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PART FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

THE GANDY FAMILY.

Our story opens in the small seaport town of Sandbank, upon the eastern coast of England. The scene, the quay of the aforesaid town. The time, dusk of a summer's evening. The dramatic personae, a youth of eighteen years, and a young girl of about sixteen.

As the more important personage of the story, we will describe the former first. His figure is tall and well-cut for his age, and although he is attired in the ill-out, clumsy clothing made by a country tailor, he carries it with an air superior to such externals. His hair is long, dark, and wavy. His face is handsome, of an aristocratic type, and although warm in tone from constant exposure to the air, his complexion is inclined to paleness. His eyes are large, dark, and brilliant, his mouth full and haughty.

The girl is a pretty blonde, with a clear red and white complexion, and pleasant irregular features. She is a rural belle of the humble class. Although her dress is of simple cotton, it is tastefully and even coquettishly arranged. They have just met, and her timid, conscious glance as she greets the youth, tells a secret. But he is perfectly unembarrassed, strokes the hand that she half-coyly offers, and smilingly asks which way she is going, and where she has been.

"I have been to grandmother's, and I am going home," she answered. "Let me carry your basket," he said, taking from her arm one of those old-fashioned marketing baskets still used by the country people. "Why didn't you tell me this morning when I saw you, that you were going over to Marshland?" he asked, and he came and met me on the road.

"Well, people do talk so," she replied, blushing. "Well, let them talk. The very worst thing they could say about us, is that we are courting. No harm in that is there?" To judge by her look, she did not seem to see so much harm in it. "But there is your mother, Charley; you know how she has gone on—"

"I am not tied to my mother's apron-string," he answered flushing angrily. Nevertheless, the subject did not appear to be an agreeable one, for he abruptly changed the conversation. "Did you notice what a splendid sunset it was to-night?" he asked. "Grandmother said it was a very nasty-looking one," she answered, simply; "that it betokened rough weather coming on."

"Oh, I am not talking about whether it meant rough or smooth weather," he rejoined, impatiently; "I am only speaking of its beauty." "Oh, yes, I dare say it was very pretty," she replied doubtfully. "You dare say it was very pretty?" he answered, in the same tone. "Couldn't you see that it was very beautiful, with all those crimson and purple clouds?"

"Oh, yes." A caustic remark rose to his lips, but he checked it by an exclamation of delight, and pointing seaward, exclaimed, "Look there; is not that lovely?" The object of his admiration was the full moon rising red as fire from behind the sand hills, out toward the sea. Over the rippled waters of the harbor she cast a stream of lurid light; above her were piled heavy masses of cloud, into which the next moment she disappeared. At the same time, a fresh breeze came sweeping from the ocean, bringing with it the muffled and dashing sound of the waves upon the breakers.

"I think grandmother was right, and that we shall have some rough weather before morning," said the girl, casting an anxious look upon the sky, but utterly unappreciative of the picturesque side of the view. "I hope we shall; I love to see a good storm." "You love to see a storm? Oh, how can you say such things?" she cried, amazedly.

"Because it is grand to see the waves rolling, and dashing and foaming, with the lightning gleaming over them, and to hear their thunder as they break upon the shore!" he cried enthusiastically. "I can't bear to hear them," she answered, shuddering. "They frighten me; and I always think of the poor fishermen, especially of Uncle Hiram, when he is out at sea. I should not like it to rain to-night."

"Catch me standing any of my young men to school, though the parson's always at me about it! It makes em that stuck up as they don't know what to do with themselves; and as lazy as can be." "What's it to do with you, Mrs. Potts, if I choose to send my boy to fifty schools? So'm to be dictated to by you am I? What next, I should like to know?" cried Mrs. Gandy turning her wrath upon the unfortunate speaker.

"Well, I didn't mean any offence, mum. I was only sorry to see as how he behaved so badly to you arter all you've done for him," answered Mrs. Potts, humbly; for she was often glad to get a few things upon credit just

ple don't appreciate the beauties of nature." "I have never been sent to boarding-school like you, and—"

"Oh, I did not learn to love sunsets and moon-rises at boarding-school. All the boarding-schools in the world cannot teach you those sort of things, if they are not in you."

This was spoken as irritably as his former words, and it was not so dark but that he could see her lip quiver, and the distressed look upon her face. His heart was touched. There was no one by; he put his arm round her waist, and drawing her close to him, kissed away the tears that were trickling down her cheeks. "There, there, what a silly little thing you are!" he said, soothingly.

His action and manner was that of a lover and he was her lover, but there was a ring of indifference, of patronizing in his tone, that did not harmonize with the action. She spoke no word, but in her silence, her tearful glance and yielding attitude, was the mute eloquence of affection.

They walked up the old-fashioned narrow street without exchanging a word. When they were nearly at the top Carry halted, and, holding out her hand, said, "Don't come any further, Charley. I don't want your mother to see us together."

He was about to offer an objection, but on second thought, changed his mind, gave her the basket and a kiss, wished her good night, and turned off into another street that crossed at right angles the one they had been traversing.

He stopped before a small house, the parlor of which had been converted into a shop for the sale of lollipops, apples and oranges, unwholesome-looking cakes, vegetables, ginger-bread, &c. To its other dry and wet goods it added the sale of tobacco and beer—the latter article supposed "not to be drunk on the premises," a point of law that was being glaringly violated at the time we have chosen to introduce the reader into its interior.

Upon a short broad plank, supported at either end by a barrel, sat a fisherman and a field laborer silently discussing between them the contents of a quart jug, and smoking short black pipes. At the counter stood two brawny women, also discussing, but not silently, a mug of ale, and two dainty children were buying limited quantities of groceries.

Behind the counter stood a little woman, of a faded complexion, her face half hidden by an old-fashioned, close-fitting, fitted nightcap. In the peaked red nose, the thin lips, the small sharp eyes, the withered skin, and, above all, the shrill voice, were the unmistakable marks of a shrew. The scene was lit up by the dim rays of a couple of tallow candles, stuck in bottles.

The sharp ring of the bell attached to the half door, which he threw back as he entered the shop, drew all eyes upon Charley. Fresh from the pure night air, he could not resist an involuntary movement of disgust as a cloud of rank tobacco-smoke was wafted in his face.

"So you've come to walk home at last! And I should like to know where you've been, my lord, since dinner?" cried the lady of the shop. The youth's face flushed; and as he perceived the grins of anticipation upon the faces of the loiterers in the shop, one and all of whom had, at some time, felt the violence of Mrs. Gandy's tongue, an angry look mingled with his mortification. He checked himself, and answered quietly, "I have been to bathe. I did not think you would want me."

The soft answer did not have its accredited effect upon Mrs. Gandy; on the contrary, it served only to sharpen the shrillness of her voice. "And what business have you got to think of me about it? What business have you got to be out of the way I should like to know?"

"I repeat, I did not know you would want me," he answered, with a quivering lip. "Don't give me any of your sauce, you young jackanapes, or, big as you are, I'll box your ears," screamed Mrs. Gandy.

This time the youth made no answer, but with crimson cheeks and a choking in the throat, passed behind the counter, and into the little sitting room beyond, with the consciousness that the faces of all the lookers-on were distended with broad grins of delight at his discomfiture.

before wages day, and dared not offend the shop-mistress. "He doesn't behave badly to me—he wouldn't dare—I'd break every bone in his skin if he was to try it!" And if he did what's that to you?" cried Mrs. Gandy, who was determined not to allow herself to be smoothed down.

The two men seated upon the plank were vastly enjoying this scene; grinning from ear to ear, and nudging each other with their elbows. "Mrs. Potts is right," chimed in the fisherman, winking at his companion. "There's nothing so bad for a lad as larmin'. I've got ten young-sters, and there ain't one of 'em who can tell 'A' from 'Z'; and never shall I 'I can help it."

The speaker was a tall gaunt man, attired in a blue gurnsey, a pair of wide, rough trousers, tucked into huge sea-boots, and an old sou'-wester upon his head. His age might have been between forty and fifty; his hair was long, ragged, and grizzled; wind and water, frost and sun, had given to his face the appearance of a dried Normandy plippin. It was not an honest-looking, nor yet a pleasant face to contemplate. There was a cunning twinkle in the steel gray eyes, and a look of savagery about the heavy lower jaw, that disagreeably impressed the spectator.

"More shame for you to boast of such a thing, Jack Bilge!" exclaimed Mrs. Gandy, once more transferring her wrath—for she made a point of never agreeing with any person, even although they might take her own side of the question. "Not that I think," she added sarcastically, "that any schoolmaster could beat into their thick heads the difference between 'A' and 'Z,' even if you gave him the chance."

"I'd very soon beat it out of their backs if he managed to beat it into their heads," guffawed Bilge, thinking he had made a capital joke. "I dare say you're brute enough for anything!" was the retort.

"Well, you wait and see what Master Charley's larmin' 'll do for you, Mother Gandy," answered Bilge, maliciously. "Why, he'll turn you out of the house by-and-by like a bit of used-up lumber."

Mrs. Gandy was at that moment handing half-a-pound of sugar over the counter to a child; but upon hearing the last words, in a torrent of wrath she dashed it at the speaker; it struck him full upon the forehead, and the paper bursting, its contents covered his face and eyes, almost blinding him. With an oath, he sprang to his feet and rushed to the counter; but Mrs. Gandy, screaming with passion, ordered him to leave the shop, threatening to throw a weight at his head if he moved another step.

Her hand was raised and she would have been as good as her word had not a new comer at that moment appeared upon the scene. It was a big heavy-looking man, nearly six feet high, with herculean shoulders, who, pipe in mouth, issued from the back doorway.

"Why, missus, missus!" he said, quietly, looking the male out of her hand; "what's all this noise about?" In an instant she turned upon her unfortunate husband, for that was the relation the big man bore to her, crying, "And you—there you sit from morning till night setting and smoking, while I'm working myself into the grave; and you suffer me to be insulted by every good-for-nothing fellow who calls for a pen'orth of 'bacca. Turn him out this minute, and if ever you suffer him to enter that door again, it won't be the same house that'll hold you and me!"

"I don't know what all this rumpus be about," said Mr. Gandy stolidly; "but I'd advise you, Jack Bilge, to clear out of this or I shall put you out."

In the meantime, the originator of the disturbance was wiping the sugar out of his eyes and off his face. "You may spare yourself the trouble of turning me out of your house, Bill Gandy," he said, quietly putting the handkerchief back into his sou'-wester. "I'll go without being turned out; and if ever I do come into your shop again, it won't be to buy a pen'orth of 'bacca, I promise you. I'll pay you back for that sugar one of these days. You think yourselves very close and very cunning, don't you? But there be folks as knows more than you fancies. Take care of yourselves, you and your shrew of a wife. If she belonged to me, I'd put a rope end about her back."

With this last remark, and a glance of intense malignity, Jack Bilge put his pipe in his mouth, and lumbered heavily out of the shop.

Mrs. Gandy endeavored to follow after the man who had dared to use such a treat to her, and was with difficulty restrained by her husband. Jack Bilge's parting words and look left a disagreeable impression behind. "Jack won't forget that sugar pellet in a hurry," remarked the laborer, who had not yet spoken.

"That he won't, Mr. Coles," said one of the women; "he's awful wily; you'll see him at home rope's-end the boys, and their mother, too, sometimes. Where he takes a dislike, he is awful."

real; and in a very short time she lapsed into a sullen calmness. One by one the customers departed; the shop was closed. Mrs. Gandy had the reputation of being the most inveterate shrew in Sandbank, while her husband was equally remarkable for his laziness, and an equanimity of temper that no provocation could move to anger.

From morning until night he sat in his easy-chair, smoking his pipe and drinking his beer, seldom speaking, and only roused to action to ply his knife and fork. His better half might scold—it produced no more effect upon him than it did upon his pipe; not a muscle moved—not a puff of smoke was interrupted. At times, Mrs. Gandy's exasperation going beyond words, she would seize her herculean lord by the shoulders, and try to shake him;—futile demonstrations, which elicited from him no further reproach than a "Gently, missus, gently; you will break my pipe."

Mr. and Mrs. Gandy were not natives of Sandbank. They had settled there about sixteen years before the opening of this story. The go-spics of the town found them very reticent in regard to their past life; but they contrived to ferret out that they had been servant's in a gentleman's family.

Charley was a baby when they came to their new home. He was an only child, and continued to be so. His early days were passed much the same as other village children of his class, and the first rudiments of learning imparted to him by an old dame that might have been a direct descendant of Stenstone's celebrated schoolmistress.

But when he was nine years of age the boy was sent to one of the best boarding schools in the country, much to the indignation of all genteel people of the neighborhood, who were virtuously indignant that the son of a chandler-shop keeper should receive as good an education as their own progeny; so Charley was sneered at, and bantered by his companions, who used to deride him by playing at shop, and selling infinitesimal quantities of the goods in which his mother dealt, until he thrashed the most obnoxious of the wits into civility. Better than that, he thrashed them all in his aptitude for study and the extent of his acquisitions.

Tom, the grocer's son, and Jack, the linen-draper's heir, looked down upon Charley, the huxler's son. Too proud to associate with his unlettered equals by birth, by social, of course, he was hated for his superiority, or to be patronized by those above him, who have condescended to admit his educational claims to their notice, he was lonely and companionless as far as those of his own age and sex were concerned.

Despite the money thus expended upon his education, Charley's parents did not evince much of pride or affection towards him. Mr. Gandy never showed pride or affection for anything except his pipe and his beer. Mrs. Gandy treated him with a harshness and a coldness of manner quite unusual in a mother.

He had but one friend and companion—a little girl about his own age—Carry Lee, to whom the reader has already been introduced. She was the daughter of a dairyman, and from their earliest years they had been constant and affectionate playmates. When Charley came home for his holidays, this childish intercourse continued to be renewed; and to neither did those seasons bring more pleasurable anticipations than the thoughts of their reunion.

In the girl, this feeling gradually ripened into a woman's love. In Charley, it became a boyish love for a pretty girl. Mrs. Gandy did not like Carry, and having, either by her own observation or from her customer's gossip, got an inkling that something like sweetheating was going on between the young people, she flew into a terrible rage, showered upon the poor girl, to Charley, the most opprobrious epithets, and threatened all kinds of vengeance upon both should she ever catch them together. The youth naturally took the girl's part, and set his mother's prohibition at defiance. This happened a week or two previous to the opening of this narrative, and the mother and son had not been friends since.

The education he had received had not been sown upon a sterile soil, and the refinements it had created in him revolted at the coarse associations by which he was surrounded. Consciousness of superiority, however, was rapidly engendering egotism and other vices of solitude. He had now finished schooling about three months, and his home had become intolerable to him. No word had been said respecting his future career, and all his inquiries upon that point were met by a sharp rebuke and a command to mind his own business. No kind of employment was enforced upon him; whatever he did in the way of work was of his own will—and had been chosen to be entirely idle so complaint would have been made against him. Yet, for all this, his mother never liked him to be long out of her sight; but whether this arose from a latent affection, or from any other motive, it was impossible to determine from the observation of so eccentric a person as Mrs. Gandy, who most certainly did not wear her heart upon her sleeve.

The lad did not bear the slightest personal resemblance to his parents—a circumstance which evoked some

strange whispers from among the go-spics of the town, some going so far as to say that he was not the Gandy's child at all. One day a woman under the influence of large potatoes of beer, jestingly hinted at the above-mentioned Mrs. Grandy's shop. That lady happened at the moment to be washing her counter. The words had scarcely passed the woman's lips before she was dashed in her face by the frate shop-keeper. From that moment, Sadybanks whispered his suspicious *sotto voce*, and well out of that lady's hearing.

CHAPTER II.

STORY OF THE UNDISCOVERED CRIME.

Two days afterwards, Charley was strolling about the sands, where we first introduced him to the reader, when he heard a gruff voice call him by name, and turning round saw Jack Bilge halting him from a little distance off. Remembering the scene in his mother's shop, and the sneering and disparaging manner in which the fisherman had spoken of him, Charley, after casting a glance over his shoulder, walked on without vouching further notice.

But Bilge would not accept the cold shoulder, and on perceiving that the youth made no response to his hail, he walked briskly after him, and as the latter did not care to present the appearance of shirking a meeting, he was soon overtaken.

"Didn't you hear me call you, Charley?" said Bilge, as he came up. "Yes, I heard you; but was the cold reply." "Ah, I see; you feel a little sore over that row the other night," said Bilge, in a conciliating tone. "I didn't mean any harm, but that mother of yours has such a temper, that there's no speakin' to her without making a blaze. I'd a drop too much that night, and my tongue run faster than my wit, and I thought I'd have a bit of fun, and get the old 'oman's dander up. As to what I said about you, why you ought to know I didn't mean it. Haven't you and me been the best of friends ever since you was a younker, no higher than my knee? There, tip us your tin, and let bygones be bygones; it shan't happen again."

And Charley did give his hand, although unwillingly. "I should ha' been off to sea to-day, only the old boat sprung a leak the other day; so the boys have got her ashore to-day, and I thought I'd fill up time in this way."

"By-the-way, I was groping in the sand for eels, which he found in great numbers, and after cutting off their heads threw them into a basket beside him. Charley lazily stretched himself upon the cool, damp sand, and watched the slaughter. After a time, wearied with his work, Bilge sat down and lit his pipe.

"You don't seem quite up to the mark to-day, Charley," he said at last; "dullish, like." "I don't feel particularly bright," answered the youth, listlessly digging pipe in the sand with his fingers. "Suppose I was to spin you a bit of a yarn, just to pass away the time?" said Bilge.

"There is not one of your old yarns you have not spun to me a dozen times, and I don't think you'd find me a very attentive listener just now; and clasping his hands behind his head, and tilting his hat over his eyes, he prepared for a doze.

"You've not heard this one," persisted Bilge, stolidly; "it would have been too exciting for your peccanancy days, so I kept it back." "What the deuce are you driving at? How confoundedly mysterious you are, Bilge!" said the young man in a sleepy tone of voice.

"I am not the only one that's mysterious; there's a good many more mysterious about than you ever guessed at." "Quite oracular, I declare!" muttered Charley.

"I don't know what that hard word means, but I could tell you something that all your school larnin' could never find out; and that you'd give the eyes out of your head to know it." At those last words Charley sat bolt upright, and with a very wide-awake and puzzled look, asked, "What do you mean?" "Oh, nothing."

"But you do mean something. Tell us the yarn, whatever it is." "Oh, but you wouldn't be an attentive listener!" answered Bilge, with quiet irony. "Besides, you might 'a' heard it a dozen times afore."

"Yes; but I thought you meant one of the old stories about phantom ships, or pirates, or ghosts, or that sort of thing," returned Charley. "Well, perhaps that is what I do mean," said Bilge, calmly puffing away in tantalizing enjoyment of his companion's curiosity.

with my eels; so I wish you good morning." And Bilge rose to his feet, and made a pretence of shouldering his basket. "Stay!" cried Charley, springing up. "I do care about it. Sit down again, and do not be so touchy."

It was only, however, after a considerable deal of persuasion, that Bilge consented to sit down, averring that his companion was too learned to care for his 'jaw.'

When he did give way at last he seemed in no hurry to satisfy the curiosity he had aroused. He took the longest possible time refilling his pipe, lighting it, and comfortably composing himself.

Stretching upon the sands, reclining upon his elbow, his face resting in the palm of his hand, and his eyes fixed, attentively watching the weather-beaten face of the fisherman, Charley waited patiently for the promised narrative. Every word, every incident, every aspect of nature in that hour was thereafter indelibly imprinted upon his memory.

It was a hot, hazy day; a sluggish mist floated in the air, hanging like a gray veil over the sand-hills, hiding the sea behind it a little distance from the shore. Through its folds the sun loomed beamless, like a red-hot ball. Nature was faint and voiceless; the very waves broke languidly and listlessly upon the sands, as though enervated beneath the influence of the depressing vapor.

And here is the story that the youth listened to with breathless interest, that momentarily increased, as the strange narrative unfolded.

ABOUT TWENTY YEARS before the opening of our tale died Squire Blakely, of Blakely Hall; a fine old family mansion, situated some twenty miles distance from Sandbank. The Blakelys had been for upwards of two hundred years, by their wealth and position, among the most influential of the country gentry. They had been a bluff, fox-hunting, hard-drinking race—more or less of the Squire Western type. Of such cast was the one whose demise we have recorded, Robert Blakely, the heir, and his father had been upon full terms several years previous to the latter's death, in consequence of certain follies and extravagances committed by the young man, and more especially on account of what is styled an imprudent match that he had made with a young girl with whom he had been desperately enamored.

From the day of their union the old Squire swore that he would never again speak to his son—and he never did; and had not the estate been entailed, he would have disinherited him. The old man's death was a sudden one; he was thrown from his horse during a hunt, and killed upon the spot. Robert, who was living in London upon a scanty annuity which he had inherited from his mother, was at once communicated with, in order that he might take possession of his rights.

Robert Blakely had always been a great favorite among the tenantry and dependants, and was known as a frank, generous, but excessively hot-tempered young man. Great was his curiosity respecting the Squire's lady, about whom there had been so great a do; and from the old man's strong dislike to the match, and the coarse, passionate remarks he had let drop upon the subject, the general impression was that the future mistress of the Hall would prove to be a low-bred, although a pretty, woman, scarcely superior to her own servants in refinement. Great was the surprise of these expectants upon discovering Mrs. Robert Blakely to be a beautiful, interesting woman, whose tone and manner might have been those of any lady in the land. She was a blonde, with the fairest of fair hair, and the lightest of blue eyes; a fragile, delicate creature, quite unfitted for the rude buffets of the world. She loved her husband passionately, adoringly; and that he loved her he had sufficiently proved by the sacrifices he had made in marrying her.

They had been married three years when he succeeded to the estate; one child had been born to them, a girl, who had died in its infancy. But soon after her arrival at the Hall she again became *enchantee*.

As though to make up for past privations, Robert Blakely plunged into the most profuse hospitality and gaiety, and Blakely Hall was always full of company. First and foremost, there was Mrs. Blakely's sister, to whom he had given a generous and unlimited invitation. The two sisters were in every respect the opposite to each other. Helen was as dark as Edith was fair, as high spirited and haughty as the other was meek and gentle; neither did there appear to exist between them any strong affection. There was no coldness, no visible disagreement—they always appeared to be the best of friends; but there seemed to be a shadow between them—a something that was felt rather than perceived.

Among the guests who might be regarded as almost stationary inhabitants of the Hall was a young gentleman named Ernest Wieland. Although a German by birth, he had been brought up from childhood in France, but, becoming mixed up in some conspiracy against the French Government, had been obliged to take refuge in England.

He was a man of strange, wild ideas, a passionate temperament, over-zealous in a man. "But," he added, "I've known a second wife to hurry it some."

political enthusiasm, with poetry and metaphysics. A pale, handsome man, of about five and twenty, with a wonderfully fascinating manner. He had lived in the same house, and been a friend of the Blakelys, before their accession to wealth. In this case the friendship seemed rather to be upon the ladies', Edith and Helen's, side rather than upon Robert's. The latter had too much of the old Blakely bull-dog blood in him to relish greatly the eccentric foreigner. Helen particularly affected his society. They read Schiller and Goethe together, and Shakespeare and Byron, for Wieland was an excellent English scholar, as well as French and German.

They played the piano and sang together; they rode out on horseback together, and they took moonlight rambles together. Scandal, however, whispered that his feelings towards Mrs. Blakely were of a much warmer nature than those he entertained for her sister; but scandal could not detect the least impropriety, could not gather up the least scrap of food from the behavior of either. If any such passion existed, Edith appeared to be unconscious of its existence while Wieland never manifested towards her anything but the most profound respect.

By-and-by, however, it was remarked that the Squire looked askant upon his guests, that his manner towards him was cold and distant. About this time the shadow between the two sisters began to darken. Helen grew gloomy, and she and Wieland were seldom together. In the meantime, a son and heir had been born. But we are anticipating events, and must go back to introduce a third character of the drama.

At the house of a neighboring gentleman, the Blakelys had been introduced to a Mrs. Greenaway, a young widow of some five and twenty years of age, the relict of a London merchant. She was a fascinating, brilliant woman of the world, who set all the young men, and many of the old ones, of the neighbourhood raving about her. She was not a favorite with the ladies, who described her as coarse, ill-bred, forward, and designing; but then ladies are always harsh critics of each other. Robert Blakely was much taken with her, and invited her to spend a few weeks at the Hall. She accepted the invitation, and in a short time it was evident to all that the young Squire was added to the entailed. She became his confidant and adviser; and, at last, he transacted no business without first consulting her.

All this began a little previous to Edith's confinement, when the delicate state of her health obliged her to frequently keep her room; then came her illness and convalescence; thus she had but few opportunities of observation. Edith was one of those quiet, passive natures in which it is possible for love to exist without jealousy, and absorbed in her new treasure—her baby—she had neither eyes, ears, nor thoughts for anything else. The reader may feel surprised that no kind female friend endeavored to dispel this infatuated moral blindness; perhaps some one did—but with this the narrative has nothing to do. It only pretends to give a bare statement of facts as they were generally known to do; and from the old man's strong dislike to the match, and the coarse, passionate remarks he had let drop upon the subject, the general impression was that the future mistress of the Hall would prove to be a low-bred, although a pretty, woman, scarcely superior to her own servants in refinement. Great was the surprise of these expectants upon discovering Mrs. Robert Blakely to be a beautiful, interesting woman, whose tone and manner might have been those of any lady in the land. She was a blonde, with the fairest of fair hair, and the lightest of blue eyes; a fragile, delicate creature, quite unfitted for the rude buffets of the world. She loved her husband passionately, adoringly; and that he loved her he had sufficiently proved by the sacrifices he had made in marrying her.

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Among the guests who might be regarded as almost stationary inhabitants of the Hall was a young gentleman named Ernest Wieland. Although a German by birth, he had been brought up from childhood in France, but, becoming mixed up in some conspiracy against the French Government, had been obliged to take refuge in England.

He was a man of strange, wild ideas, a passionate temperament, over-zealous in a man. "But," he added, "I've known a second wife to hurry it some."

On the morning of the ball Edith was taken ill—so ill, that all idea of leaving her room that day had to be abandoned. Robert proposed that the party should be broken up, and that messages of apology should at once be sent to excuse their absence. But of this she would not hear. Then Helen wished to remain at home with her; but both these propositions she combated with a warmth and persistency quite unusual to her customary yielding meekness. At eight o'clock in the evening, Robert Blakely and Mrs. Greenaway departed in one carriage, Wieland and Helen Deerbrook in another, and no one was left in the house save the lady of it and the domestics. At one o'clock next morning Edith Blakely was found strangled in her own bed, and her infant child had disappeared.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

As some lady visitors were recently going through a penitentiary, under the escort of the superintendent, they came to a room in which three women were sewing. "Dear me!" one of the visitors whispered, "what vicious-looking creatures! Pray, what are they here for?" "Because they have no other home. This is our sitting-room, and they are my wife and two daughters," blandly answered the superintendent.

A man from Placerville, California, when asked by a Saratoga waiter what he would have for breakfast, replied: "Well, I rather guess I'll just top my lip over a chicken."

A shrewd old Yankee said he didn't believe there was any downright cure for laziness in a man. "But," he added, "I've known a second wife to hurry it some."

Political.

We congratulate the Hon. John Morrissey! Now is the time for the Hon. John to take possession of Tammany and lead the reform movement. We congratulate the Hon. William Allen! He can enjoy the repose so richly earned in a long and useful life, and tell stories about his smoking corn-cob pipes with Andrew Jackson.—N. Y. Herald.

The nomination of Hendricks fixes the character of the convention. The declaration for an unconditional repeal of the resumption clause of the act of 1875 was a bid for the votes of the inflationists; the nomination of Hendricks was a still higher bid. The inflationists have been rejected by the Republicans. They have got, substantially, all they asked for in the Democratic platform, and their most conspicuous leader has been placed on that platform to give it emphasis. If the inflationists were to bolt they would only help elect that of the Republicans. If they accept the surrender made to them, they will remain the real masters of their party, able to dictate terms to its leaders.—N. Y. Times.

The Democrats open the campaign suspiciously. With a candidate nominated to attract the vote of New York, they have associated with him a candidate for vice president admirably adapted to repel the vote of the State. They ask the hard money men to look at Tilden and the hard money phase in the platform; they ask the soft money men to look at Hendricks and the unconditional, unlimited postponement of resumption. The soft money men may ignore the hard money