, be as safe on board as the members of an amateur opera company on the good ship Pinafore.

But even this idea was abandoned and the old wooden craft Dale was ordered to Baltimore. She had long lain on the mud flats of the Potomac at Washington, and it needed considerable hauling to get her off. But a start was made, and after a stormy voyage she reached Baltimore, leaking badly. The harbor was entered and she was moored to the wharf. The reserve were waiting, their sisters and sweethearts being present to bid them farewell. Everything was ready for the embarkation. Stores were taken on board and all was bustle and confusion. Suddenly there was a strange movement on the part of the noble craft. A shudder passed through her frame, she gave a list to port, sank down and settled in twelve feet of water, looking for all the world like a Noah's ark.

The course of training through which the reserves were to be put has been postponed, but Secretary Herbert's naval genius has not exhausted itself, and he will see to it that Baltimore patriotism shall yet have a free field for its exercise, as long as there is an old hulk in the navy.

All There Is of It.

The president's letter to three men coming as commissioners from the deposed queen of Hawaii was almost equivalent to saying that congress had defeated his efforts to get the wench back on the throne, and that he wasn't going to have anything more to do with the matter.—Cincinnati Enquirer, Dem.

Cleveland and Casimir.

President Cleveland is not imitating the example set by M. Casimir-Perier. Yet he has made about as bad a mess of things as the ex-president of the French republic But Mr. Cleveland is a Democrat and has all the instincts of his party to hold onto a fairly good thing.

Republican Financiers.

While we as a nation were issuing bonds almost as fast as they could be printed, Massachusetts last year wiped out nearly $13,000,000 of its public debt. Republican administrations pay in more ways than one, as those who have tried them know.—St. Louis Star-Sayings.

Democracy Then and Now.

It was the patron saint of Democracy, General Jackson, who said: "By the Eternal the union and the constitution shall be preserved," and it is the Democrats of his own state, Tennessee, who celebrated St. Jackson's day by trampling theconstitution out of sight.

Convalescent.

The states heretofore under Democratic or Populist control have during the last month passed into the hands of the Republicans, and coincidentally a revival of business industries is reported all along the line.

Where Would We Be At?

It is profitable to consider what would be the status now if there had been a British cable station in Hawaii when the insurrection occurred.

Lecturers Not Lecturing.

Bill Cook and Debs both in jail and "the lecture season" at its best. But Waite and Breckinridge are loose.—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

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