Stenographers We Have Known.

The stenographer hung out his sign one day, to the gaze of a busy city,
Reporting of all kinds done here;
Cases taken in either hemisphere;
Lecturers reported in Blackstone or Chitty.

Scientific or technical matter, and all other I do not here mention,
From the sad funeral oration
To the speech at the celebration,
Will receive prompt attention.

French and German reported and neatly transcribed into English.
As well as Armenian and Spanish;
Dictation in Norwegian and Danish,
Translated into elegant English.

Medical lectures taken on the disease "Cerebro-spinal-meningitis,"
On nerves of motion and sensibility,
On muscles and their contractility;
Also those on Bronchitis.

Sermons taken from Hebrew or Sanscrit,
Cases solicited in litigation;
* * * * *
He took notes from English dictation,
And couldn't get out a transcript.

ADOPTED BY THE DEAN:

A TALE OF TWO COUNTRIES.

All she could do at present was to sympathize with her, and try to give her fresh interests; and Bertha did seem rather happier when she was fairly out of the dreary Bayswater lodgings, and established in Esperance's pretty drawing-room. George was in the city all day, and the time passed slowly when she was alone; but in the Magnays' house there was a brightness and geniality in the very atmosphere which roused her from her depression of spirits. After a time her visits there became almost daily institutions; she would sit nursing little Noel by the hour, or talking sadly yet with a kind of pleasure of Rilchester and the deanery, and the bygone times. Esperance was only too glad to have her, and was always bright and cheerful while she was present; but after she had gone her face would become thoughtful and sad, and sometimes a tear would fall on the baby's white frock as she thought over poor Bertha's troubles.

"If my uncle would only relent," she used to say to Claude, when most troubled by Bertha's paleness and depression.

"Well, cherie," Claude would reply, "you and Noel must go to Rilchester and touch his heart, that is the only plan I can think of."

And Esperance would laugh, and hold her baby more closely, while she declared that his little brown face would be worse than useless.

Rilchester seemed but little altered; and Esperance looked at the quiet streets and picturesque houses with an odd sort of affection; she had learned a great deal while she lived there, and she could look back upon the suffering now with undisturbed serenity, seeing how good had come out of evil. It was curious to drive down the very streets which she used to pass through on her way to and from the Priory, to recall the long, weary walks, her terror when it grew dusk, and her encounter with a gang of workmen, and then to look to the other side of the carriage and to see Claude giving a blithe recognition to the precentor, and little Noel gazing with wide-opened eyes at all about him. How little she had dreamed in those dark days of the possessions which were awaiting her in the future.

On the following day they were to dine at the deanery, and Mrs. Mortlake and Dean Collinson came to see them before the afternoon service. Christabel was, of course, as polite and amiable as possible, and put on her very best company manners, but Esperance knew she did not really like her any better than before, and disliked the fussing politeness almost more than the former sharp fault-finding. The dean, too, seemed more pompous than ever; she had mentioned Bertha's name to him, but he had looked displeased, and had at once changed the subject. On the whole the visit had been a disappointing one, and she left weary and depressed.

"Why, my little 'Mariana,'" said Claude, as he returned from seeing the visitors out, and found Esperance with the shadow of that old look on her face, "what has been troubling you?"

"I don't know," said Esperance, half laughing, and allowing herself to be ensconced on the sofa, "I am cross and stupid to-day, and somehow after our long happiness it seems rather a weight to come back to Christabel. And Uncle Collinson seems heartless—and he did not even care to hear of Bertha."

CHAPTER XXXV.

"Mr. and Mrs. Magnay!"

The heavy door was thrown back, the tall footman stood aside, and Esperance found herself once more in the purple drawing-room. Mrs. Mortlake had not come down; but Cornelia came forward with her kind and real welcome, and Esperance's old friends, Mrs. Lowdell and her daughter Grace, were also there. She was glad to be able to tell them all about Gaspard, and she did not mind recalling the past troubles which had happened during their last visit, now that she could look across the room to where her husband stood in conversation with the dean.

Dean Collinson had for the time lost his pomposity—he was talking very eagerly.

"I have been busy in the observatory," Esperance heard him say; "we must go up there after dinner."

Then in a minute both crossed the room to the window-seat where she was sitting.

"Let us come one moment, cherie; we want to see what kind of a night it is," and Claude drew aside the heavy purple curtains, and looked out intently, shading his eyes from the light within.

It was quite dusk, but not too dark to prevent their seeing a great rolling masses of cloud away to the southeast.

"A thunder storm," said Claude, "if I am not mistaken; I thought it would come on sooner, the sky was so lurid this afternoon."

"Provoking!" said the dean, "it will prevent us from taking our observations, but it will pass over, I've no doubt."

Dinner was announced just then. Esperance sat next to Cornelia, and had so much to tell her that she got through the tediously long infliction better than she had expected. The gentlemen did not stay down-stairs long; directly after tea they adjourned to the observatory, and Miss Grace Lowdell having expressed a wish to go up too, Cornelia and Esperance followed with her.

Esperance was glad to peep into her old attic-room, now filled with Bella's playthings, and she could not repress a little shiver as she remembered how much she had gone through there. She held Cornelia's hand more closely, and crossed the landing quickly to the observatory, where Claude was working away at the great cog-wheel which turned the domed roof, so as to open it for the telescope, which was not yet adjusted.

Miss Lowdell was enchanted; she had never been in the observatory before, and had no idea ingenious machinery existed there. The dean had called Cornelia to the adjoining room, and Esperance and Miss Lowdell had just climbed up the flight of steps on the little wooden stage, when a sudden and very vivid flash of lightning startled them both.

"Oh, pray let us get down," said Miss Lowdell, nervously. "We seem so terribly near to it up here. It must be the beginning of a storm."

"Yes," said Esperance, with a slight shiver, as another flash succeeded, quickly followed by a tremendous clap of thunder.

She had a great horror of thunder-storms, and as Claude came half-way up the steps to help her down, her hand felt cold and tremulous.

"You must come down-stairs, darling," he said decisively. "There is no use in our going up here till the storm has passed."

"Noel will be so frightened," she said, pleadingly, "don't you think I might go home to him?"

"What! in the middle of the storm?"

"It has not begun to rain yet; and it is not far; besides, the lightning will not be worse out-of-doors than it is here. Cornelia will understand how it is—will you not?" she, said, turning to her cousin, who had just rejoined them.

"Quite," said Cornelia, kindly, "you must do just what you like, dear."

"Then I will go, please, Claude, for I shall not feel happy about Noel; you know Marie is very young."

"Considerably older than her small mistress," said Claude, with a comical look.

Cornelia and Miss Lowdell both laughed, while Esperance drew herself up with an expression of mock dignity.

"I was twenty last birthday; and you've no business to laugh at me now I am out of my teens."

They laughed all the more, however, and it was not until another still more vivid flash startled them all, that they left the observatory, Cornelia and Miss Lowdell joining Christabel in the drawing-room, and Claude and Esperance returning to their hotel.

There was a heavy oppressiveness about the atmosphere—not a star was visible—and as they crossed the open square which led from the deanery to the Vicar's Court the darkness seemed to press almost painfully on their sight. They had scarcely reached the old gate-way when a flash—if flash it could be called—which seemed to them like a mass of golden-red fire, blazed past them, while simultaneously came the most appalling thunder-clap.

Esperance was half deafened by it for a moment, but her terror was conquered by her amazement. She had never seen or heard anything so grandly awful. Claude put his arm around her.

"Do not be frightened, darling, that is most likely the worst we shall have."

"Did the cathedral tower fall?" she asked. "Surely something fell in that great crash—something is falling now! Oh, listen!"

Claude turned back toward the deanery—the direction from which the noise came. The lamp-light was too dim to reveal much, but the next moment the lightning illumined the old house, and in that brief glance they could see that the observatory had been altogether wrecked. The jagged and irregular outline stood out darkly against the bright sky, then in an instant the black darkness veiled it from their sight.

"Cornelia! my uncle! Oh, Claude, they must be killed!" cried Esperance, in an agony of grief. "Let us go back!"

Claude was struck dumb by that terrible revelation; he could not refuse her, and they hurried back to the house, where all was confusion. By the time they had reached the door Mrs. Mortlake, with poor little terrified Bella, had rushed out, Mrs. and Miss Lowdell hurried after her, while the servants had already fled and were standing on the grass in front of the house, huddled together in their fright.

"Oh, Esperance, it has been so terrible!" said Mrs. Mortlake, clinging to her. "If it had been ten minutes later Bella would have been upstairs!"

"Are you all safe?" asked Esperance, shuddering.

"I do not know. We were sitting in the drawing-room when that fearful crash came, and the whole house seemed to tremble and vibrate, and——."

But Esperance interrupted her—"Where is Cornelia?"

No one knew.

"And the dean!" said Mrs. Lowdell. "Where is the dean?"

The little crowd round the house had increased, but the neighborhood was so quiet and retired that it was still small; there was a low, awed murmur, as a dead silence followed Mrs. Lowdell question.

Just then a light was seen within the hall; it approached slowly, and Esperance gave a glad cry as she discerned Cornelia carefully crossing the pavement, which was strewn with fallen beams and broken fragments of glass. But as she came nearer her fixed, ashy-white face put all rejoicing to flight, and fear made every one speechless.

Claude went to meet her and first broke the silence.

"We have been so anxious about you!" he said, hurriedly. "I hope you bring us news of the dean?"

She turned her rigid face toward him.

"I cannot reach him. He was in the ante-room, close to the observatory, when we came down—the way is impassable now!"

"Some one must go up and find him," said Mrs. Mortlake, and she called the footman; but the danger was great, and the footman hung back reluctantly.

Claude left Cornelia then for a moment, and drew Esperance a little apart from the crowd.

"Darling," he said, gently, "I must see if I cannot help to find your uncle. Will you go back to baby? Mrs. Lowdell will go with you, I am sure."

"I cannot go till you come down again," said Esperance, trembling. "And oh, Claude, it will be so dangerous! Must you—need you go?"

He held her closely.

"It seems the only chance, darling. I know the house thoroughly, and am young and strong. The dean is a feeble old man, I cannot leave him without help—you would not wish me to do so."

"No, no!" sobbed Esperance, "you must go, only let me wait here."

"But the rain is so heavy—it is so bad for you, and the storm is not over."

"I do not mind it—see, I do not even start now at the lightning!" she pleaded. "Only let me stay here and I will be quite good and quiet—it would be much worse for me to have to go."

He yielded to her entreaties, and bending down, kissed her, caught her hands in his, and said in low, hurried tones, "Pray for us, darling—and trust."

"Yes," she replied, earnestly—"always."

The last words passed her lips half-dreamily—she could not have given her reason for adding it. The lamp-light fell fully on Claude's face now; she looked up into his clear, grave, blue eyes—one last, long look,—then he stooped once more to kiss her, wrapped her cloak more closely round her, and walked hurriedly away. For a minute Esperance strained her eyes to follow him in the dim light. Some one brought him a lantern, he spoke a few words to Cornelia and then walked up the steps and disappeared in the darkness. Her head drooped then, and she leaned against the lamp-post for support, waiting with folded hands and closed eyes.

People gathered round her, and talked hopefully, but she could not heed them, she never raised her eyes until a half-whispered remark roused her—"Poor Miss Collinson seems quite stunned." Then she drew nearer to the door where Cornelia was standing, and put her arm round her waist, and held one of her cold hands in hers. Cornelia looked at her pityingly.

"My poor child, you ought not to be here."

"It will not hurt me, he told me I might stay—we will wait together," she replied.

"Tell Christabel and the others to go under shelter somewhere," said Cornelia, uttering the words with difficulty.

Esperance obeyed, and Mrs. Mortlake and her guests accepted the offer of one of the minor canons, and took refuge in the Vicar's Court. Then Esperance returned again to Cornelia, and the two women waited in silence through minutes which in their agony of suspense seemed like hours—waited in the pouring rain, and the chill of the autumn night, unheedful of all around, each knowing that the life most dear to her in the world was in mortal danger.

There was an expectant hush; every one was listening intently for some sign which might tell of Claude's success, yet to Esperance it seemed as if the quiet court had never before been so noisy. Her ears were strained to catch the faintest sound from the house, and the low whispers of the lookers-on, the ceaseless drip of the rain on the gravel, and the distant roll of the thunder, seemed almost more than she could endure.

Claude's friend, Mr. White, and two or three servants and neighbors, had ventured as far as the hall, and were the first to hear the shout from above. Cornelia and Esperance heard the voice but could not distinguish the words. Mr. White hurried out to them, however—it was all right, the dean was unhurt. Cornelia uttered a fervent thanksgiving, then again there was unbroken silence while the perilous descent was made down the shattered and almost impassable staircase. Ladders had been procured, but they had proved too short and could not be adjusted, nor was the feeble old dean very anxious to try them.

Claude had found him in the room adjoining the observatory, or rather among its ruins, just recovering from the shock of the accident which had at first stunned him. He was safe and unhurt, but so much agitated that to convey him safely down again was no easy matter. The wooden balustrade and more than half the stairs themselves had been crushed by the falling-in of the observatory, and the debris was strewn so thickly on the remaining portion that walking was very difficult; more than once the dean turned giddy, and was obliged to pause, but at length the worst part of the descent was over, and they could see the faces of the watchers in the hall. They had just reached the top of the last flight where the foothold was rather more sure, when the dean with fresh confidence began to move more quickly, missed his footing, grasped hold of Claude, slipped down a step or two, but finally recovered himself.

Claude, however, could not resist the sudden shock; the dean was next to the wall, but he was on the outside, on the very verge of the broken and shattered stairs. For an instant he struggled hard to right himself, but in vain; the dean glancing round, held the wall for protection with one hand, and with the other clutched despairingly at his rescuer. But it was useless; Claude fell heavily into the hall below.

* * * * * * * *

Esperance had turned cold and faint, but the sight of her husband revived her, terrible though it was. She took off her cloak and spread it on the ground of the porch, then signaled to them where to place him, and, supporting his head, wiped his face with her handkerchief. The others looked on sadly; they had scarcely any hope. Cornelia quite dreaded the arrival of the doctor, so certain did she feel that his first words would blast poor Esperance's hopes.

Claude's death-like pallor and icy coldness had, however, misled them, the doctor reassured them; he was still living, but was unconscious from the effects of concussion of the brain. The dean, who had been too much shocked till now to speak, fairly burst into tears on hearing this; all his pomposity vanished, and he sobbed like a child—"It is my doing—my doing!"

Cornelia could not soothe him; but as Claude was placed on a mattress, and borne slowly away to the hotel, Esperance seemed to awake to the recollection of others, and quickly perceiving how matters were, begged her uncle to come back with her.

After a time she recovered herself, and, hastily dressing, left Noel with Marie and went to her husband's room. There was no improvement of any kind; Claude lay cold and motionless—she only knew that he still lived by the words spoken to her as she came in—"No change." The weary day passed on to its close and night came; the next morning and the next night, and still only a continuation of that awful death in life. On the evening of the third day Esperance's hopes were raised, the deathly stillness and pallor changed, the paralysed limbs moved once more; she watched breathlessly. But alas! there was no comfort in the wandering, unrecognizing gaze of the blue eyes as they rested on her; the awakening was only to delirious ravings and to feverish paroxysms terrible to witness.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Lady Worthington and Frances were away at the time of the accident; there had been a wedding in the family, and they had been from home a week, but the news of the disaster reached them very soon, and Lady Worthington's first object when she returned to Rilchester was to go at once to see Esperance. Frances thought it best to defer her visit, and left her sister alone at the Spread Eagle, after hearing at the door that Mr. Magnay was no better.

There was something very sad in that first visit. The tears were in her eyes, when Esperance came quietly into the room with the hushed manner which people bring with them from a sick bed; she was very pale, but her smile had lost none of its radiance as she hastened forward to kiss Lady Worthington.

"It was very good of you to come—I have so wanted to see you!"

"My poor child! I have been so anxious about you! We only heard on Saturday, and could not come back till this morning. I am afraid you have no better account to give me?"

"No," said Esperance, wearily. "On Saturday evening there was a change, and inflammation set in. Now he has sunk again into a quiet, insensible state, and there seems so little one can do. The dean has telegraphed this morning for some London doctor—he has been very kind."

Was he any the worse himself? I did not hear if he was injured at all?"

"No, he is unhurt." And Esperance gave Lady Worthington all the details of the accident. While she was still talking a servant came in with the mid-day letters—two directed to "Claude Magnay, Esq.," which Esperance put down with a quick sigh, and one to herself from Gaspard. The tears rose to her eyes then—it was the first she had from him since Claude's illness, and he of course knew nothing of her trouble; she could not bear to open it.

Lady Worthington could not enough admire the resolute way in which she turned from her troubles

"Frances came back with me this morning," she said. "I wonder whether you have heard any rumors of her piece of news?"

"What!" exclaimed Esperance; "is it really true, then! I heard a report that she was going to be married."

"Trust Rilchester to be beforehand with gossip," said Lady Worthington, smiling. "But this is really true. Can you guess whom she is going to marry?"

Esperance thought for a minute.

"A clergyman of some sort, I suppose; Frances would make such a model clergyman's wife."

"No," said Lady Worthington, with an amused look; "you are quite wrong."

"Well, then—the squire of a country parish, where she will be a Lady Bountiful."

"Right!" said Lady Worthington. "And now who is the squire?—you know him, but he lives a long way from here."

"The squire of a country parish, and I know him," said Esperance, much puzzled. Then with a sudden remembrance—"Mr. Henderson! can it be Mr. Henderson?"

"Yes, it really is," said Lady Worthington, smiling. "You and Madame Lemercier, you see, have helped to find a husband for Frances."

Esperance was really very much pleased at this piece of news, and Lady Worthington's visit had cheered and refreshed her.

Leaving Esperance with her husband, she went down again to the sitting-room, where she found the dean waiting for the last accounts of Claude. He looked very much aged and shaken, and Lady Worthington fancying he would not care to see any one, would have left after the first greeting and a few words of sympathy, but he begged her almost pathetically to stay.

"If you could tell me, Lady Worthington, what I can possibly do for that poor child; she is wearing herself out, and I seem powerless to help—both their deaths will lie at my door."

"Esperance told me that Cornelia has been the greatest comfort to her," said Lady Worthington, anxious to say something soothing, but the dean only grew more agitated.

"Yes, Cornelia can help," he said, piteously, "but I myself—I who caused all the trouble, can do nothing but watch the effects. Lady Worthington, I am an old man and a scholar, but now for the first time I have found that all my life has been lived for self, and because of that wrong motive, I have been self-deceived. I see it now all too plainly, but the punishment is very hard, very bitter. It is grevious to sit helplessly by, watching the ruin one has caused in the present, haunted by the specters of past deeds. My sister—whom you yourself remember—Monsieur de Mabillon, his son, even his own children, all rise up before me with reproaches. I see that you think this a strange confession for me to make; but I tell you this that you may know how all-important it is that I should find some means of helping Esperance. You know her better than any one, you and Miss Neville; can you not think of something which I can do to relieve her?"

Lady Worthington's still beautiful face was full of sympathy; her humorous gray eyes were softened, and beamed with a kindly light; years ago she had owned to her husband that she felt that it would be a sheer impossibility to rouse the dean from his selfishness to a perception of his duties, and now from his own lips she was hearing that Claude and Esperance had succeeded in this. She paused for a moment before answering, then, with the hesitation of one who speaks while yet thinking out some doubtful point, she said, "There is one way that has just occurred to me, in which I think you might perhaps help Mrs. Magnay. I know from what she said just now how much she longs to have her brother with her—would it be possible for him to be sent for?"

The dean started to his feet with sudden animation.

"Lady Worthington, I don't know how to thank you enough: she must surely be relieved by that; and it had never struck me—you see I am not accustomed to think of other people, I have been self-engrossed, that is the fact, and now when I long to see how to help, and what to do, I am blind and powerless. But that is really a good idea! I will telegraph to Mr. Seymour, tell him to advance the necessary money to Monsieur de—to Gaspard and offer any compensation which Mr. Seymour may think to charge for his sudden withdrawal."

The visit of the London doctor took place a later in the week, and the dean built a great deal on it, hoping that his opinion would be more favorable, or that he would adopt some more active measures. He was terribly disappointed when Mr. Moore only confirmed the opinion of the Rilchester doctors—trepanning could not be attempted; in all probability the patient would never recover consciousness, but would sink in a few days. This was the opinion given to the dean—the doctor faltered a little as Esperance drew him aside.

"You will not deceive me, I know," she said, raising her clear brown eyes to his. "Is there any hope of my husband's recovery?"

Never had the doctor been so strongly tempted to hold out false hopes. He was silent for a moment, looking at the poor little wife, so young and helpless, so unable to bear calamity. But those unflinching eyes would not allow him to prevaricate.

"It is possible, madame," he said, with emphasis.

Her lips quivered. She saw plainly how very little hope he had.

"How long?" she asked, in a tremulous voice.

"It may be a few days," he answered, "or it may possible be weeks, or even months. There have been cases in which the patient has lingered on in this way and ultimately recovered, but it is only fair to tell you, madame, they are very rare."

She asked a few more questions, keeping back her tears bravely; then with a few words of hearty sympathy Mr. Moore took leave, hurrying away to catch the London train.

(To be continued).

PENNY BANKS.

Institutions of this kind are numerous in Britain, and are useful as teaching the children, who are the principal depositors, habits of thrift. They are encouraged to save their coppers by placing them in these banks, and when the pennies increase until they become shillings and pounds they are again encouraged to transfer them into the Government Savings Banks. By this means they are often enabled to save up quite a tidy little sum for future use. In the poorer quarters even grown up people may be found among the patrons of these unpretentious yet useful institutions. The People's Savings Bank, of West Bay City, Mich., is introducing a rather novel feature into banking there. It is a plan which can be best told in the words of the cashier, who explains it in detail as follows: "I have been for some time past studying to devise some plan to induce children of our fair city to save their pennies and nickels by depositing them in our bank, and think I have hit upon a plan that will greatly please our little folks and get them in the habit of saving, which will do more for them toward building up a good character and making them grow up to good and useful manhood and womanhood, than almost any other one thing. The plan, briefly stated, is this: The People's Savings Bank is having plates engraved at considerable expense, from which will be printed many thousands of pretty gummed stamps; each stamp will represent the value of five cents. In connection with these stamps, the bank has ordered a large number of nice little books containing twenty leaves, each leaf ruled off into twenty squares, and each square being the same size as the stamps. As soon as everything is ready, the People's Savings Bank will place these stamps on sale with well-known merchants of West Bay City. Any child, or adult for that matter (although the plan is particularly intended for children), can go to any one of the stores that have the stamps on sale and buy one or more at five cents each. With the first purchase of one or more stamps, the boy or girl will be given, free of charge, one of the books I have already mentioned, in which they will stick the stamp on one of the little squares, and when a page of the book is filled with stamps it will represent a value of one dollar. The book can then be taken to the merchant from whom it was obtained and he will tear out the page and give a receipt for it, and when at length each page of the book has been thus filled, torn out and receipted by the merchant, the child can take the receipts to the People's Savings Bank and exchange them for a nice, neat bank book, in which will be credited the sum represented by the receipts, which must correspond with the leaves returned to the bank by the merchant. The child then buys another or more stamps, gets another book and proceeds precisely as before. These stamps can be obtained at all times when the stores are open, and the drug stores especially are almost always open early and late every day of the week, and buying these stamps is always equivalent to a deposit in the bank."

THE Duke of Edinburgh was never chargeable with being a spendthrift and an incident has just occurred which shows his economical turn of mind. Last spring he opened the Exposition in Auld Reekie, at the request of the municipal authorities. He did not do the job for nothing, it seems, and one item of the bill which he rendered was $1,000 for a special train which he did not have, but claimed that he had a right to have had, and hence should be allowed the money that it would have cost.

Delegates representing the workmen of all the Scotch railroads met in Glasgow yesterday and decided to formulate a demand for shorter hours of labor, and similar action was taken by employees of the Great Western Railway. These movements have undoubtedly been stimulated by the success of the strike of the Welsh railway employees.

"If there is one time more than another," says an experienced married man, "when a woman should be left alone, it is when a line of clothes comes down in the mud."

"How to lay on shingles without using nails," is the heading of a newspaper article. But we didn't read read it. We know all about it. We were a boy once ourselves.

It makes very little difference how badly a man treats his wife, she will talk of him with pride to strangers.