Lavender Creighton's Lovers

By OLIVIA B. STROHM

(Copyright, 1905, by Olivia B. Strohm).

CHAPTER XXX—CONTINUED.

So on this auspicious morning the little log building was filled with a noisy crowd in high good humor. Winslow sat on the platform in company with a few leading men who were busy making speeches. For now that the schoolhouse was a success—a practical something in logs and mortar, everybody was enthusiastic; each striving to prove that his had been the support which promised to make of St. Charles an educational center.

And for this recognition Winslow was grateful. What though doubts were at first expressed and, fearful of failure, the villagers gave sly indorsement and grudging aid? "I am not the first," he thought, "for whose venture the public waited with hands behind its back; in one the crown of thorns—the laurel wreath in the other."

Unconsciously his shoulders were lifted disdainfully; his lips took a cynical curve at thought of how little his venture—a log schoolhouse in the wilderness—was worthy either reward. Compared with the hopes he had built on the southern project how puerile it seemed! He had reckoned upon the success of the expedition less from its own possibilities than because of his belief in the integrity and statecraft of Aaron Burr. From him—from his reflected glory, he had expected great things. There was much of the dreamer in Winslow—the disciple rather than the leader.

And this, not from weakness, but because of a habitual plane of thought where energetic leadership seemed scarcely worth while. To live and dream in an artistic, a poetic world to which others had given practical shape—this was his idea of the best in life. The failure of Burr's plans had roused him to action, and action which, so far as it led, had been successful; it was only that he despised the end.

But there had suddenly come a new turn of affairs, and his horizon had dawned broader—bright with new possibilities. It was this recent hope which lifted the tenor of his thought, made less hard the light in his eyes; this—and something else.

For there was a stir at the door, and some newcomers pushed through the crowd. Winslow saw Rev. Luke Ballinger rise from his chair near the pulpit, and go down the aisle to greet him. His heart gave an expectant throb. On the threshold appeared the white head of Mr. Creighton. Tall, placid-eyed, he stood, on his arm the invalid wife. She was pale and very thin, with the look of one to whom has been granted, in illness, a glimpse of the unseen. Winslow's eyes lingered upon her as if to drink in a bit of the divinity which he fancied must be clinging to her. Then his gazed sought and held the other dainty, if more earthly bit of loveliness that hovered near her in the doorway. Lavender had seen in one quick glance that Winslow was there, had noted his eager attention upon their entrance. Summoning all her artful artlessness, she responded to the preacher's greeting with serenity and an easy indifference which belied her beating heart. He found seats for her parents, then asked her to lead the singing. "Nobody can play; we have been waiting for you," he said.

"And I would not have missed coming; you see, sir, we were determined to get in."

The reverend man replied with mock gravity: "I see, but were you not afraid of being smitten with blindness, that, like the men of Sodom, you came near to break the door?"

She gave him a searching glance as they went down the aisle together, opening her eyes wide with a pretty blush of defiance.

The minister shook his head. "The eyes are there, no doubt; see that they do no mischief," and shaking his finger at her with a warning smile, he escorted her to the spinet which occupied one end of the platform.

And Winslow's attention wandered from the service to watch her as she presided over the squeaky little instrument. In her best mulberry-colored gown, with sarsenet sash, she sat demure, her head bent over the keyboard, all her mind apparently intent upon a copy of Watt's hymns—all her strength expended in energetic pressure of the stiff old pedals. But that her thoughts, too, were wandering, was apparent from an occasional glance, sidelong, in his direction; then a blush would redden her cheek, and creep down into the neck which the soft gauze kerchief only pretended to conceal. To-day she was to give Winslow his answer; the answer to his question: "May its fulfillment be mine?"

All the way into the village she had been rehearsing what she should say, how meet him.

Yet how vain to think she would have need for words. For words—when as she passed him where he sat on the platform, very glance of the humidly tender eyes, each curve of the winsome lips, the rise and fall of linen crossed on the happy bosom—all made plain what words could only weaken.

The exercises would have bored any but such an audience. The people, mentally starved, were pleased with anything that even parodied thought, and speeches, dialogues and songs were applauded with an impartiality which made up in fervor what it lacked in discrimination. The last speaker chose patriotism for his theme, and waved an imaginary banner of stars and stripes for the edification of his hearers. To most of these, however, patriotism was but a name; national pride a dead letter. For love of country could have no firm hold upon a people when the very name of that country was for months a matter of doubt, when much of the time, it was a moot question to what flag they owed allegiance. The standard raised, and as often lowered to give place to another, cheapened each until, through rapid changes, the pioneers managed well enough without a common head relying each upon its own sturdy settlement.

However, this was more especially true of the French and Spanish in the new territory; there were stalwart sons of the new republic east of the Mississippi, to whom the sight of the standard of freedom was inspiring; who felt yet a glow of patriot fervor at the faintest flap of eagle wings. To one of this kind was allotted the closing speech. He was a tall, loose-jointed individual whose hair might be charitably described as sandy, but whose whiskers were undeniably red. The arms which he waved seemed borrowed for the occasion—so little their gestures savored of familiar use. He raised his voice to a patriotic shriek at the peroration: "My friends, I have said all this to prove that there yet live patriots about us. Because we have journeyed far, let us not forget that we have a country; let us not forget, either, that our country has enemies. Indeed, we have had recent news of the activity of one such. His machinations are even now being discussed in a court of law at Richmond where, let us hope, justice and truth will be vindicated, and by its orders may Aaron Burr suffer the doom of traitor to his flag."

He waved his arms again, and with a jerky bow took his seat. The applause that followed was intended less in praise of the oratory than gratitude for the relief of tired muscles.

When it had died away, Winslow, pale, but with eyes glowing, came to the center of the platform. There was an expectant hush, and he began:

"It is not my purpose to speak in justification of the distinguished prisoner at the bar to which our friend has just alluded, but my personal acquaintance with Aaron Burr makes it hard to keep silent. Even so great a soul as he may reach depths where the faith of the humblest is prized. You will forgive me, therefore, if I add a moiety of favor in the balance which threatens to weigh against him. My own connection with his expedition I am prepared to explain fully to all in whose minds there may lurk a doubt of my honesty (in the half-defiant pause which followed nobody spoke nor moved), but for Aaron Burr's cause I am not here to ask for your sympathy; the verdict of the court must decide for us. I have only to suggest that in the meantime all criticism be withheld. The country at large is the jury which will later sit in deliberation upon the result. Indeed, it is more than likely that the whole truth will not be known until the judgment. On that day let us see that we bring to that Greater Bar unprejudiced minds and hearts all free from bias that we may escape peremptory dismissal at the hands of the Great Challenger."

There was a pause, while his hearers were undecided whether to applaud or not. Winslow settled the point for them by a sudden change of tone and manner. Coming forward and insensibly edging closer to where—a little to the right—sat Lavender, he began anew lightly:

"I have an announcement to make which may come as a surprise to many here."

The audience craned their necks, and those at the windows stood a-tiptoe to hear. "I am going back east as soon as—" involuntarily his head swerved to the right—"as soon as possible. There are urgent reasons calling me away now. I fear that all of you who remain here to work in the vineyard will liken me to the spies of Canaan who only carry home bunches of grapes to show the fatness of the land. But, indeed, I go with grateful regrets which must ever follow such kindness as I have met here—here, in this garden spot of the new land of our new country."

And he bowed amid loud cheers. Then: "But in order that the work here be not lost, but carried on better than my feeble powers would admit, the committee and I have decided to present the name of another for the place of teacher in this school. The gentleman whom we have the honor to name is Mr. Gerald Creighton."

At this arose an audible murmur of excitement; none expressed open displeasure but all felt more or less disappointment. Winslow was not only a personal favorite—he was regarded by all as one having authority, and competent to lead the school to success. That his mantle would sit well upon the restless shoulders of the easy-going Gerald all felt much doubt. But to the pioneer mind it was of small consequence, and there was no dissent. Since the new Elisha was nowhere to be found, his acceptance was taken for granted.

As Winslow took his seat there was a commotion in the crowd that filled the aisle, and Tobias Judson lurched forward. Stepping to the platform with a tread that threatened partition of the oaken flooring, he began to speak.

If there were a member of the community whose word carried more weight than another's, it was Uncle Tobias—as he was familiarly known. His was an ambition to be known as one having authority and, though self-appointed to the office, the country folk were glad to recognize him as arbiter in common affairs. Hence his great hand raised was as a scepter, his first word was followed by instant silence.

"Feller citizens, I want ter say a word about this schoolhouse. I'm proud of it; it's the first, but you kin jest bet yer life it ain't a-goin' to be the last. And I want ter say—speakin' fer the committee and the hull of yer, that we're all obleeged to the schoolmaster."

His wave of the hand toward Winslow was the signal for cheers; the orator continued: "You all will be glad to hear, too, that he's struck it rich—or that's how it promises. They've found coal on his land, and it's a valoeable piece of property. When he goes back east he kin brag to his friends about the strike he made here, and I hope he'll do it."

Another emphatic nod followed by loud applause. "If he does, it'll probably take the curse off'n that Burr dodge that fizzled out—and with all due respect to the schoolmaster I'm right glad it did. A coal mine in this blessed country is better any day than promises of gold and diamonds in a land which none of us ain't sartin about, and can't locate any closeter 'n the end o' Godspeed!"

There was loud applause and the scuffling of anxious feet. To the latter disconcerting accompaniment Rev. Luke offered prayer. Then he gave out the hymn, and Winslow stepped to the spinet to turn the leaves for the player. As Lavender struck the first chord their eyes met; though her own were instantly lowered again, to the keys, Winslow had read his answer.

CHAPTER XXXI.

When the time for dinner had come, the merry-makers devoted themselves with keen appetites and spirits boisterous to this—the grand event of the day. To Winslow it seemed odd that these simple pioneer folk who served all meals in such bare and homely fashion should find sport in slight deviation from the ordinary habit. "But evidently there are degrees in rustic simplicity," he said to himself, as with a smile half cynical, half envious he surveyed the crowd. Two or three small fires were built, and above these hung kettles for the making of that rare luxury—tea. Over the embers game was toasted, and "roastin' ears" slowly baked in their jackets of yellow and green. Cloths were sometimes spread on the ground, but more often lap-robes served as napery.

Here and there, from their teams detached, were wagons in which whole families perched making hungry dives into a common hamper. One table graced the grove. It was put together—a few boards on stakes—for the use of the committee and its favored guests. Chief of these was Winslow, who occupied his post of honor with secret dissatisfaction. For in the few words she had found time to say, Mrs. Creighton urged his company with them. He declined ruefully. "A lamb led to the slaughter I go to play the role of hero in—extraordinary. But save a little strength to visit with me," and he bowed low over her hand.

With divided mind he performed the honors of the table; secretly intent upon watching Lavender. One or two of the more daring among the village beaux assisted with awkward gallantry while she unfilled the small hickory crates and put the food in tempting array on a white cloth—dropped like a cloud upon the green sward.

When Winslow's gaze would catch and hold hers a rare smile filled her neyes with iridescent sparkle or by a bow, blush or wave of the hand she would reward the glances which, however they roved, came always back to her. For the lover's fond vision saw but another setting for her beauty in this brilliant scene; the forest—all green save for the scarlet of berry and gold of blossom which blazoned the last glory of summertime. The sky seemed to hold for her the softest bridal veil of mist, and in the background a low fire smouldered—against which her head shone in cameo relief.

He was roused from these poetic fancies by a touch on the shoulder and turning saw Gerald Creighton, his handsome face a-blush. With an embarrassed smile he said: "May I see you when dinner is over? At the grove by the road there; I'll be waiting under the maple trees." Winslow murmured a surprised assent, but before he could speak further Gerald had slipped away. In a moment he was joined by Susan whom he led straight to his mother.

Interested, Winslow watched the little family comedy. Sue, frightened, nervous, but beaming with a proud happiness, hovered close to her lover. Happiness—yet not all unmixed; for the daughter's conscience was never free from the accusing finger of the dead. It was the first time she had seen Gerald—except for the few moments by the brook—since the awful suspicion, and to-day she only consented because he would not be refused; he had besought, commanded: "Tell me, Susan, I insist upon knowing your reason for this change. You love me, dear; why do you treat me coldly?"

She had parried his questioning with a promise to go this once, and now she was here—here, with all her little world looking on. Winslow noticed the gentle kindness with which Mrs. Creighton responded to Sue's awkward little courtesy. The father placed her near him with an evident intent to put her at ease.

As Lavender advanced to meet the new guest, Winslow watched her closely; how would she act? There was just a moment's hesitation—she stopped short and, all the color gone from her face, put her hand to her heart as if in sudden pain. Involuntarily her eyes sought Winslow's, and it gave him a sudden sharp pang as he thought: "She is wondering how she must meet the girl whose father I killed!"

But whatever the reason, Lavender's hesitation was over in a moment, and going forward she greeted the newcomer with hand outstretched and smiling words. Winslow could hear none of the conversation, but it was apparent that the family were bent upon kindliness toward this timid stranger whose quiet brown eyes and quivering lips seemed to entreat their love.

Gerald maintained a defiant air of outward calmness, but there was a flush on his cheek, and an anxious light in his eye which flashed feverish scrutiny between his mother and the girl he had thrust upon her. He was proud, grateful and happy at Sue's reception—at the justice finally done; relieved that the wooing of her who really held his wayward affections need be no longer under the rose.

At the close of the meal Winslow saw Gerald go alone to the place of meeting he had signified.

As soon as possible he, followed to where the grove of maples offered shade and silence. Here he found Gerald waiting.

The latter greeted him with impulsive candor: "Mr. Winslow, what a coward you must think me!"

Winslow took his hand, smiling as he returned: "I'm sorry I came, if it was but to hear you villify yourself."

But Gerald was fully bent upon making the apology to which he had nerved himself, and which he now poured forth as if anxious to have the distasteful task over.

(To Be Continued.)

HOME VS. THE CITY

THAT IS WHAT THE HOME-TRADE PROBLEM AMOUNTS TO.

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?

If You Are Sending Your Dollars to the Mail-Order Houses You Are Battling Against the Home Town.

(Copyrighted, by Alfred C. Clark.)

A far seeing, provident business man will not pursue a policy which is subversive of his best interests. He will not destroy his own house, neither will he jeopardize his business. He will observe the golden rule, not only in theory, but in practice, and its practical observation was never more needed than at the present time. Men dream about the "Golden Age" and yet, ofttimes pursue a policy which renders the dawn of that age an impossibility.

Within the horizon of every country resident there exists an evil which is yearly assuming greater proportions. We refer to the mail order business which last year amounted in money sent to Chicago alone to $200,000,000. Two hundred millio dollars diverted from its legitimate channel. Two hundred million dollars sent out to enrich those who were not needy, while those at home sorely in need of support were passed by coldly; the local trade was impoverished just to that extent. This golden trade reviving stream should have remained within its own channel, thus enriching its own soil, and causing desert places to bloom and blossom.

Many unemployed would have been engaged at living wages, households would have been cheered and hearts warmed; but no, it went to swell the dividends of surfeited, boastful city concerns.

The live and let live doctrines was overlooked; its old-fashioned wholesomeness was utterly disregarded.

The country merchant would have been engaged in his daily struggle, instead of battling at long odds against ostracism, adversity, big bills and meager receipts.

Think of $200,000,000, ye who cause the catalogue houses to flourish as the cedars of Lebanon, and the gre n bay tree; remember that their prosperity is at the expense of your brother, the local merchant, and local progress. Then ask this pertinent question: Can we afford to play the game longer; can we longer stultify local interests?

This great evil affects every farmer, teacher and work hand, every home, every school, every church in every country community. It also touches the interests of the physician, preacher and pedagogue. It really robs the country merchant before his eyes, in a heartless way. He sees the freight yard crowded with consignments to individuals from great catalogue houses, and sadly does he look at his country store with its stock accumulating, for want of trade, and thus decreasing in value every day. Sadly too does he look at the refuge of bankruptcy hourly being hastened because his townsmen prefer the catalogue house with its ubiquitous circulars. Those train loads of goods were bought with money that should have found its way into the honest hand of your local merchant, who has the good of your locality at heart, and who is expected to contribute liberally and continuously to very moral and benevolent institution in your midst. Then likewise remember this, that of all the millions thus sent to swell the coffers of houses in great cities, not one cent will ever return to bless your community; to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry or to educate the ignorant!

This is certainly a misguided, ill-advised policy; if self preservation is the first law of nature, the fact just stated should cause lovers of this country to think. Continue this policy and what follows? The value of real estate decreases, local improvements cease, material progress stops, the whole country suffers.

The money of a community represents in a business sense just so much possibility, and every honest occupation is injured in proportion as that is withheld or sent elsewhere.

In a certain rural community, this official order and warning was issued: "Unless bad roads are fixed there will be no rural delivery at all." It is impossible to put roads in repair without money. This lack of means cannot be traced to poor crops, for the harvest just gathered in has been superabundant. Men cannot support and build up business concerns in distant cities without sacrificing the local good. Is it fair to establish the city by depriving the country of its just support?

Many hold forth the idea that the country is the feeder of the city. This is only partially true. That doctrine has been preached till the text is threadbare. It would be much wiser for men to get a new text and talk and work the country up, then allow the city, including its mail order Octopus, to work its own problems awhile. This, instead of being selfishness, would be the finest order of common sense. A more marked feeling of brotherhood interest is saidly needed in the country on this particular point.

The rural population complain of lack of facilities and conveniences; in order to obviate this, let $200,000,000 this coming year be disbursed among country merchants, among the humbler storekeepers, then observe what will follow. The improvements would be marked. Social conditions would be greatly ameliorated. A new order would maintain in the home and over the broad acres of the farm and best of all, the social spirit of brotherhood would be felt as never before.

Listen to these thoughtful words from Gov. Folk, of Missouri: "We are proud of our splendid cities, and we want to increase in wealth and population, and we also want our country towns to grow. We wish the city merchants to build up, but also desire the country merchants to prosper. I do NOT BELIEVE in the mail order citizen. If a place is good enough for a man to live in and to make his money in, it is good enough for a man to SPEND HIS MONEY in. Patronize your own town papers, build them up, and they will build your town up in increased trade and greater opportunities."

These are the words of wisdom and foresight from a prudent, patriotic man. As it is to-day, these words are expressive of the opposite of what should be in many a country district. The mail order citizen may think he is gaining; the truth is he is sawing off the limb upon which he sits. Disaster only can follow. The mail order citizen makes his money locally and scatters it abroad in a field where it is not needed; this is unfair to both the town and to its merchants. This shortsighted citizen complains of the size and character of his town paper, at the same time he pursues a policy which tends to destroy both. Then, publishers ought to be careful how they exploit and give publicity to the mail order houses; even if they are paid well for the space, it reacts disastrously on the town's best prospects.

Let men stand by the local merchant, let them protect his interests, for they thus further their own. The town that made the man should be made by the man. This is fair to all. Let men ponder well this truth, that we are all interdependent; that the vein of brotherhood underlies the entire social and commercial fabric. That together we stand or fall; that the good of the country demands loyalty and practical cooperation.

ARTHUR M. FROWDEN.

The batteries of the catalogue houses are carrying destruction to the smaller cities and towns. Are you helping in this work of hurling destruction at the local schools, churches and industries? Are you assisting in the distribution of mail-order literature and sending ammunition in the way of home dollars with which they will continue the campaign?

Father's Fond Hopes Dashed.

"Times are changed," said Mark Twain, speaking of Washington. "I doubt if nowadays a man of Washington's unswerving integrity would be able to get on.

"A rich lawyer after dinner the other night went into his den for a smoke. He took down from his piperack a superb meerschaum, a Christmas present from his wife, but, alas, as he started to fill the pipe it came apart in his hands. The bowl had been broken in two and then carelessly stuck together.

"With loud growls of rage the lawyer rushed from his den and demanded to know who had broken his new meerschaum. His only son, a boy of 11, spoke up bravely.

"'Father,' he said, 'I can not tell a lie. I did it.'

"The lawyer praised the lad's Washingtonian veracity, but that night on his pillow he groaned and went on terribly about the incident.

"'Heaven help me,' he said, 'it had been my life's dearest wish to rear up my son to my own profession, but now—alas—alas—'"

Fortunate Men of Prominence.

Admirers of great, rich or famous people often bestow their wealth upon the objects of their regard. The German emperor heads the list of lucky ones so favored. His receipts in money and real estate during the last ten years would, it is said, make a millionaire envious. Following precedent, a Hamburg merchant prince left more than $1,000,000 to the emperor's chancellor, whom Kaiser William immediately created "Prince" Buelow. William Jennings Bryan recently came by wealth in the same way. In England Lord Allerton has received $100,000 from an admirer of his public career and Dr. Jameson inherits a sum one-fifth larger under the will of Mr. Beit. Queen Victoria was very fortunate in her admirers, of whom the wealthiest was Nield, who bequeathed to her the sum of $1,250,000.

Lady Isabel and the Curio Shop

BY MRS. NEISH

(Copyright, by Joseph B. Bowles.)

"I don't know why it is," said Lady Isabel, "but the more one makes, the less one always seems to have."

"Do you make so much, Isabel?"

"No, only a scrap here and there," she said regretfully, "because, you see, it takes such an awful lot to make an income; but I wasn't thinking of myself."

"No?"

"You needn't say 'No' in that tone, Marjorie, as though you thought me egotistic," said Lady Isabel, in a slightly aggrieved voice. "The fact is, I am trying to help a friend."

"Really—how kind of you, dear. Who is it?"

"Laura Staunton," she answered; "the dear girl, the youngest daughter of our old vicar. Like all clergymen, he had what David or Solomon or somebody called 'a quiverful' of daughters. I don't know why it should be considered in the light of a blessing to have a quiverful of daughters. It's very hard, at any rate on them, for he has left them all without a penny."

"How are you going to help her?" I asked with interest.

"Well," replied Lady Isabel, "she has opened a shop for nice second-hand things—now don't look like that Marjorie, I don't mean clothes, I mean things like grandfather's clocks and broken china and old fenders, and all that sort of thing," she added vaguely.

"Oh, you mean curios—an old curiosity shop, in fact."

"Yes," said Lady Isabel. "And now, Marjorie, dear,"—delightedly—"you've put an idea in my head. I'll make her call it 'Ye anciente curiosyte shoppe;' but I must see she spells it right, or rather, wrong, it will sound so much more genuine."

"It will certainly be an advantage in these days even to sound genuine," I said.

"Yes, won't it," she answered very pleasantly, "especially as most of the things will be faked. You know they nearly always are faked at that sort of shop."

"Really?"

She nodded. "Yes—and I'll tell how it's done a little later on."

"How are you going to help Miss Staunton's shop?" I asked her presently.

"Well, for one thing, I am going to take Mrs. Barrington-Brown there to buy things; you see, we shall both be in town for a day or so next week."

"I see. And Mr. Malcolmstein, is he to be taken there as well?"

"No; I shan't take him there," said Lady Isabel hastily, "nor the Fliedermanns; they know too much; but I dare say they'll pick me up some little things for her to sell. She's very pretty—Laura, I mean."

"Is she faked, too?" I asked.

Lady Isabel laughed. "No, my dear, she's not; she's absolutely genuine."

* * * * *

"I've been going over the list of things in Laura's shop and rearranging them," said Lady Isabel the following afternoon.

"Have you; how very good of you."

"Oh, it's rather fun," she answered, bending over her table and writing something rapidly.

"La Marquise Victorine—Victime de la Revolution," leaning on her shoulder as I read. "Who's she?"

"It's for a small miniature I picked up cheap," said Lady Isabel airily. "It was very faded, so I got a little artist I knew to touch it up for half a guinea."

"And how did you find out who it was?"

"I didn't," she replied frankly; "but if I don't know, I shall always put Victime de la Revolution—there were so many of them, poor dears, so I shall always be safe."

"Why call it anything?"

"Only on account of the price," she answered seriously. "You see, Mrs. Barrington-Brown will pay so much more for something really historical."

"I see," I said.

"All the broken china has gone to be mended by a little man Mr. Fakenstein told me of—he lives at Whitechapel, or Notting Hill, where no one ever goes, or somewhere, and he's a Polish Jew, and frightfully clever and tricky. His name is Balenski, and you can't tell a Balenski-Chelsea figure from the real thing, if you're ever such an expert—unless, of course, you know his work."

"Is that how collectors get their china mended?"

"No," she said, "not collectors, only dealers. You see, collectors generally only care for genuine things; but then, of course," she added thoughfully, "dealers must live, and if you can't tell the difference, it doesn't hurt anybody. Besides, collectors shouldn't be taken in, they ought to have a thorough knowledge of their subject before they attempt to begin to collect."

"What a lot you seem to know about the subject, Isabel."

"Yes, Mr. Malcolmstein taught me a tremendous lot," she answered. "He told me how they make real old Worcester china and real Chelsea and Crown Derby over in Paris, and how they send it over here almost by the ton. And they make old English glass, too, over in Holland and in Germany, at a place called the Giant mountain—or the Giant something or other, but I think it was a mountain."

A day or two later I went with Lady Isabel to see Miss Staunton's curio shop. Mrs. Barrington-Brown had not yet arrived, and Lady Isabel took me round and let me into several little secrets of the curio trade.

"This box is Battersea enamel," she said; "you know, Marjorie, enameled on copper—at least, it ought to be."

"I know," I said, "it's a lost art, isn't it?"

"Well, it's not quite as lost as you think," she answered thoughtfully. "This, for instance,"—she took up a little box as she spoke—"this is what I call a 'Balenski-Battersea' box; but this one is genuine—I mean, it isn't mended yet."

"And this," I said, taking up another

"Oh, that has just come back from Paris. It has had a new lid. Isn't it a pretty one?—of course, it has no more intrinsic value than an enameled saucepan; but then, all values are only relative, aren't they dearest?"

"What a pretty picture!" I said, turning away to a print that was lying on a small Chippendale table.

She lifted it and handed it to me. "Yes," she said, "isn't it? It is an old one—at least, it will be old by the time I sell it to Mrs. Barrington-Brown." She dropped a little "historical" label in the box as she spoke. "You'll see how well we're going to make it pay, Marjorie," she said with gaiety.

"Do you think it is quite fair," I asked, feeling as I said it, that I was,

La Marquise Victorine—Victime de la Revolution.

metaphorically speaking, running my head against a wall of brick.

"Fair!" she echoed; "my dear girl, of course it's fair—I am only telling you some secrets. All trades have secrets—grocers and butchers, and artists, and—and every one."

This dictum followed me as I turned from greeting the newly-arrived Mrs. Barrington-Brown to speak to Lady Isabel's protege.

"Well how are you getting on, Miss Staunton?"

"Oh, very well indeed, thank you," she answered, and added hurriedly, "you know we never give a guarantee with anything that isn't right, and Lady Isabel only sends rich and ignorant people here who can well afford to buy out things, and she is very kind; she often almost gives away a thing to a woman who really is hard up, and she—"

"I know," I interposed, "her distinctions of honesty are wholly inimitable."

"She's awfully clever, too," said Laura Staunton, glancing half apologetically at Lady Isabel, who was showing Mrs. Barrington-Brown her "Victime de la Revolution," "and I shall miss her awfully while she is abroad. She has been so very, very kind to me."

"She has," I assented, "and she seems to be taking an especially great amount of trouble just now to make your fortune."

"My fortune," echoed Laura Staunton, staring at me in amazement; "it doesn't affect me, I only get my salary."

"Your salary!" I gasped, for even I was taken aback by this assertion. "Do you mean to say that Lady Isabel pays you a salary?"

Miss Staunton nodded. "Of course," she said gratefully, "and a jolly good one, too."

"But why?" I asked; "why should she pay you anything?"

Laura Staunton looked at me in fresh astonishment. "Didn't you know?" she stammered; "I thought, of course, you knew."

"Knew what?"

"Why," she explained, "I thought, of course, you knew the shop was Lady Isabel's!"

FISH WEARS FUR OVERCOAT.

Strange Tale of Freak of Nature from Alaska.

Winnipeg, Man.—The following has been received by mail from Dawson City:

"Scientists will be puzzled when they hear of a recent discovery made at Mooschide. So strange a demonstration of freaks of nature has never before been published.

"Indian Tom of Mooschide brought in the news. He says the whole tribe is worn out with speculation as to what the strange happening portends for the future of the Indian race.

"After Christmas—just after the annual potlach—some industrious Indians thought it would be wise to catch some fresh greyling for the Dawson market.

"The first fish hooked was a greyling ten inches long. It had fur all over it. Never before did an Indian see any edible fish wearing a fur overcoat. The head of the strange fish, says Indian Tom, is just like that of an ordinary greyling, and the shape is the same.

"But from the back of the gills down to the end of the tail the fish is covered with a soft fur. The color of the fur is a dark brown, exactly the achromatic tone and color of the taste of the morning after a whole night o jackpots. No wonder the Mooschid Indians have all decided to swear off with the new year."

His Idea.

"Every man who starts out with the intention of killing things should b made to pay a license."

"I thought autoists already paid a license?"—Houston Post.

Memento.

Though generations pass, the marks
Of their Indian origin appear.
For instance, there's the coppery hue,—
A sort of Sioux veneer.
—Puck.